

## READING TEST 162

### READING PASSAGE 1

*You should spend about 20 minutes on Questions 1-13, which are based on Reading Passage 1 on pages 2 and 3.*

#### **Why should we study history?**

In this paper, I shall present a number of people's opinions on why we should study history. Let me point out at the outset that many of these views overlap, with differences that are ones of emphasis, rather than of principle.

According to some of the greatest historians, such as Arnold Toynbee, the essential value of history is its ability to give us self-awareness, self-knowledge. This occurs because historical figures are presented to us in detail. Studying Alexander the Great, for instance, teaches us that a single person is capable of the whole range of behaviour from cruelty to kindness.

Diane Ravich, an education policy analyst, gives a practical reason for studying history. Like many others before her, she claims that history doesn't tell us the answers to our questions, but it helps to inform us and thus to improve our judgment, so that we make better choices in the future.

With a different focus, though, we can say that we know nothing about the future, and the present is just a moment, so in fact all there is is history. As the philosopher of education John Dewey suggested, the only tool we have for making sense of the reality we experience is what has occurred in the past.

According to historian Mark M rug, the knowledge of how people acted in the past may not always suggest clever solutions to present crises, but it makes the task of finding them easier by giving us a starting point, a body of past experience which we can and, if necessary, reject. Peter N Stearns argues that the wisdom available from history has a personal, everyday application. People need to have some sense of the workings of societies, simply so that they can run their own lives without coming into conflict with the community to which they belong.

The philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche said people need models to imitate, and historical models are particularly powerful because they actually existed. Through her contribution to ending English rule over France, Joan of Arc demonstrates the power of individual belief and action. Galileo's opposition to the prevailing belief that the sun and planets orbited the Earth

symbolises the fight against authority for freedom of thought. When studying history, we judge the actions of historical figures to be admirable or despicable, good or bad, and choose who we want to emulate.

Some philosophers have identified a pattern in historical events. Both Georg Hegel and Oswald Spengler saw history as a dynamic process, one in which nothing is static, in contrast to the many other philosophers who have believed that history consists of unique events. But there the resemblance ends. In Hegel's view, history is a process of conflict between opposite ideas, leading towards greater freedom, which combines the best elements of the two original ideas.

Spengler, on the other hand, developed the organic view that historical cultures, like plants and animals follow a process of growth, flowering and deterioration, a rise inevitably leading to a fall. There are very many historical examples of both individuals and empires that have conformed to this pattern.

Many historians argue that a society which has a shared cultural understanding of its own history is more likely to function smoothly than a society that is ignorant of its past. For example, Beverly Southgate claims that societies, like individuals, need to know who they are, and where they belong. Individuals who lack this sense of uniqueness are likely to feel that life has little meaning or purpose, and so too with societies. A shared knowledge of its history provides a nation with meaning, purpose and cohesion.

Southgate would agree with Conal Furay and Michael J Salevouris, in whose view a society that cannot recall its past is like an individual with amnesia, unaware of the roots that have created it. As a consequence, it has no direction, and this impacts on its further evolution. These two historians identify another value of history. We tend to have a narrow view of our own society, assuming that its ways are the only acceptable ones. By learning how our own country used to be, we may realise that our present-day customs are not the only ones which are acceptable. This clearly has implications for our attitude towards other present-day countries and cultures, too.

Many historians and educators believe that the expert knowledge possessed by historians includes not only the learning of factual information, but also the habit of critically examining and evaluating evidence. These are abilities worth developing, as they are very useful, both in other academic pursuits and in almost any career.

### Questions 1 - 4

*Look at the following people (Questions 1-4) and the list of theories of history below  
Match each person with the correct theory, A-F.*

*Write the correct letter, A-F, in boxes 1-4 on your answer sheet.*

- 1      Arnold Toynbee
- 2      Diane Ravich
- 3      John Dewey
- 4      Friedrich Nietzsche

### List of Theories of History

- A      It helps us to put problems into perspective.
- B      It helps us to understand human nature.
- C      It helps us to understand the present.
- D      It provides examples to copy.
- E      It shows that there are alternative explanations of events.
- F      It helps to improve our ability to make decisions.

### Questions 5 - 9

*Complete the notes using the list of words, A-J, below.*

*Write the correct letter, A-J, in boxes 5-9 on your answer sheet.*

Hegel and Spengler: history is a process of **5** ..... . Hegel: historical process ends in an increase in **6** ..... . Spengler: historical process ends in **7** ..... .

