

Mock Test 1: Reading Section

TOEFL® iBT Reading Section Instructions

The TOEFL® Reading Section consists of three reading passages and three sets of reading comprehension questions. You will be awarded one point for every correct answer except for the last question in each set, which is worth more than one point.

You will have 60 minutes to fully complete this section of the test.

Reading Passage 1

Age Determination

When archaeologists discover something, perhaps the most important thing they can do is find out how old it is. Determining the age of an artifact or specimen can give them a better understanding of what was happening in the world at that time—what species existed and what the weather was like, for example. But finding the age of an artifact that is thousands or millions of years old is not a simple task. For this reason, archaeologists have developed a number of ways to determine the age of a specimen, including faunal association, floral analysis, and radiometric dating.

One way of determining the age of an organism is through faunal association. Because most animal species exist for only a certain period of time, this method examines the remains and determines what species it is. This gives archaeologists an approximate idea of when the animal was alive. For example, in 1926, archaeologists found stone projectile points, which are human-made, pointed tools that were often used as weapons, and bison* bones together in Folsom, New Mexico, a very small village in the southwestern United States. Prior to this discovery, archaeologists believed that humans had only been living in this area for 3,000 to 4,000 years, but after scrutinizing the bones from the bison and determining what species it was, they concluded that humans had actually inhabited that region for at least 10,000 years. Although it cannot provide a very precise date, the faunal association method can give a general idea of the time period in which a particular species existed.

Floral analysis methods can help determine a more precise age. One floral analysis method is called dendrochronology, a technique that can provide almost an exact date for when a tree existed. Dendrochronology measures the growth rings on a horizontal cross-section of a tree, which form each year that the tree is alive, often exhibiting certain characteristics based on the weather during the year the ring forms. For example, if the weather is too cold, the tree ring might not even fully form. In order to date a tree based on its rings, archaeologists first look at the outermost ring, which is the most recent, and determine when the tree was cut down by comparing it to the rings from other trees with known cutting dates. Usually, for trees of the same species, there is an overlap where the rings are very similar, allowing the scientists to give a tree an exact cutting date. From there, the scientists essentially count the rest of the rings backwards, going toward the center of the tree. Dendrochronology is an accurate method; archaeologists can usually determine the age of a tree to the year, and sometimes, even to the season. For instance, archaeologists examined a Bristlecone pine tree, and by counting its rings estimated its age to be at least 4,862 years old, though its actual age was probably closer to 5,000 years old, making it one of the oldest trees in the world.

A third dating technique frequently used by archaeologists is radiometric age determination. Specimens analyzed using this technique all have radioactive isotopes in them. Isotopes are groups of atoms that have the same chemical element. In order to determine the age of a specimen using this technique, some information is needed. First, archaeologists should

determine the number of the radioactive isotopes present before the specimen began to decay. Second, they should determine how much of the isotope remains. And finally, they need to know the rate of decay. Usually, the first criterion is impossible to determine immediately, but if archaeologists have the other two pieces of information, they can get an accurate date for the specimen by counting backwards based on the rate of decay, as with dendrochronology. Radiometric testing can be used on most organic materials, such as bone, wood, shells, and seeds. This method has been used to determine the Earth's age, but is most commonly applied to find the age of rocks.

Of the three methods mentioned here, none in particular is more valuable than another. Often, archaeologists use these methods in conjunction with one another to provide a more complete and accurate picture of the time period in which a specimen first existed.

*bison—a large animal that looks similar to a buffalo.

1. According to the passage, which of the following is true about faunal association?

- (A) It estimates the time period of when humans first existed.
- (B) It examines animals that lived 3,000 to 4,000 years ago.
- (C) It mainly studies bison in the southwestern United States.
- (D) It finds out when a species lived by looking at its remains.

2. Why does the author mention bison in paragraph 2?

- (A) To give an example of animals that lived in the southwestern United States
- (B) To contrast a dating method used on animals with one used on humans
- (C) To show how archaeologists found out when humans first lived in Folsom
- (D) To illustrate how people hunted and killed animals thousands of years ago

3. Which of the following can be inferred from paragraph 2 about the bison found in Folsom?

- (A) It was probably killed using the projectile points.
- (B) It may have been older than the humans in Folsom.
- (C) It was similar to those from species found nearby.
- (D) It was a predator of humans thousands of years ago.

