

## READING PASSAGE 3

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

### The Value of Literary Prizes

It is a central paradox of literary writing that true greatness only becomes apparent over time, and yet that the judgements of the future are substantially dependent on what the present chooses to publish, publicise and preserve. Viewed from the pinnacles of hindsight, literary history looks like a stately procession of great texts. A snapshot taken at any particular moment, however, reveals a far messier business: one clogged with readers, writers, commercial obligations, prejudices and misconceptions. All those enduring works that collectively form a standard by which we judge others are busily being forged or maintained within that snapshot. And somewhere close to the heart of this business lies one of the most ancient and contentious of all artistic institutions: the literary prize.

The ancient Greeks founded the idea of the literary prize. In fact, the Greek calendar was full of formal contests, most of which were either poetical, athletic or some combination of the two; the competitive singing of dithyrambs—choruses of praise to the god Dionysus—was a kind of literary sport, with groups of up to 50 men or boys moving in stately circles and declaiming verse in order to win the honour of coming first. It might look comical to our eyes, but this was art of the most serious kind. To my mind, just as sporting spectacles today offer people the thrill of watching the human body pushed toward its limits, so the quest for supremacy in words made the deepest concerns of the mind accessible to a wide audience in classical Greece.

After the classical era, the importance of prizes diminished. Later, in medieval Europe, aristocratic patrons and learned societies singled out the most promising writers and commissioned and rewarded them. It was only at the start of the 20th century that the first truly modern literary prize arrived. Alfred Nobel, the inventor of dynamite, bequeathed an immense sum, equivalent to US \$186m today, to fund five international prizes in the fields of literature, chemistry, physics, medicine and peace (prompted, it is said, by the guilt he felt when a French newspaper described him as a 'merchant of death'). In 1901, the first Nobel prizes were announced. Crucially, they were awarded not by patrons or clubs, but by impartial and authoritative committees—something as close to an absolute and enduring standard as the modern world could find. Their impact was instant, and the results were reported in over 100 newspapers worldwide. Like the newly reborn Olympic movement (founded in 1896), here was an annual competition that would deliver a stream of victory headlines.

Nobel imitators soon came thick and fast: the Goncourt and Femina prizes in France, the Pulitzer in America, and many more. However, as the years went by neither the gradual expansion of the universities nor the increasing number of awards seemed to be infusing the general reader with an overwhelming regard for great literary works. For example, in 1955, the recently formed British Crime Writers' Association started an annual prize for the best crime novel; in the same year, there was an annual award for Science Fiction. What was emerging was a complex system of patronage whose value was open to dispute. Perhaps the most familiar example of this is Britain's Booker prize (now the Man Booker). Where the Nobel had aimed at rewarding 'an ideal direction' in literature, this award intended to stimulate interest 'in serious British fiction as a whole'. The people behind it had clearly learned something from the bestseller market. The Booker would aim at catching the imagination of the press by establishing an explicitly sporting-style atmosphere: a shortlist of authors, a high-profile panel of judges, an exciting victor. Above all, though, what came to impress was the fact that by the 1990s, winners could regularly expect to shift over 500,000 copies.

Yet there is a pale glow of illusion surrounding the wilder claims made for prizes. Winners can prosper, but no victory guarantees vast sales. Most importantly, there is still no substitute for word of mouth. In 2007, *The Reluctant Fundamentalist* by Mohsin Hamid lost out to Kiran Desai's *The Inheritance of Loss* in the Man Booker, but considerably outsold it, becoming one of the best-performing literary novels of the year. It was also a far more ambitious and exciting book. Prizes grant opportunities, but their winners remain at the mercy of the reading public. And the bottom line is that this public is ill-served by much of the current marketplace of overlapping awards and those books that are manufactured to claim them—sensitive, trendy tracts of needlessly effortful prose whose elegant openings so impress some juries.

If, however, we are willing to have a little more faith in the hunger that's still out there for fresh, awakening words, there remain causes for hope. Literature should take a step towards this audience—should wind down some of the media circus, shed its timid obsession with narrow categories, and learn a little more from the worlds both of genre fiction (where much that is most exciting in contemporary writing is taking place) and grassroots prizes like the Man Booker. But we should thin out the other awards, and spend some money instead on competitions that will get writers' first books into print. We should restore proper expertise to juries, and then—and only then—open the door to science fiction, crime, thrillers, horror and everything else that's out there racking up sales.

*Questions 27–30*

*Choose the correct letter, **A**, **B**, **C** or **D**.*

*Write the correct letter in boxes 27–30 on your answer sheet.*

**27** What is the writer's main point about great literary works in the first paragraph?

- A** They often attract unfair criticism.
- B** Readers today are more interested in other types of writing.
- C** Their quality is not always immediately recognised.
- D** Publishers do not see them as commercially attractive.

**28** The writer compares Greek poetry contests to sports events because of

- A** their impact on spectators.
- B** the amount of preparation required.
- C** the fame enjoyed by top performers.
- D** the common criticisms made of them.

**29** What point is the writer making in the fourth paragraph?

- A** International awards encouraged people to write.
- B** People paid little attention to the creation of new prizes.
- C** Readers began to see the value of many different types of writing.
- D** More awards did not lead to a greater appreciation of literary merit.

**30** What are we told about the development of the Man Booker prize?

- A** The media did not take it seriously at first.
- B** It had a similar focus to that of the Nobel prize.
- C** The organisers knew how to generate interest in it.
- D** Writers were not likely to gain more from it than the honour of winning.

