## Water Supply in Venice

**Paragraph 1**

The city of Venice, built on saltwater marshes and crisscrossed by canals, experienced problems with its water supply for most of its history. One fifteenth-century French traveler noted that “**in a city” in which the inhabitants are in water up to their mouths, they often go thirsty** “How was the community to solve this important problem?

1. Why does the author include the quotation **“in a city in which the inhabitants are in water up to their mouths, they often go thirsty**”?

1. To indicate that the French traveled to Venice frequently in the fifteenth century.
2. To illustrate the opinion of other Europeans about the water situation in Venice
3. To suggest that the water supply problem of Venice continued well beyond the fifteenth century.
4. To emphasize how serious the water problem was in Venice.

**Paragraph 2**

Water drawn from the lagoon (the large, shallow body of water between Venice and the Mediterranean Sea) and the canals within the city served many domestic uses such as washing and cooking. Inventories of even the most modest households list large numbers of buckets, which were emptied and rinsed, the ones used to carry the brackish (somewhat salty) canal water were kept separate from those intended for fresh water. Still, even serving such needs would have been impossible if the canals of Venice had been extremely polluted. The government was **obliged** to impose controls, and in the early fourteenth century, the Great Council prohibited the washing of all cloth and dyed woolens in the canals, adding that water used for dyeing could not be flushed into the canals. **Henceforth**, dirty water of that sort was to go into the lagoon. Thanks to resistance on the part of the dyers, infractions were many, the law did not reflect common practice. A century later, however, most of the dye works that used blood or indigo(a dark blue dye) had shifted to the periphery of the city, as had all activities “that let off bad odors or smells.”, such as butchering. Blood, carcasses, and spoiled meat were to go into the lagoon. The canals of Venice began to be protected in the name of nascent ecological awareness.

2. The word “**Henceforth**” in the passage is closest in meaning to

1. Instead of this
2. In addition
3. From this time on
4. In effect

3. The word “**obliged”** in the passage is closest in meaning to

1. forced
2. allowed
3. expected
4. Persuaded

4. According to paragraph 2, why did the government place restrictions on dyers?

1. To protect the city’s drinking water
2. To prevent the lagoon from being polluted
3. To keep canal water clean
4. To discourage the use of blood and indigo for dyeing cloth

5. According to paragraph 2, how did dyers respond to the controls imposed by the government?

1. They switched from using dyes that let off bad odors or smells to new dyes that smelled much better
2. They resisted initially but eventually moved most of the dyeing operations outside the city center
3. They argued that the government did not consider common practice before imposing the controls
4. They started washing cloth and woolens dyed with blood and indigo in the lagoon

**Paragraph 3**

Much more stringent measures were necessary to guarantee a supply of drinking water, however. In the early centuries of settlement in the lagoon basin, the populations depended on wells on the nearby coastal region. By the ninth century, however, with the increase in population density, cisterns became necessary. Basically, the cisterns were large, covered pits dug into the ground and lined with clay to hold water. The cisterns were located in the city, but unlike the wells, the cisterns were not supplied with water from the lagoon, they collected rainwater instead. Cisterns became widespread in the growing city.

6. It can be inferred from paragraph 3 that wells on the nearby coastal region

1. were smaller in size than the cisterns located in the city
2. served as a water source for the growing number of cisterns in the city
3. increased in number as the population density increased
4. provided enough water for only a relatively small number of people

**Paragraph 4**

Over a period of several hundred years, Venice developed an elaborate system of cisterns and gome-the gutters or pipes that carried rainwater to the cisterns and that, for a single cistern, might extend over an area of several streets. Wealthy households had their own cisterns. In less affluent areas of the city, cisterns were often owned and maintained by neighborhood groups. In crowded parts of the city where landlords offered small house for rent, one or two cisterns were provided for each street. A network of public cisterns paralleled these private and semiprivate arrangements. Every public square in the city had a cistern to serve the poorest venetians.