Southgate: history helps to create a nation's **8** .....

Furay and Salevouris: study of history encourages **9** ..... of other cultures.

- |             |            |                 |           |
|-------------|------------|-----------------|-----------|
| A analysis  | B decline  | C peace         | D change  |
| E identity  | F pleasure | G communication | H liberty |
| I tolerance | J conflict |                 |           |

**Questions 10 - 13**

*Complete the sentences below.*

*Choose **ONE WORD ONLY** from the passage for each answer.*

*Write your answers in boxes 10 - 13 on your answer sheet.*

- 10** Peter N Stearns believes that the study of history helps people to avoid ..... with the society they live in.
- 11** Southgate compares societies with ..... .
- 12** Furay and Salevouris believe ignorance of history is like suffering from ..... .
- 13** One educational benefit of studying history is the ability to analyse ..... .

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## READING PASSAGE 2

*You should spend about 20 minutes on Questions 14 - 26, which are based on Reading Passage 2.*

### **Violins and very cold weather - a hypothesis**

*Lloyd Burckle and Henri D Grissino-Mayer suggest a link between the great Italian violin-makers and a mini ice-age 300 years ago*

**A** There is considerable controversy surrounding reasons why instruments made by the artisans of Cremona in Italy in the late 17th and early 18th centuries sound superior compared to modern instruments. The famous violin-making families of Amati, Stradivari, and Guarneri certainly included many highly accomplished craftsmen, and the popular belief is that the skills of these Cremonese artisans, combined with either a secret ingredient or undocumented process, gave their instruments the rich sound so highly admired by professional musicians. The nature of that secret ingredient has been the subject of conjecture for many years and is still fueling discussion. Theories have included the development and use of a specially formulated varnish applied to the wood to protect it, drying the wood in ovens, the re-use of old wood taken from castles, and soaking the wood in water to get rid of supposedly harmful chemicals before seasoning.

**B** However, no basis has been found for these possible explanations. There is no documented evidence of wood being artificially dried by violin-makers, and this process was most likely unknown to these artisans. Nor can seasoning -the practice of leaving wood for the moisture to evaporate naturally- be invoked as a possible explanation, as considerable variability exists in the lengths of seasoning periods, even among individual makers. Instruments made by the most renowned of all violin-makers, Antonio Stradivari (1644-1737), have seasoning periods as short as seven years and as long as 31 years, for example. A secret varnish has yet to be demonstrated, despite considerable scientific analyses that include ultraviolet photography, electron microscopy, ion back scattering and x-ray investigations. Finally, some have suggested that Stradivari used wood taken from castles. This theory has been discounted because analyses on numerous instruments attributed to Stradivari demonstrated ages for the wood that were contemporary with his lifetime.

**C** Violin-makers have always known that the secret of a quality instrument lies in the selection of the wood. Maple wood (*Acer* spp.) is preferred for the back, ribs, and neck of the instrument while spruce (*Picea* spp.) is often used for the top. These woods have superior acoustical and mechanical properties, having the least loss of energy through internal friction compared to other woods. For example, spruce cells are light, physiologically simple, hollow, and rigid-ideal properties for enhanced acoustic quality. Only trees that have grown in thin, poor soils at higher elevations on north-facing slopes have the dense wood grain that helps instill a superior tone in violins. Long winters and cool summers produce wood that has the slow, even growth ideal for producing quality sounding boards.

**D** Stradivari and other eminent Italian violin-makers of the 17th and early 18th centuries had neighbouring workshops in Cremona and would most probably have used the nearby high forest slopes of the southern Italian Alps for their supplies of spruce wood. A probable location is the famous "Forest of the Violins" in the Parco Naturale Paneveggio in the eastern part of Trentino, long familiar to violin-makers for its 'fir trees of resonance'.

**E** Wood with high density can, however, be found in trees growing in a variety of habitats and environmental settings in numerous higher-elevation locations throughout the world. Hence, an account of the Cremonese craftsmen's superior sound quality based solely on wood properties is insufficient. Instead, could the superior sound quality be explained by a combination of wood properties, environmental characteristics, and macroclimatic conditions? Could the wood used by the Cremonese makers have had particular physical characteristics that were perhaps time-specific? These were questions that required more thorough research.

