

## SAT Reading Test 4

### Questions 32-41 are based on the following passage.

This passage is adapted from Virginia Woolf, *Three Guineas*. ©1938 by Harcourt, Inc. Here, Woolf considers the situation of women in English society.

Close at hand is a bridge over the River Thames, an admirable vantage ground for us to make a survey. The river flows beneath; barges pass, laden <sup>Line</sup> with timber, bursting with corn; there on one side are 5 the domes and spires of the city; on the other, Westminster and the Houses of Parliament. It is a place to stand on by the hour, dreaming. But not now. Now we are pressed for time. Now we are here to consider facts; now we must fix our eyes upon the 10 procession—the procession of the sons of educated men.

There they go, our brothers who have been educated at public schools and universities, mounting those steps, passing in and out of those 15 doors, ascending those pulpits, preaching, teaching, administering justice, practising medicine, transacting business, making money. It is a solemn sight always—a procession, like a caravanserai crossing a desert. . . . But now, for the past twenty 20 years or so, it is no longer a sight merely, a photograph, or fresco scrawled upon the walls of time, at which we can look with merely an esthetic appreciation. For there, trapesing along at the tail end of the procession, we go ourselves. And that <sup>or makes a difference. We who have looked so long at</sup>

25 makes a difference. We who have looked so long at the pageant in books, or from a curtained window watched educated men leaving the house at about nine-thirty to go to an office, returning to the house at about six-thirty from an office, need look passively 30 no longer. We too can leave the house, can mount those steps, pass in and out of those doors, . . . make money, administer justice. . . . We who now agitate these humble pens may in another century or two speak from a pulpit. Nobody will dare contradict us 35 then; we shall be the mouthpieces of the divine spirit—a solemn thought, is it not? Who can say whether, as time goes on, we may not dress in military uniform, with gold lace on our breasts, swords at our sides, and something like the old 40 family coal-scuttle on our heads, save that that venerable object was never decorated with plumes of white horsehair. You laugh—indeed the shadow of the private house still makes those dresses look a little queer. We have worn private clothes so 45 long. . . . But we have not come here to laugh, or to

talk of fashions—men's and women's. We are here, on the bridge, to ask ourselves certain questions. And they are very important questions; and we have very little time in which to answer them. The 50 questions that we have to ask and to answer about that procession during this moment of transition are so important that they may well change the lives of all men and women for ever. For we have to ask ourselves, here and now, do we wish to join that procession, or don't we? On what terms shall we join that procession? Above all, where is it leading us, the procession of educated men? The moment is short; it may last five years; ten years, or perhaps only a matter of a few months longer. . . . But, you will 55 object, you have no time to think; you have your battles to fight, your rent to pay, your bazaars to organize. That excuse shall not serve you, Madam. As you know from your own experience, and there are facts that prove it, the daughters of educated men 60 have always done their thinking from hand to mouth; not under green lamps at study tables in the cloisters of secluded colleges. They have thought while they stirred the pot, while they rocked the cradle. It was thus that they won us the right to our 65 brand-new sixpence. It falls to us now to go on thinking; how are we to spend that sixpence? Think we must. Let us think in offices; in omnibuses; while we are standing in the crowd watching Coronations and Lord Mayor's Shows; let us think . . . in the 70 gallery of the House of Commons; in the Law Courts;

<sup>or gallery of the House of Commons, in the Law Courts</sup>  
let us think at baptisms and marriages and funerals. Let us never cease from thinking—what is this “civilization” in which we find ourselves? What are these ceremonies and why should we take part in 80 them? What are these professions and why should we make money out of them? Where in short is it leading us, the procession of the sons of educated men?

32

- The main purpose of the passage is to
- A) emphasize the value of a tradition.
  - B) stress the urgency of an issue.
  - C) highlight the severity of social divisions.
  - D) question the feasibility of an undertaking.

33

The central claim of the passage is that

- A) educated women face a decision about how to engage with existing institutions.
- B) women can have positions of influence in English society only if they give up some of their traditional roles.
- C) the male monopoly on power in English society has had grave and continuing effects.
- D) the entry of educated women into positions of power traditionally held by men will transform those positions.

34

Woolf uses the word “we” throughout the passage mainly to

- A) reflect the growing friendliness among a group of people.
- B) advance the need for candor among a group of people.
- C) establish a sense of solidarity among a group of people.
- D) reinforce the need for respect among a group of people.

35

According to the passage, Woolf chooses the setting of the bridge because it

- A) is conducive to a mood of fanciful reflection.
- B) provides a good view of the procession of the sons of educated men.
- C) is within sight of historic episodes to which she alludes.
- D) is symbolic of the legacy of past and present sons of educated men.

36

Woolf indicates that the procession she describes in the passage

- A) has come to have more practical influence in recent years.
- B) has become a celebrated feature of English public life.
- C) includes all of the richest and most powerful men in England.
- D) has become less exclusionary in its membership in recent years.

37

Which choice provides the best evidence for the answer to the previous question?

- A) Lines 12-17 (“There . . . money”)
- B) Lines 17-19 (“It . . . desert”)
- C) Lines 23-24 (“For . . . ourselves”)
- D) Lines 30-34 (“We . . . pulpit”)

**38**

Woolf characterizes the questions in lines 53-57 ("For we . . . men") as both

- A) controversial and threatening.
- B) weighty and unanswerable.
- C) momentous and pressing.
- D) provocative and mysterious.

**39**

Which choice provides the best evidence for the answer to the previous question?

- A) Lines 46-47 ("We . . . questions")
- B) Lines 48-49 ("And . . . them")
- C) Line 57 ("The moment . . . short")
- D) Line 62 ("That . . . Madam")

**40**

Which choice most closely captures the meaning of the figurative "sixpence" referred to in lines 70 and 71?

- A) Tolerance
- B) Knowledge
- C) Opportunity
- D) Perspective

**41**

The range of places and occasions listed in lines 72-76 ("Let us . . . funerals") mainly serves to emphasize how

- A) novel the challenge faced by women is.
- B) pervasive the need for critical reflection is.
- C) complex the political and social issues of the day are.
- D) enjoyable the career possibilities for women are.