Questions 31–35

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

In boxes 31–35 on your answer sheet, write

<b>YES</b>	<i>if the statement agrees with the views of the writer</i>
<b>NO</b>	<i>if the statement contradicts the views of the writer</i>
<b>NOT GIVEN</b>	<i>if it is impossible to say what the writer thinks about this</i>

- 31** The founders of the Man Booker prize rejected high-profile commercialisation of its prize.
- 32** The judges of the 2007 Man Booker prize came to regret their choice of winning title.
- 33** Some authors deliberately write in an exaggerated style which they think will attract judges.
- 34** There should be a reduction in the number of literary awards.
- 35** Juries of literary awards should consist of writers rather than critics.

*Questions 36–40*

*Complete each sentence with the correct ending, **A–G**, below.*

*Write the correct letter, **A–G**, in boxes 36–40 on your answer sheet.*

- 36** In ancient Greece, prizes
- 37** In the post-classical period, literary prizes
- 38** In medieval Europe, talented writers
- 39** The first results issued by the Nobel foundation
- 40** After the establishment of the Nobel prizes, other awards

- A** were considered to be less significant than previously.
- B** were intended to be a boost to public education.
- C** were covered by the international press.
- D** were supported by wealthy people.
- E** were felt to be out of touch with their time.
- F** were presented for many different categories of literature.
- G** were presented to teams for oral performance of sacred works.

选择题 (27–30)

题号	答案	定位句 (段落)	解析 (同义改写 + 排错)
27	C	“true greatness only becomes apparent <b>over time</b> ... judgements of the future are dependent on what the present chooses to publish...” (第1段)	同义改写：真正的伟大需要时间才能显现 ⇒ “Their quality is not always immediately recognised”。排错：A “常遭不公批评” 文中未提；B “当今读者更偏好其他写作” 未述；D “出版社不看商业性” 未述。
28	A	“just as sporting spectacles today offer people the <b>thrill</b> ... so the quest for supremacy in words <b>made</b> ... <b>accessible to a wide audience</b> in classical Greece.” (第2段)	同义改写：把诗歌比赛与体育比赛类比，强调对观众/受众的影响与吸引力 ⇒ 选A。排错：B “准备量” 未比；C “明星名望” 未比；D “共同批评点” 未比。
29	D	“neither ... the increasing number of awards <b>seemed to be infusing the general reader with</b> an overwhelming regard for great literary works.” (第4段)	同义改写：奖项越来越多，但没有让大众更欣赏文学之“真正价值/功绩” ⇒ “更多奖项并未带来更大的对文学价值的欣赏”。排错：A “国际奖鼓励写作” 未述；B “人们对新奖关注少” 与原意相反；C “读者开始看到多种写作价值” 无据。
30	C	“The Booker would <b>aim at catching the imagination of the press</b> by establishing an explicitly <b>sporting-style atmosphere</b> : a shortlist... high-profile judges... an exciting victor.” (第4段)	同义改写：主办方懂得如何制造话题/吸引媒体与公众 ⇒ 选C。排错：A “媒体最初不当回事” 相反；B “与诺奖侧重相同” 文中对比显示不同；D “仅有荣誉无实际收益” 不对 (后文说90年代可卖出50万册)。

判断题 (31–35)

题号	答案	定位句 (段落)	解析
31	NO	“The Booker would aim at catching the imagination of the press... <b>high-profile</b> panel of judges... winners could expect to shift over 500,000 copies.” (第4段)	题干说“创办者拒绝高调商业化”，原文恰好说明他们主动营造高曝光和销量 ⇒ 反对，选NO。
32	NOT GIVEN	“In 2007... <i>The Reluctant Fundamentalist</i> lost out... but <b>considerably outsold</b> it...” (第5段)	文中仅比较销量与作品雄心，未提“评委后来后悔”。信息缺失 ⇒ NOT GIVEN。
33	YES	“those books that are <b>manufactured to claim</b> them—... <b>needlessly effortful prose</b> whose elegant openings <b>impress some juries</b> .” (第5段)	明确批评有些书为夺奖而被“制造”，用矫饰/夸张的文风以取悦评审 ⇒ 与题干一致，YES。
34	YES	“we should <b>thin out the other awards</b> , and spend some money instead on competitions...” (第6段)	作者主张减少奖项数量 ⇒ YES。
35	NOT GIVEN	“We should <b>restore proper expertise</b> to juries ...” (第6段)	只说应恢复专业性，未限定应由作家而非评论家组成 ⇒ NOT GIVEN。

句子配对 (36–40)

题号	答案	定位句 (段落)	解析
36	G	“the competitive singing of <b>dithyrambs—choruses of praise to the god Dionysus</b> —... groups... <b>declaiming</b> verse in order to win the honour...” (第 2 段)	古希腊诗歌竞赛是团队口头表演神祭赞歌 ⇒ G。
37	A	“ <b>After the classical era, the importance of prizes diminished.</b> ” (第 3 段)	后古典时期，奖项的重要性下降 ⇒ “被认为不如以往重要” A。
38	D	“in medieval Europe, <b>aristocratic patrons</b> and learned societies singled out... <b>commissioned and rewarded</b> them.” (第 3 段)	中世纪由贵族资助者 (富人) 支持优秀作家 ⇒ D。
39	C	“In 1901, the first Nobel prizes were announced... Their impact was instant, and the results were <b>reported in over 100 newspapers worldwide.</b> ” (第 3 段)	国际媒体广泛报道 ⇒ C。
40	F	“Nobel imitators soon came thick and fast... crime... <b>Science Fiction</b> ... a complex system of patronage...” (第 4 段)	诺奖之后，其他奖项按多种类别 (犯罪、科幻等) 颁发 ⇒ F。