4. The word **scrutinizing in the passage is closest in meaning to**

- (A) searching
- (B) studying
- (C) locating
- (D) challenging

5. The word **precise in the passage is closest in meaning to**

- (A) careful
- (B) unchanging
- (C) permanent
- (D) accurate

6. According to paragraph 3, which of the following is true of dendrochronology?

- (A) It can accurately measure the annual rainfall.
- (B) It finds similar characteristics between different species.
- (C) It is more widely used than faunal association.
- (D) It counts tree rings from the outside of the tree to the inside

- 7. Which of the following best expresses the essential information in the highlighted sentence?**
- (A) Archaeologists examine the outermost ring of a tree, which is usually the ring that grew the most recently.
(B) Archaeologists can determine the age of a tree by studying its innermost ring and comparing it to other trees.
(C) Archaeologists cut down a tree and look at its outermost ring to determine the tree's age.
(D) Archaeologists compare the outer ring of a tree to the rings from other trees to find out when the tree was cut down.
- 8. According to paragraph 3, archaeologists compare the rings from different trees because**
- (A) the rings can show how fast the trees grew
(B) the outermost rings provide little information
(C) the rings of trees from the same family are alike
(D) many trees are cut down at about the same time

Paragraph 4

Specimens analyzed using this technique all have radioactive isotopes in them. (A) ■ Isotopes are groups of atoms that have the same chemical element. (B) ■ In order to determine the age of a specimen using this technique, some information is needed. (C) ■ First, archaeologists should determine the number of the radioactive isotopes present before the specimen began to decay. (D) ■ Second, they should determine how much of the isotope remains.

- 9. Look at the four squares [■] that indicate where the following sentence could be added to the passage.**

These isotopes lessen in number over time, usually at a fixed rate, depending on the chemical element.

Where would the sentence best fit?

- (A)
(B)
(C)
(D)

- 10. The word decay in the passage is closest in meaning to**

- (A) diminish
(B) improve
(C) extend
(D) appear

- 11. According to paragraph 5, in radiometric dating, archaeologists need all of the following information EXCEPT**

- (A) The chemical element of the isotopes
(B) How fast or slowly the isotopes decay
(C) The original location of the specimen
(D) The amount of isotope in the specimen

- 12. The phrase the first criterion in the passage refers to**

- (A) Finding out how many isotopes are currently in a specimen
(B) Counting backwards to determine the age of an organic material
(C) Determining the original number of isotopes in a specimen
(D) Confirming the chemical element's rate of decay

13. An introductory sentence for a brief summary of the passage is provided below. Complete the summary by selecting the THREE answer choices that express the most important ideas in the passage. This question is worth 2 points.

This passage discusses different methods of determining the age of archaeological specimens.

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1. Archaeologists used dendrochronology to find the age of the oldest tree in the world.
2. Radiometric age determination measures age using the rate of decay for the radioactive isotopes found in organic materials.
3. Faunal analysis examines the remains of a species and determines its age based on when other members of the same species existed.
4. Radiometric testing is frequently used by archaeologists to determine the age of bones and rocks.
5. One method of floral analysis is dendrochronology, which counts the number of growth rings in a tree and compares them to similar trees to estimate the tree's age.
6. Faunal association is capable of giving a specific date for when a species existed.

Reading Passage 2

The Cultural Impact of the Printing Press

Today, books are readily available and can be acquired easily. However, prior to the 1400s, making a book was a very complicated process, so books were only available to the wealthy and to religious and educational institutions. But by the mid-1400s, there was a growing population of educated, middle-class people, and they wanted books. A man named Johannes Gutenberg answered this call by inventing the printing press, which had a profound effect on society, allowing the spread of new ideas and information that was previously unavailable to the masses.

Before Gutenberg's printing press, books were either handwritten or printed using hand-carved wooden blocks. Both processes were time-consuming and costly, and the final products weren't widely available, partially because so few were made and partially because they were extremely expensive. In 1424, the library at Cambridge University in England had only 122 books, each one worth the equivalent of the land for an entire farm. By the 1450s, Gutenberg's press, which utilized technologies that had previously been available in Asia, changed that. He made durable metal molds of letters, which could be reused, and rather than using water-based ink, he used oil-based ink, which lasted longer. His new technology eventually spread throughout Western Europe and by the early 1500s, there were printing presses in 2,500 European cities.