**F** The well-documented Maunder Minimum (1645-1715) was a period characterized by a scarcity of sunspots and a reduction in overall solar activity. It coincided with a sharp dip in temperatures and a period of extremely cold weather in western Europe. Analyses of high-elevation forest areas of the European Alps reveal a long period of reduced growth rates between approximately 1625 and 1720, identified by the narrow rings visible in the cross-sections of tree samples from that era.

**G** It seems likely that the narrow tree rings that identify the Maunder Minimum in Europe played a significant role in the enhanced sound quality of instruments produced by

the Cremonese craftsmen. Narrow rings would not only strengthen the violin, but lend the wood a high degree of density-the property so important for acoustic resonance. It is surely significant

that Stradivari's working lifetime coincides exactly with this climatic period, and that to fashion the most prized and valued instruments of his 'Golden Period' (1700-1720), he would have used the only wood available to him, i.e. from trees that grew during the Maunder Minimum. The onset of the Maunder Minimum at a time when the skills of the Cremonese violin-makers reached their peak perhaps made that crucial difference in the violin's tone and brilliance. Furthermore, the conjunction of elevation, topography, soil properties and a deterioration in climate was temporally unique- climate conditions with temperatures such as those that occurred during the Maunder Minimum simply cannot and do not occur today in areas where the Cremonese makers obtained their wood.

### ***Questions 14-20***

*Reading Passage 2 has seven paragraphs, A - G.*

*Choose the correct heading for each paragraph from the list of headings below.*

*Write the correct number, i-ix, in boxes 14- 20 on your answer sheet.*

### **List of Headings**

- I Propositions that needed further investigation
- ii The most valuable instrument ever made
- iii An unrepeatable mix of professional and environmental circumstances
- iv A remarkable woodworking technique
- v An ongoing debate
- vi Choosing the materials for different parts of a violin
- vii Disproving some hypotheses
- viii A well-known source of suitable wood
- ix Evidence of some exceptional environmental conditions

**14** Paragraph A

**15** Paragraph B

**16** Paragraph C

**17** Paragraph D

18 Paragraph E

19 Paragraph F

20 Paragraph G

### Questions 21-24

*Complete the summary below.*

*Choose **ONE WORD ONLY** from the passage for each answer.*

*Write your answers in boxes 21-24 on your answer sheet.*

#### **The Cremonese violins: fine artistry-but what else?**

There is no doubt that the superior quality of the late 17th-and early 18th-century Cremonese violins is due in large part to the **21** ..... of the people who crafted them.

But it has long been felt that other factors were involved.

There has been extensive research into whether the composition of the varnish that was put on the wood could account for the unique sound of the Cremonese violins. Some people have also put forward the idea that Stradivari made his instruments from wood which had already been used in old buildings such as **22** ..... Scientific analysis has proved this not to be the case.

Other theories have focused on the violin-makers' method of using **23** ..... to dry their wood before use, or using water to remove dangerous **24** ..... from the wood. A further suggestion concerns the amount of time taken for the process known as seasoning. However, craftsmen differed in the time they allowed for this.

### **Questions 25 and 26**

*Choose **TWO** letters, **A-E**.*

*Write the correct letters in boxes 25 and 26 on your answer sheet.*

Which **TWO** of these factors are mentioned in the passage as possibly having a significant effect on the eventual quality of a violin?

- A the altitude at which a tree is grown
- B the stage of a tree's growth at which it is cut down
- C the steepness of the mountains where a tree is grown
- D the lack of rain during a tree's growing period
- E the nutritional composition of the earth in which a tree is grown



### **READING PASSAGE 3**

*You should spend about 20 minutes on Questions 27-40, which are based on Reading Passage 3 on pages 10 and 11.*

#### **What should companies do to survive?**

**A** In the world of business, where today's fashionable management theory soon becomes a stale cliché or a quaint archaism, it is essential to have a clear idea about the enduring rules of good management. The company that follows these is the company that is in the strongest position amid the uncertainties and violent upheavals of the world as we know it.

**B** A company is the sum of what its people understand and know how to do well. Value lies increasingly in creative ideas and knowledge. But ideas have value only if people share and develop them in ways that increase revenue; knowledge is useful only if people can find what they need to know. Getting intelligent people to share what is in their heads is vital, and takes more than mere money or clever software. Ideas must flow in every direction through a company-not merely from the top down. And knowledge is worth storing only if senior staff set careful rules to filter and structure it. What goes into a database determines the value of what comes out. So setting central rules and standards is key to good knowledge management.

