**Reading Comprehension**

**Read the passage and answer the questions**

The crystal clear, blue water and the magnificent sun make the Caribbean island of Saint Maarten a favorite vacation spot, one that is popular with North Americans during their winter holidays from December through March, as well as with South Americans and Europeans from April through August. The French and Dutch settled on the island in the 1600s, and to this day, the island is divided between the two of them. The French capital is Marigot; the Dutch capital is Philipsburg. Tourists soon discover that St. Maarten has an intriguing history. Ancient artifacts found on the island date back to the Stone Age, 6,000 years ago! Tourists also learn that 1,200 years ago the Arawak Indians inhabited all the islands of the West Indies and were a peaceful people living under the guidance of their chiefs. Three hundred years after the Arawaks first arrived on St. Maarten, in the 1300s, they were defeated and forced to abandon the island by a hostile tribe of Indians originating in South America. This new tribe was called the Carib. The Caribbean Sea was named after them. Unlike the Arawaks, they had no permanent chiefs or leaders, except in times of strife. And they were extremely warlike. Worse, they were cannibalistic, eating the enemy warriors they captured. In fact, the very word *cannibal* comes from the Spanish name for the Carib Indians. The Spanish arrived in the fifteenth century and, unfortunately, they carried diseases to which the Indians had no immunity. Many Indians succumbed to common European illnesses; others died from the hard labor forced upon them.

1. One can infer from the passage that the Stone Age people lived on St. Maarten around the year

**a.** 6000 b.c.

**b.** 4000 b.c.

**c.** 800 a.d.

**d.** 1300 a.d.

2. Which of the following is NOT true about the Carib Indians?

**a.** The sea was named after them.

**b.** They were peaceful fishermen, hunters, and farmers.

**c.** They ate human flesh.

**d.** They settled after defeating the Arawak Indians

3. According to the passage, the Carib Indians were finally defeated by

**a.** sickness and forced labor.

**b.** the more aggressive Arawak tribe.

**c.** the Dutch West India Company.

**d.** the French explorers.

4. One can infer from the passage that the underlined word *strife*

means

**a.** cannibalism.

**b.** war.

**c.** duty-free.

**d.** chief.

5. According to the article, present-day St. Maarten

**a.** belongs to the Spanish.

**b.** is independent.

**c.** is shared by the French and the Dutch.

**d.** is part of the U.S. Virgin Islands.

The entire low-carbohydrate versus low-fat diet argument is so prevalent that one would think that these are the only two options available for losing weight and staying healthy. Some experts even feel that the low-carb/low-fat debate distracts us from an even more important issue—our culture’s reliance on processed and manufactured foods.

6. The paragraph best supports the statement that

**a.** experts state that not all fats are equal, so we need not reduce our intake of all fats; just those that contain partially hydrogenated oils.

**b.** important health concerns get overlooked when we focus exclusively on the low-fat versus low-carb question.

**c.** low-carbohydrate diets lead to significant and sustained weight loss.

**d.** processed foods can lead to many adverse health problems including heart disease, cancer, diabetes, and obesity.

Every year, Americans use over one billion sharp objects to administer healthcare in their homes. These sharp objects include lancets, needles, and syringes. If not disposed of in puncture-resistant containers, they can injure sanitation workers. Sharp objects should be disposed of in hard plastic or metal containers with secure lids. The containers should be clearly marked and be puncture resistant.

7. The paragraph best supports the idea that sanitation workers can be injured if they

**a.** do not place sharp objects in puncture-resistant containers.

**b.** come in contact with sharp objects that have not been placed in secure containers.

**c.** are careless with sharp objects such as lancets, needles, and syringes in their homes.

**d.** do not mark the containers they pick up with a warning that those containers contain sharp objects.

Litigation is not always the only or best way to resolve conflicts. Mediation offers an alternative approach and it is one that can be quite efficient and successful. Mediation can be faster, less expensive, and can lead to creative solutions not always possible in a court of law. Additionally, mediation focuses on mutually acceptable solutions, rather than on winning or losing.