The immediate impact of the printing press was that it made millions of books available at a much lower cost. Books were available to a wider variety of people, and the demand for them was only growing. Previously, most books had been religious in nature and commonly written in Latin, but with the creation of the printing press, there were books about a variety of subjects in a variety of languages. Literature, such as Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales*, a work of fiction that is known for having standardized the English language, became popular. Travel, philosophy, art, poetry, and even romance were also common subjects.

In addition, the dissemination of more books caused a shift in how stories were passed on. Previously, stories were told

In addition, the **dissemination** of more books caused a shift in how stories were passed on. Previously, stories were told orally, so there was a lot of variation depending on who was speaking. But with books, people no longer had to memorize stories. Histories could be preserved and stories were told more accurately because there were fewer differences from book to book. Moreover, the stories weren't just spoken aloud. Private, leisurely reading became an increasingly popular **pastime**.

The wider availability of books had a great cultural impact, providing the driving force for both the scientific revolution and the Renaissance, which began in the 14th century. The Renaissance was a time of great intellectual and cultural change, during which new ideas in philosophy, art, literature, and politics became very important. The printing press served to advance those ideas and make intellectual achievement available to members of any social class. For example, the texts of the ancient Greeks and Romans, known as the "classics", had been largely ignored before the invention of the printing press because they conflicted with the views of the religious organizations that did most of the printing. However, after the invention of the printing press, anyone could make books, so these works, which hadn't been seen in almost 2,000 years, became hugely important to Renaissance scholars.

Similarly, the printing press is also credited with helping greatly in the establishment of a **cohesive** scientific community. Previously, scientists were seldom able to combine or verify their research with that of other scientists because of geographic differences; however, with the creation of the printing press came the creation of scholarly journals, which reached a variety of locations, so **they** were able to spread new ideas and research very quickly. Because they had the methods and processes available to them, scientists were better able to test the work of others themselves and verify that it was, in fact, true. They could easily alter and improve upon previous experiments and broadcast their results to a huge audience. In addition to creating new and more accurate information, this also gave importance to the concept of authorship, something that was not a concern in the era before the printing press. Since more people were seeing the information, knowing who was responsible for it became more important.

14. According to paragraph 2, why couldn't many people obtain early printed books? Choose two answers.

- (A) Universities controlled book sales.
- (B) There were limited quantities of the books.
- (C) Most were in private libraries in England.
- (D) They were too costly for most people.

15. Why does the author mention farms?

- (A) To explain where the supplies to make books came from
- (B) To give an example of an early printing press location
- (C) To illustrate the cost of books before the printing press
- (D) To contrast books from rural places to those from urban locations

16. According to paragraph 3, what was an immediate effect of the printing press?

- (A) Demand lessened as more books became available.
- (B) There were books printed in many different languages.
- (C) Religious books became much less popular.
- (D) The cost of printing made books more expensive.

17. The word **dissemination in the passage is closest in meaning to**

- (A) delivery
- (B) spread
- (C) communication
- (D) expression

18. According to paragraph 4, information and stories could be preserved more accurately because

- (A) they were being read aloud to many people
- (B) the variations between books decreased
- (C) it was easier to memorize printed information
- (D) readers checked the work for mistakes

19. The word pastime in the passage is closest in meaning to

- (A) career
- (B) chore
- (C) goal
- (D) hobby

20. Which of the following best expresses the essential information in the highlighted sentence?

- (A) The information in ancient Greek and Roman texts conflicted with the opinions of religious groups.
- (B) Ancient Greek and Roman texts were ignored by the inventors of the printing press.
- (C) Before the printing press, religious organizations were the primary printers of Greek and Roman classical texts.
- (D) The classics were not widely published before the printing press because religious institutions did not agree with them.

21. The author's description of the Renaissance mentions all of the following EXCEPT:

- (A) The printing press made ancient texts available to scholars.
- (B) Any person could participate in intellectual activities.
- (C) There were many cultural changes to society at that time.
- (D) Renaissance scholars rejected early religious texts.

22. The word cohesive in the passage is closest in meaning to

- (A) unified
- (B) responsible
- (C) surprising
- (D) predictable

23. The word they in the passage refers to

- (A) locations
- (B) scholarly journals
- (C) geographic differences
- (D) scientists

Paragraph 6

Similarly, the printing press is also credited with helping greatly in the establishment of a cohesive scientific community.

