

## SPECIAL PLACEMENT TRAINING 2021

### CAREER DEVELOPMENT CENTRE

#### READING COMPREHENSION

*For the following three questions, choose the topic sentence that best fits the paragraph.*

1. The term spices is a pleasant one, whether it connotes fine French cuisine or a down-home, cinnamon-flavored apple pie. \_\_\_\_\_. In the past, individuals traveled the world seeking exotic spices for profit and, in searching, have changed the course of history. Indeed, to gain control of lands harboring new spices, nations have actually gone to war.

a. The taste and aroma of spices are the main elements that make food such a source of fascination and pleasure.

b. The term might equally bring to mind Indian curry made thousands of miles away and those delicious barbecued ribs sold on the corner.

c. It is exciting to find a good cookbook and experiment with spices from other lands—indeed, it is one way to travel around the globe!

d. The history of spices, however, is another matter altogether, and at times, it can be filled with danger and intrigue

2. It weighs less than three pounds and is hardly more interesting to look at than an overly ripe cauliflower. \_\_\_\_\_. It has created poetry and music, planned and executed horrific wars, and devised intricate scientific theories. It thinks and dreams, plots and schemes, and easily holds more information than all the libraries on Earth.

a. The human brain is made of gelatinous matter and contains no nerve endings.

b. The science of neurology has found a way to map the most important areas of the human brain.

c. Nevertheless, the human brain is the most mysterious and complex object on Earth.

d. However, scientists say that each person uses only 10% of his or her brain over the course of a lifetime!

3. Gary is a distinguished looking man with a touch of gray at the temples. Even in his early 50s, he still turns heads. He enjoys spending most of his time admiring his profile in the mirror. In fact, he considers his good looks to be his second-most important asset. The first, however, is money. He is lucky in this area, too, having been born into a wealthy family. \_\_\_\_\_. He loves the power his wealth has given him. He could buy whatever he desires, whether that be people, places, or things. Gary checks that mirror often and feels great delight with what he sees.

- a. Gary's gray hair is his worst characteristic.
- b. Conceit is the beginning and the end of Gary's character; conceit of person and situation.
- c. Gary feels blessed to be wealthy and the joy consumes his every thought.
- d. The only objects of Gary's respect are others who hold positions in society above him.

**For the following questions, a topic sentence is given. Try choosing the sentence that best develops or supports it.**

**4. In Oklahoma, a girl is forbidden to take a bite from her date's hamburger.**

- a. It's illegal for teenagers to take a bath during the winter in Clinton, Indiana.
- b. Youngsters may not spin Yo-Yos on Sunday in Memphis, Tennessee.
- c. It may be hard to believe, but these types of strange laws are still on the books!
- d. It is illegal to parade an elephant down Main Street in Austin, Texas.

**5. Cosmetic plastic surgery is one of the fastest growing segments of U.S. medicine.**

- a. Cosmetic plastic surgery can have dangerous side effects, some of which can be fatal.
- b. Americans are eager to make their bodies as perfect as possible and to minimize the visible signs of aging.
- c. The price of cosmetic plastic surgery is also on the rise.
- d. This increase in cosmetic plastic surgery says something quite disturbing about our culture

**6. One scientific theory of the origin of the universe is the much misunderstood big bang theory.**

- a. Physicists now believe they can construct what happened in the universe during the first three minutes of its beginning.
- b. Many scientists believe that, during microwave experiments, we can actually "hear" echoes of the big bang.
- c. The popular notion is that the big bang was a huge explosion in space, but this is far too simple a description.
- d. The big bang theory, if accepted, convinces us that the universe was not always as it is now.

**7. Before we learn how to truly love someone else, we must learn how to love the face in the mirror.**

- a. Don't be shy about meeting members of the opposite sex.
- b. No one can really love you the way you can love yourself.
- c. Love is not something that lasts unless one is very lucky.
- d. Learning to accept ourselves for who we are will teach us how to accept another person.

**8. The Greek ideal of the hero most closely resembles today's free-agent superstar.**

- a. A superstar is an athlete who commands a great salary based on his individual skills.
- b. The Greek warrior's focus was on grasping at immortality, and he did this by ensuring that his name would live on, long after he died.
- c. The Greek hero valued self-interest above loyalty to a cause, his king, or to his army, just as the free-agent superstar values his contract salary above any special team, coach, or the game.
- d. The Greek hero was impressive in his performance on the battlefield as well as in the sports arena

**9. A cat's whiskers are among the most perfect organs of touch.**

- a. The hairs themselves are very sensitive.
- b. Whiskers are generally white in color.
- c. Touch is very important to a cat.
- d. Dogs have very sensitive noses.

**For the following question, choose the sentence that does NOT support the given topic sentence.**

**10. In Moby Dick, Herman Melville wrote that the whale men were "enveloped in whale lines," that each man relied on the others during moments of danger.**

- a. The small boats that pursued the whales left the whaling ship far behind; each man in a boat had to depend on the others to stay alive.

- b. Once the whale was harpooned, the whale line unraveled so fast that water had to be poured on it to keep it from smoking.
- c. The whale line was the rope, dozens of yards long, that attached to the harpoon; it was raveled under the seats of all the men metaphorically connecting each man to the next.
- d. One wrong move and the line would snap a man right out of the boat; thus, his life depended on whether the crew would cut the whale loose to save him, or leave him in the ocean during the heat of the hunt.