**C** Good judgement is a key skill. Managers constantly blitzed with new information need to build in the data that matters and set aside the rest. Big-bang decisions are generally best avoided-or implemented in small incremental moves that leave room for flexibility and for altering course, if circumstances change.

**D** Customers matter-but some matter more than others. Acquiring new customers often costs more than making extra sales to existing ones. So companies must build loyalty by providing reliability and good service. Given the welter of product information reaching customers, memorable brands will grow more important. Companies need not only to widen their reach by finding new markets, but also to deepen existing relationships. They have more information than ever before about their customers, and must use this to offer their

most profitable customers special deals and to make them feel part of an elite club. Some companies even seek to 'fire' unprofitable customers by charging them higher rates than others.

**E** Like its customers, some of a company's people matter more than others, and not just at the top: managing talent is also about capturing innovative ideas from middle managers and those further down the line. At every level, managers must identify where most value lies. In some cases, a few stars will encapsulate much of a company's value; in others, teams of employees will matter more. Some companies will want to hire the talents of 'free agents' as and when they are required; others, to employ directly their best brains.

**F** Companies need to collaborate more, in alliances that allow them to outsource production or to spread risk or to enter new markets. Effective collaboration calls for trust and shared understanding, rather than the top-down, command-and-control approach of hierarchical structures. Successful collaboration also requires excellent communication, and incentives that reward sharing information and working for common goals. As costs of handling information in a company decline, new opportunities open for redefining corporate shape, and companies are becoming less hierarchical, with more ways to arrange and rearrange structure. Managers must think through from scratch which activities should be kept in-house and which outsourced, and normally a company should keep those activities it does better than its competitors.

**G** Given the pace of change, bosses need more than ever to be able to communicate persuasively through many channels, with their staff and the outside world. They must also listen: the most valuable communications will frequently be bottom-up, and the people nearest to the customer are best placed to explain what they see and hear. Managers must listen to them.

**H** Ironically, internet technologies, tools of freedom and decentralisation, call for discipline and standard processes. Only by setting standards and insisting that everyone abide by them will companies reap their potential savings. Companies need to insist on common

practices in areas such as purchasing and information technology in order to harvest real productivity gains. As a result, some aspects of centralisation will increase: a key task of top managers is to provide structures and standards, and to insist that they are observed.

**I** Once standards have been set, openness and freedom should reign. Centralisation of standards makes possible decentralisation of decision making. In addition, internet technologies increase the need for a culture of openness, to foster the sharing of knowledge and effective collaboration. Increasingly, companies will allow their suppliers and customers 'inside the machine,' as it were, by giving them extraordinary access to their databases and inner workings in order to integrate their operations and to make collaboration effective.

**J** The key to success lies much less in technical know-how than in excellent leadership to push through and build upon organisational change. At some points in a company's life, it will need a leader who can rally staff to push through the trauma of disruptive change. At other times, the right style will be the manager-as-coach, a selfless talent scout who specialises in assembling and motivating great teams. Always, the people at the top will set the tone in a firm. Their skills will determine whether it is a good company to work in and do business with.

### **Questions 27-34**

*Do the following statements agree with the views of the writer in Reading Passage 3?*

*In boxes 27-34 on your answer sheet, write*

**YES** *if the statement agrees with the views of the writer*

**NO** *if the statement contradicts the views of the writer*

**NOT GIVEN** *if it is impossible to say what the writer thinks about this*

**27** Too few companies understand how to evaluate fashionable management theories.

**28** Certain practices should always be followed when coping with unstable situations.

**29** It is important that the development of ideas should lead to improvements in the company's financial position.

**30** The structuring of a database should be decided by all its users.

**31** More training needs to be provided to help managers assess the usefulness of new information.

**32** Any major change should be introduced all at once.

**33** Companies can benefit from using different strategies with different customers.

**34** The activities which are common to all companies are best kept in-house.

**Questions 35-40**

*Reading Passage 3 has ten paragraphs, A-J.*

Which paragraph contains the following information?

*Write the correct letter, A-J, in boxes 35-40 on your answer sheet.*

**NB** *You may use any letter more than once.*

**35** examples of qualities required when co-operating with other companies

**36** examples of business activities where all staff should follow the same practices

**37** examples of alternative employment patterns within a company

**38** a basis for deciding whether a company should carry out an activity itself or ask an outside company to do it

**39** an example of how information can be shared by a company and its customers

**40** a reason why customers might continue to buy from the same companies