

SECTION 5: READING COMPREHENSION

Time -- 20 minutes

30 Questions (216 – 245)

NAME: _____

SCHOOL: _____

SIMULATED EXAM – SET B

Directions: Answer the questions below based on the information in the accompanying passages and compositions and then darken the corresponding oval on the answer sheet.

PASSAGE 1

Tell me not in mournful numbers,
Life is but an empty dream –
For the soul is dead that slumbers,
And things are not what they seem.

Life is real! Life is earnest!
And the grave is not its goal,
Dust thou art, to dust returnest,
Was not spoken of the soul.

Not enjoyment, and not sorrow,
Is our destined end or way;
But to act, that each tomorrow
Find us farther than today.

Art is long, and Time is fleeting,
And our hearts, though stout and brave,
Still like muffled drums are beating
Funeral marches to the grave.

In the world's broad field of battle,
In the bivouac of Life,
Be not like dumb, driven cattle!
Be a hero in the strife!

Trust no Future, howe'er pleasant!
Let the dead Past bury its dead!
Act–act in the living Present!
Heart within, and God overhead!

Lives of great men all remind us
We can make our lives sublime,
And, departing leave behind us
Footprints on the sands of time;

Footprints, that perhaps another,
Sailing o'er life's solemn main,
A forlorn and shipwrecked brother,
Seeing, shall take heart again.

Let us, then, be up and doing,
With a heart for any fate;
Still us, then, be up and doing,
With a heart for any fate;
Still achieving, still pursuing,
Learn to labor and to wait.

– *A Psalm of Life*, Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

216. Which of the following best summarizes the main point of the selection?

- A. Forget the past and live the present.
- B. Not all things are what they seem.
- C. The dead is remembered for what he left behind.
- D. Live life to the fullest.

217. What literary device can be seen in the poem?

- A. personification
B. metaphor

C. onomatopoeia
D. irony

218. What does the author mean in the 5th stanza?
A. Anyone, young and old, can be a hero.
B. Live to survive.
C. Life is full of struggles and conflicts.
D. Do not be afraid of challenges and struggles.

219. What does the author state in the first stanza?
A. Life is not measured by quantity but by quality.
B. Life lasts as long as one wants it to.
C. Live your dreams to be able to enjoy life.
D. Dreams are framework which guide us in living life.

220. According to the poem, how must humans live their lives?
A. They must live with hope that the next day will be better than the previous one.
B. They must live in constant struggle, trying to outdo others in order to survive.
C. They must always keep in mind that life is the survival of the fittest and the bravest.
D. They must remember that they are living on borrowed time.

221. How does the author view great men?
A. people who have set the highest standards of living
B. people who have believed that life is a race
C. role models for people who have yet to live their lives
D. role models for people who make the best out of their lives

PASSAGE 2

Some people believe that a symphony conductor serves no significant purpose but simply stands upon a podium, madly waving a baton, while the orchestra does the real and important work. This opinion is not valid. Vital to the orchestra, the conductor coordinates the various independent actions of the performers and interprets the work of each composer whose music is performed.

Fundamentally, a conductor is a director, responsible for coordinating the activities of often more than one hundred musicians, not only during a concert, but also at the many rehearsals that usually precede a performance. The conductor is the only figure visible to the entire orchestra. Standing in a prominent place, the conductor provides a single focus for all the musicians. The conductor indicates the start of a piece with a "downbeat," ends it with a "cutoff," and acts as timekeeper in between, indicating the beat for the orchestra. Through an intricate kind of "sign language," a conductor also communicates to the players changes in dynamics (volume) and tempo (speed), and he or she often signals musicians when to begin playing by providing them with special "cues," such as nodding the head or pointing the baton. Thus, the conductor makes the orchestra work together as one; without the conductor, confusion and discord would reign.

Second, and artistically more important, a symphony orchestra conductor must interpret each written piece, or "score," of music. Since it would be impossible for a composer to indicate on paper exactly how fast or loud a piece should be played, directions such as "mezzo-forte" (medium-loud) and "lento" (slowly) are provided, and the interpretation is left up to the individual conductor. The conductor may feel that a certain woodwind passage, for

instance, should be emphasized or that the third movement of a symphony should lead directly into the fourth without the traditional pause between movements.

Sometimes conductors have taken even greater responsibility for the presentation of a piece of music. Some “liberal” conductors have altered a composer’s choice of instruments or have changed the originally intended size of the orchestra. For instance, Sir Thomas Beecham, the British conductor, added trombones, cymbals, and even a triangle to the instruments that Handel’s “Hallelujah Chorus” traditionally requires. Although many conductors do not go this far, all are required to interpret the musical score, a responsibility that determines the overall impression created by the orchestra.