**Read the following passages and answer the questions:**

Opera refers to a dramatic art form, originating in Europe, in which the emotional content is conveyed to the audience as much through music, both vocal and instrumental, as it is through the lyrics. By contrast, in musical theater an actor's dramatic performance is primary, and the music plays a lesser role. The drama in opera is presented using the primary elements of theater such as scenery, costumes, and acting. However, the words of the opera, or libretto, are sung rather than spoken. The singers are accompanied by a musical ensemble ranging from a small instrumental ensemble to a full symphonic orchestra.

**11. It is pointed out in the reading that Opera \_\_\_\_\_**

- A) has developed under the influence of musical theater
- B) is a drama sung with the accompaniment of an orchestra
- C) is not a high-budget production
- D) is often performed in Europe
- E) is the most complex of all the performing arts

**12. We can understand from the reading that \_\_\_\_\_**

- A) people are captivated more by opera than musical theater
- B) drama in opera is more important than the music
- C) orchestras in operas can vary considerably in size
- D) musical theater relies above all on music
- E) there is argument over whether the music is important or the words in opera

**13. It is stated in the reading that \_\_\_\_\_**

- A) acting and costumes are secondary to music in musical theater
- B) many people find musical theater more captivating than opera
- C) music in musical theater is not as important as it is in opera
- D) an opera requires a huge orchestra as well as a large choir
- E) opera doesn't have any properties in common with musical theater

## **Passage 2**

Dolphins are regarded as the friendliest creatures in the sea and stories of them helping drowning sailors have been common since Roman times. The more we learn about dolphins, the more we realize that their society is more complex than people previously imagined. They look after other dolphins when they are ill, care for pregnant mothers and protect the weakest in the community, as we do. Some scientists have suggested that dolphins have a language but it is much more probable that they communicate with each other without needing words. Could any of these mammals be more intelligent than man? Certainly the most common argument in favor of man's superiority over them that we can kill them more easily than they can kill us is the least

satisfactory. On the contrary, the more we discover about these remarkable creatures, the less we appear superior when we destroy them.

**14. It is clear from the passage that dolphins\_\_\_\_\_**

- A) don't want to be with us as much as we want to be with them
- B) are proven to be less intelligent than once thought
- C) have a reputation for being friendly to humans
- D) are the most powerful creatures that live in the oceans
- E) are capable of learning a language and communicating with humans

**15. The fact that the writer of the passage thinks that we can kill dolphins more easily than they can kill us\_\_\_\_\_**

- A) means that they are better adapted to their environment than we are
- B) shows that dolphins have a very sophisticated form of communication
- C) proves that dolphins are not the most intelligent species at sea
- D) does not mean that we are superior to them
- E) proves that Dolphins have linguistic skills far beyond what we previously thought

**Read the following passage and answer the questions:**

An ecosystem is a group of animals and plants living in a specific region and interacting with one another and with their physical environment. Ecosystems include physical and chemical components, such as soils, water, and nutrients that support the organisms living there. These organisms may range from large animals to microscopic bacteria. Ecosystems also can be thought of as the interactions among all organisms in a given habitat; for instance, one species may serve as food for another. People are part of the ecosystems where they live and work. Human activities can harm or destroy local ecosystems unless actions such as land development for housing or businesses are carefully planned to conserve and sustain the ecology of the area. An important part of ecosystem management involves finding ways to protect and enhance economic and social well-being while protecting local ecosystems.

**16. What is the main idea of the passage?**

- a. An ecosystem is a community that includes animals, plants, and microscopic bacteria.
- b. Human activities can do great damage to local ecosystems, so human communities should be cautiously planned.
- c. In managing the ecology of an area, it is important to protect both human interests and the interests of other members of local ecosystems.
- d. People should remember that they are a part of the ecosystems where they live and work

**17. Which of the following best sums up activities within an ecosystem?**

- a. predator-prey relationships
- b. interactions among all members
- c. human-animal interactions
- d. human relationship with the environment

**18. An ecosystem can most accurately be defined as a**

- a. geographical area.
- b. community.
- c. habitat.
- d. protected environment

**19. One can infer from the reading that ----.**

- a) dolphins are quite abundant in some areas of the world
- b) communication is the most fascinating aspect of the dolphins
- c) dolphins have skills that no other living creatures have such as the ability to think
- d) it is not usual for dolphins to communicate with each other
- e) dolphins have some social traits that are similar to those of humans

**Read the following passage and answer the questions:**

Naval architects never claim that a ship is unsinkable, but the sinking of the passenger-and-car ferry Estonia in the Baltic surely should have never have happened. It was well designed and carefully maintained. It carried the proper number of lifeboats. It had been thoroughly inspected the day of its fatal voyage. Yet hours later, the Estonia rolled over and sank in a cold, stormy night. It went down so quickly that most of those on board, caught in their dark, flooding cabins, had no chance to save themselves: Of those who managed to scramble overboard, only 139 survived. The rest died of hypothermia before the rescuers could pluck them from the cold sea. The final death toll amounted to 912 souls. However, there were an unpleasant number of questions about why the Estonia sank and why so many survivors were men in the prime of life, while most of the dead were women, children and the elderly.

One can understand from the reading that ----.

- A) the lifesaving equipment did not work well and lifeboats could not be lowered
- B) design faults and incompetent crew contributed to the sinking of the Estonia ferry
- C) 139 people managed to leave the vessel but died in freezing water
- D) naval architects claimed that the Estonia was unsinkable
- E) most victims were trapped inside the boat as they were in their cabins