

PASSAGE TWO (Questions 9–16)

Paragraph

The Smartphone Revolution

- 1► Smartphones have rapidly increased their dominance in the mobile phone market in recent years, accounting for more than half of all mobile phones sold globally. These multifunctional devices have revolutionized the way in which users communicate, correspond, and interact with the world, and others, around them. Since smartphones have combined the tasks of previously separate devices into one exceptionally efficient product, their appeal to consumers cannot be overestimated. Prior to the modern development of the smartphone, people required a combination of machines, such as computers, televisions, PDAs (Personal Digital Assistants), and cameras to accomplish all of the functions that are currently handled with a single piece of technology.
- 2► While smartphones have only been in existence since the 1990s, the original concept was introduced in 1973 by Theodore Paraskevakos. In that year, the innovative entrepreneur obtained a patent for his idea of uniting the functions of data processing activities, intelligent applications, and visual displays with those of a telephone. At that time, Paraskevakos made note of such tasks as banking and bill paying in his outline; two commonplace activities many users today perform with their smartphones. Paraskevakos may have come up with his concept of an advanced phone as a result of his earlier success with transmitting electronic data through telephone lines, a process that became the foundation for the “Caller ID (Identification)” function available on virtually all

contemporary phones. Since beginning his engineering work in 1968, Paraskevakos has obtained over 20 patents worldwide which are based on this technology.

- 3► Despite the fact that it took almost 20 years to bring the first smartphone to market, once it appeared, subsequent generations of enhanced versions have emerged with increasing frequency, offering consumers a variety of brands from which to choose. In 1992, the IBM Corporation demonstrated a prototype of a phone that incorporated PDA capabilities with traditional phone functions. A couple of years later, an improved version was put on the market for the public. By this time, several competitors were working on their own adaptations of what would later be called a "smartphone," and by the end of the first decade of the twenty-first century, the popularity of the smartphone approached that of its predecessor, the "feature" phone.
- 4► Though mobile phones are divided into three categories—those that provide only basic phone and text services, feature phones, and smartphones—the line between a feature phone and a smartphone is still somewhat blurred. In general, a feature phone differs from a smartphone in that it provides access to less functions than the smartphone does, although it does have a variety of functions over and above those of a basic mobile phone. One of the challenges of distinguishing between feature phones and smartphones is that, with the rapid evolution of successive generations of phones, the features exclusive to yesterday's smartphones are often found on today's feature phones. So while modern feature phones may still be behind in terms of the capabilities of their smartphone contemporaries, they may in fact be more advanced than smartphones of just a few years ago. For example, in the early part of the first decade of the twenty-first century, functions such as GPS (Global Positioning System) and Wi-Fi (Wireless Fidelity) access belonged solely to smartphones, whereas, by the end of that decade, many feature phones had evolved to include these functions.
- 5► One characteristic that most people agree differentiates smartphones from feature phones is the use of "apps," application programs designed specifically for the individual operating systems of smartphones. These apps are programs that can be downloaded directly onto the smartphone, or downloaded through a website. Apps have become one of the most popular features of smartphones in recent years, and cover a wide range of fields. Some apps, such as word processing or spreadsheet programs, help users complete tasks. Other apps provide information, such as weather or location. Still others are a source of entertainment, allowing for books and music to be downloaded, or for games to be played on the smartphone screen. For example, Angry Birds, one of the most popular apps on the market when it was created, was a game first devised for the Apple iPhone. Its enormous fame led to versions being devised for other smartphone operating systems, and then for other devices, such as computers and gaming consoles.

9. The word "their" in paragraph 1 refers to
(A) smartphones
(B) tasks
(C) separate devices
(D) consumers
10. The word "those" in paragraph 2 refers to
(A) intelligent applications
(B) functions
(C) data processing activities
(D) displays
11. The word "this technology" in paragraph 2 refers to
(A) contemporary phones
(B) telephone lines
(C) electronic data
(D) Caller ID
12. The phrase "an improved version" in paragraph 3 refers to
(A) a variety
(B) a phone
(C) a PDA
(D) a prototype
13. The word "its" in paragraph 3 refers to
(A) the first decade
(B) the public
(C) the smartphone
(D) the feature phone
14. The word "they" in paragraph 4 refers to
(A) feature phones
(B) capabilities
(C) contemporaries
(D) functions

15. The word "others" in paragraph 5 refers to

- ☐ (A) programs
- ☐ (B) tasks
- ☐ (C) apps
- ☐ (D) books

16. The word "Its" in paragraph 5 refers to

- ☐ (A) Angry Birds
- ☐ (B) the market
- ☐ (C) the Apple iPhone
- ☐ (D) a game