8. This paragraph best supports the idea that

**a.** there is too much reliance on litigation in our society.

**b.** litigation is expensive, slow, and limited by its reliance on following the letter of the law.

**c.** mediation is the best way to resolve a crisis.

**d**. mediation can be an effective way to resolve conflicts.

One of the missions of the Peace Corps is to help the people of interested countries meet their need for trained men and women. People who work for the Peace Corps do so because they want to, but to keep the agency dynamic with fresh ideas, no staff member can work for the agency for more than five years.

9. The paragraph best supports the statement that Peace Corps employees

**a.** are highly intelligent people.

**b.** must train for about five years.

**c.** are hired for a limited term of employment.

**d.** have both academic and work experience.

More and more office workers telecommute from offices in their own homes. The upside of telecommuting is both greater productivity and greater flexibility. Telecommuters produce, on average, 20% more than if they were to work in an office, and their flexible schedule allows them to balance both their family and work responsibilities.

10. The paragraph best supports the statement that telecommuters

**a.** get more work done in a given time period than workers who

travel to the office.

**b.** produce a better quality work product than workers who travel

to the office.

**c.** are more flexible in their ideas than workers who travel to the

office.

**d.** would do 20% more work if they were to work in an office.

Once people wore garlic around their necks to ward off disease. Today, most Americans would scoff at the idea of wearing a necklace of garlic cloves to enhance their well-being. However, you might find a number of Americans willing to ingest capsules of pulverized garlic or other herbal supplements in the name of health.

Complementary and alternative medicine, which includes a range of practices outside of conventional medicine such as herbs, homeopathy, massage therapy, yoga, and acupuncture, hold increasing appeal for Americans. In fact, according to one estimate, 42% of Americans have used alternative therapies. In all age groups, the use of unconventional healthcare practices has steadily increased in the last 30 years, and the trend is likely to continue, although people born before 1945 are the least likely to turn to these therapies.

Why have so many patients turned to alternative therapies? Many are frustrated by the time constraints of managed care and alienated by conventional medicine’s focus on technology. Others feel that a holistic approach to healthcare better reflects their beliefs and values. Others seek therapies that relieve symptoms associated with chronic disease; symptoms that mainstream medicine cannot treat.

Some alternative therapies have even crossed the line into mainstream medicine, as scientific investigation has confirmed their safety and efficacy. For example, physicians may currently prescribe acupuncture for pain management or to control the nausea associated with chemotherapy. Additionally, many U.S. medical schools teach courses in alternative therapies, and many health insurance companies offer some alternative medicine benefits.

11. What is the main idea of this passage?

**a.** Alternative medicine is now a big business in the United States

with more Americans seeking it out than ever before.

**b.** Today, it is not unusual for mainstream doctors to incorporate

alternative therapies into their practice.

**c.** Over the last few decades, alternative medicine has become

more popular, accepted, and practiced in the United States.

**d.** People are tired of conventional medicine’s focus on technology.

12. According to the passage, which practice would not be defined as alternative medicine?

**a.** pain management

**b.** acupuncture

**c.** taking herbal garlic supplements

**d.** massage therapy

13. Based on the information given, what kind of person would be least likely to seek out alternative medical treatment?

**a.** a senior citizen suffering from chemotherapy-induced nausea

**b.** a young woman suffering from chronic fatigue syndrome

**c.** a 45-year-old man who believes that his body and mind must be treated together.

**d.** a 25-year-old track star with chronic back pain

14. The passage indicates that alternative treatments are increasingly being used by mainstream medical professionals because

**a.** more and more Americans are demanding alternative therapies.

**b.** healthcare insurance companies are now providing some benefits for alternative medical treatments.

**c.** they are frustrated by the time constraints of managed care.

**d.** scientific studies are becoming available that prove their effectiveness and safety.