7. According to paragraph 4, all of the following were true of Venice’s system of cisterns and gome EXCEPT

A. It was developed over several centuries

B. It collected rainwater

C. It was maintained with fees paid by the public

D. It reflected the social and economic diversity of the city of Venice

**Paragraph 5**

In the thirteenth century, a decision was made to create 50 additional cisterns, primarily in the recently urbanized area at the edge of the city. At the same time, a campaign was **launched** to repair the existing cisterns. Expansion of the cistern system stopped during much of the fourteenth century as Venice, like other cities in Europe, suffered from bubonic plague. In the fifteenth century, however, a new program of cistern construction and repair was undertaken.

8. The word “**launched**” in the passage is closest in meaning to

1. paid for
2. started
3. proposed
4. agreed on

9. According to paragraph 5, all of the following had an effect on cisterns in Venice from the thirteenth to the fifteenth century EXCEPT

1. the construction of cisterns in other cities in Europe
2. the establishment of programs to construct and repair cisterns
3. the outbreak of bubonic plague
4. the urbanization of an area at the edge of the edge of the city

**Paragraph 6**

In spite of the expansion of the cistern system, Venice continued to have problems with its water supply, especially during dry periods. Flotillas of boats had to be dispatched to the mouths of nearby rivers-first to the Bottenigo, then to the Brenta-to fetch fresh water. The fresh water was then sold by the bucket or poured into the cisterns. The public authorities made efforts to take bolder action to **ensure** the supply of fresh water from **this parallel source** and a number of projects were suggested during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries to channel river water and even to construct an aqueduct. However, the high cost of such initiatives precluded their execution.

10. The phrase “**this parallel source**” refers to

1. flotillas of boat
2. nearby rivers
3. the cisterns
4. an aqueduct

11. The word “**ensure**” in the passage is closest in meaning t**o**

1. improve
2. increase
3. control
4. Guarantee

12. According to paragraph 6, how did public authorities respond to problems with the water supply during dry periods?

1. They sent boats to fetch fresh water from nearby rivers
2. They channeled river water into the cisterns
3. They constructed an aqueduct
4. They sold water from the cisterns in buckets to the public

**Paragraph 4**

Over a period of several hundred years, Venice developed an elaborate system of cisterns and gome-the gutters or pipes that carried rainwater to the cisterns and that, for a single cistern, might extend over an area of several streets. **■**Wealthy households had their own cisterns. **■**In less affluent areas of the city, cisterns were often owned and maintained by neighborhood groups. **■**In crowded parts of the city where landlords offered small house for rent, one or two cisterns were provided for each street. **■**A network of public cisterns paralleled these private and semiprivate arrangements. Every public square in the city had a cistern to serve the poorest venetians.

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

**The complexity of the cistern system was social as well as physical.**

Where would the sentence best fit?

14. **Directions:** An introductory sentence for a brief summary of the passage is provided below. Complete the summary by selected THREE answer choices that express the most important ideas in the passage. Some sentences do not belong in the summary express ideas that are not presented in the passage or are minor ideas in the passage. **This question is worth 2 points.**

**The city of Venice experienced problems with its water supply for most of its history.**

**Answer Choices**

1. The water from the lagoon between Venice and the Mediterranean Sean could not be used for drinking because it was extremely polluted.
2. From the ninth to the fifteenth century, Venice developed a system to collected and store rainwater in cisterns for use by the population
3. Wealthy households were able to build their own cisterns, but everyone else had to use public cisterns located in the city’s many squares.
4. By the early fourteenth century, the water in Venice’s canals was becoming too polluted for household use prompting the city council to prohibit the use of the canals by dyers and butchers.
5. By the fifteenth century, cisterns supplied by rainwater proved to be inadequate, but the cost of the projects proposed for a permanent solution was too high for the projects to be undertaken.
6. The expansion and repair of the cistern system was interrupted for much of the fourteenth century because of the bubonic plague, a situation that worsened the water supply problem.