- (A) ■ Previously, scientists were seldom able to combine or verify their research with that of other scientists because of geographic differences; however, with the creation of the printing press, came the creation of scholarly journals, which reached a variety of locations, so they were able to spread new ideas and research very quickly. (B) ■ Because they had the methods and processes available to them, scientists were better able to test the work of others themselves and verify that it was, in fact, true. (C) ■ They could easily alter and improve upon previous experiments and broadcast their results to a huge audience. (D) ■ In addition to creating new and more accurate information, this also gave importance to the concept of authorship, something that was not a concern in the era before the printing press.

24. Look at the four squares [■] that indicate where the following sentence could be added to the passage.

Furthermore, the printing press did much for the accuracy of the information being published.

Where would the sentence best fit?

- (A)
- (B)
- (C)
- (D)

25. Which of the following can be inferred from paragraph 6 about authors before the printing press?

- (A) Many of their names were lost.
- (B) Much of their work was accurate.
- (C) They checked their work with others.
- (D) They published their work in journals.

26. An introductory sentence for a brief summary of the passage is provided below. Complete the summary by selecting the THREE answer choices that express the most important ideas in the passage. *This question is worth 2 points.*

This passage discusses how the invention of the printing press influenced society.

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1. It allowed Renaissance scholars to rediscover and distribute ancient texts and to spread new ideas more easily.
2. It made reading a popular hobby for those with a lot of leisure time, such as the wealthy.
3. It helped members of the scientific community improve their research, show it to scientists in different geographic locations, and get proper recognition for their discoveries.
4. It popularized literary works and made them easier to read by standardizing the languages they were printed in.
5. It replaced old printing methods and made use of new tools and materials, including metal letter molds and oil-based ink.
6. It reduced printing costs and made books available to the general public in addition to religious institutions and the wealthy.

Reading Passage 3

The Origins of Chocolate

Today chocolate is so common that it can be readily obtained nearly anywhere in the world for a modest sum. Nonetheless, it was once considered both a precious commodity and a sacred food by the ancient Maya, who referred to cacao, the main ingredient in chocolate, as “the food of the gods”. The chocolate that most people are familiar with today is in fact a relatively modern confectionary product made from the seeds of the tropical evergreen *Theobroma cacao*, a species indigenous to the tropical regions of the Americas and commonly known as the cacao tree. Once removed from the dried pods, the cacao seeds are roasted and ground into a thick paste. Modern recipes blend milk, sugar, and other ingredients with the paste to make what is known as chocolate.

To understand the origins and early uses of chocolate, one must go back three millennia to the ancient civilizations of Mesoamerica. It was long thought that the Mayans were among the first people to cultivate and use cacao. Their civilization flourished in southern Mexico and the highlands of Belize from around 500 BCE to 1500 CE. Images painted on clay pots dated to 1000 BCE depict the ancestors of the Mayans preparing a beverage thought to be made from cacao. However, the earliest direct evidence that the Mayans were in fact drinking a cacao-based beverage are pottery vessels that still contain ancient cacao residue, some of which has been dated to 600 BCE, just prior to the growth of their civilization.

Recent evidence, however, dates the origin of chocolate to a much earlier period. Archaeologists believe that the Mayans most likely obtained cacao from an older civilization, the Olmecs, who thrived in southern Mexico and disappeared around 300 BCE. Evidence from language and artifacts shows that the Maya derived much of their high culture from the Olmecs, including their word for cacao, *xocoatl*. The Olmecs, in turn, in all likelihood got cacao from other peoples. At the site of Puerto Escondido in Honduras, outside of Olmec territory, archeologists recently found the earliest known evidence that people cultivated and used cacao. Around 1400 BCE, the people of Puerto Escondido were growing cacao not only for the seeds, but also for the pulp of the pods, which they used to make an alcoholic beverage.

When the first Europeans encountered the Mayans around 1500 CE, they observed that chocolate was the beverage of both the commoners and the elite. At the time it was first introduced to the Maya, however, it would have been forbidden to women and children, only to be consumed by priests, high-ranking government officials and great warriors, as it was thought to be too valuable and powerful for them. *Cacahuatl*, the Mayan chocolate beverage, has little resemblance to the thin, watery drink familiarly known as hot chocolate. Mayan chocolate was thick and foamy, a result of both its contents and preparation. It contained a higher percentage of cocoa butter—a thick byproduct of grinding the cacao seed—than that found in hot chocolate today. Likewise, the Maya prepared their drink differently than modern people do. They mixed the cacao with water in a pair of special vessels, pouring the liquid back and forth between the vessels to create a highly-desired layer of foam. *Cacahuatl* contained no milk or sugar, but was often spiced with chili, vanilla, allspice, and other flavorings.

Cacao was much more than just a beverage in Mesoamerica. It played an important role in Mayan religious and ceremonial life. Mayan paintings depict priests offering the gods *cacahuatl* mixed with droplets of their own blood. Ancient texts also describe a wide array of medicinal and culinary uses of cacao. It was added to ground corn to make a basic porridge. The Mayans also traded cacao beans for important commodities such as salt, stone tools, jade, and ceremonial feathers. In fact, cacao was used by the Maya and other nearby cultures, such as the Aztecs, as a form of money.

27. Which of the following best expresses the essential information in the highlighted sentence?

- (A) Cacao trees, which grow in the tropics, produce seeds that can be made into modern products.
- (B) Modern chocolate is made from a tropical American tree called *Theobroma cacao* that people call the cacao tree.
- (C) Today's chocolate is a modern product of the *Theobroma cacao* tree found in the Americas.
- (D) Modern chocolate is made from the seeds of an evergreen native to the American tropics called the cacao tree.

28. The word **cultivate** is closest in meaning to

- (A) grow
- (B) eat
- (C) process
- (D) produce

29. According to paragraph 2, how do archeologists know for sure that the Mayans drank chocolate before they founded their civilization?

- (A) The Olmecs inhabited the regions later conquered by the Mayans.
- (B) The archaeologists found textual evidence.
- (C) The Mayans paintings show them drinking chocolate.
- (D) The archaeologists found chocolate in Mayan pottery.

30. The word **residue** is closest in meaning to

- (A) flavor
- (B) color
- (C) liquid
- (D) remains

31. Why does the author talk about the Olmecs?

- (A) To show how Mesoamericans traded
- (B) To contrast their culture with the Maya
- (C) To give an example of the Mayan ancestors
- (D) To suggest how the Maya got cacao

32. What can be inferred about the people of Puerto Escondido mentioned in paragraph 3?

- (A) They had no use for chocolate.
- (B) They were not related to the Olmecs.
- (C) They taught the Maya to grow cacao.
- (D) They used cacao for money.

33. The word **them** in the passage refers to

- (A) women and children
- (B) priests
- (C) government officials
- (D) great warriors

34. According to paragraph 4, how did the chocolate consumption of the Mayas change over time?

- (A) It became more expensive
- (B) It became less popular
- (C) It became more religious
- (D) It became available to all

35. The author's description of *Cacahuatl* mentioned which of the following?

- (A) It was heavily spiced and sweetened.
- (B) It was very mild and light.
- (C) It contained less cocoa butter than today's chocolate.
- (D) It was blended into a foamy mixture.

36. The word **array** is closest in meaning to

- (A) description
- (B) completion
- (C) selection
- (D) restriction

37. According to the final paragraph, the Mayans used cacao for all of the following purposes EXCEPT

- (A) a form of currency
- (B) an ingredient in meals
- (C) an additive to pottery
- (D) a type of religious offering

Paragraph 5

Cacao was much more than just a beverage in Mesoamerica. It played an important role in Mayan religious and ceremonial life. (A) ■ Mayan paintings depict priests offering the gods *cacahuatl* mixed with droplets of their own blood. (B) ■ Ancient texts also describe a wide array of medicinal and culinary uses of cacao. (C) ■ It was added to ground corn to make a basic porridge. (D) ■ The Mayans also traded cacao beans for important commodities such as salt, stone tools, jade, and ceremonial feathers.

38. Look at the four squares [■] that indicate where the following sentence could be added to the passage.

Other recipes blended cacao with peanuts, honey, and spices to make complex sauces and medicines.

Where would the sentence best fit?

- (A)
- (B)
- (C)
- (D)

39. Directions: An introductory sentence for a brief summary of the passage is provided below. Complete the summary by selecting the THREE answer choices that express the most important ideas in the passage. *This question is worth 2 points.*

The origins of chocolate can be found in the ancient cultures of Mesoamerica.

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Answer Choices

1. The cultivation and consumption of cacao predates Mayan civilization.
2. Great warriors were honored with a foamy cacao drink.
3. Cacao was an important part of the Mayan diet, religious life, and economy.
4. The Mayans likely learned how to prepare cacao from the Olmecs.
5. The Mayan drink Cacahuatl differs considerably from modern hot chocolate.
6. Mayan civilization allowed for people of all classes to enjoy Cacahuatl.