A conductor’s job is complex, and his or her contributions to the music played are many. After all, coordinating many different performers to produce a single interpretation of music is a demanding responsibility, one that is of primary importance to the orchestra. In a sense, the conductor is the orchestra’s brain, its mastermind.

– Adam R. Sexton

222. The author’s main purpose in this passage is to

- A. criticize a symphony orchestra conductor.
- B. explain the vital role a conductor plays in an orchestra.
- C. define what a conductor is.
- D. discuss how a conductor does his job.

223. According to the passage, which of the following is NOT true about the conductor?

- A. The conductor makes the orchestra work together as one.
- B. The conductor is required to interpret the musical score.
- C. The conductor acts as the manager of the whole orchestra.
- D. The conductor is responsible for the overall impression of the audience.

224. The conductor acts as the following EXCEPT

- A. as an interpreter.
- B. as a producer.
- C. as a timekeeper.
- D. as a director.

225. What would happen without the conductor?

- A. The audience would be more appreciative of the music interpreted by the orchestra.
- B. The music would be played as it is.
- C. All the musicians would be focused on the instruments they’re playing.
- D. There would be confusion and discord in the orchestra.

226. The conductor’s roles in an orchestra can be summarized as

- A. the composer.
- B. the orchestra’s brain.
- C. the manager.
- D. the heart of the whole orchestra.

227. The best title for the passage is

- A. The Conductor’s World
- B. The Significance of Conductors
- C. The Art of Conducting
- D. The Mastermind of the Orchestra

PASSAGE 3

Man's youth is a wonderful thing; it is so full of anguish and of magic and he never comes to know it as it is, until it has gone from him forever. It is the thing he cannot bear to lose, it is the thing whose passing he watches with infinite sorrow and regret, it is the thing whose loss he must lament forever, and it is the thing whose loss he really welcomes with a sad and secret joy, the thing he would never willingly relive again, could not be restored to him by any magic.

Why is this? The reason is that the strange and bitter miracle of life is nowhere else so evident as in our youth. And what is the essence of that strange and bitter miracle of life which we feel so poignantly, so unutterably, with such bitter pain and joy, when we are young? It is this: that being rich, we are so poor; that being mighty, we can yet have nothing; that seeing, breathing, smelling, tasting all around us the impossible wealth and glory of this earth, feeling with an intolerable certitude that the whole structure of the enchanted life – the most fortunate, wealthy, good, and happy life that any man has ever known – is ours – is ours at once, immediately and forever, the moment that we choose to take a step, or stretch a hand or say a word – we yet know that we can really keep, hold, take, and possess forever – nothing. All passes; nothing lasts; the moment that we put our hand upon it, it melts away like smoke, is gone forever, and the snake is eating at our heart again; we see then what we are and what our lives must come to.

A young man is so strong, so mad, so certain, and so lost. He has everything and he is able to use nothing. He hurls the great shoulder of his strength forever against phantasmal barriers, he is a wave whose power explodes in lost mid-oceans under timeless skies, he reaches out to grip a fume of painted smoke; he wants all, feels thirst and power for everything, and finally gets nothing. In the end, he is destroyed by his own wealth. Thoughtless of money or the accumulation of material possessions, he is nonetheless defeated in the end by his own greed – a greed that makes the avarice of King Midas paltry by comparison.

And that is the reason why, when youth is gone, every man will look back upon that period of his life with infinite sorrow and regret. It is the bitter sorrow and regret of a man who knows that once he had a great treasure and got nothing from it, of a man who knows that he had strength enough for everything and never used it.

– *Man's Youth*, Thomas Wolfe

228. Which of the following best summarizes the main point of the selection?

- A. Man's vanity makes him seem ageless.
- B. Man does everything he can to preserve his youth.
- C. Man takes for granted everything he presently has.
- D. All men look back upon his youth with sorrow and regret.

229. Which of the following is NOT cited in the passage?

- A. Man cannot bear to lose his youth.
- B. Man regrets living in this world.
- C. Man doesn't know the wonder of things until they have gone from him.
- D. Youth, once gone, couldn't be restored to man.

230. What is the reason why man looks back upon his youth with infinite sorrow and regret?

- A. He has lived chasing things for their glamor and promised comfort, overlooking the real important ones.
- B. He hasn't done a lot of things.
- C. He realizes he should have chosen a different path to take and a different lead to follow.
- D. He has neglected his health.

231. According to the passage, which of the following is true?

- A. Man despises youth and beauty.
- B. Man learns the secret of youth as he gets older.

- C. Man has everything he can possibly ask for.
D. Man realizes late in life what he is and what his life must come to.

232. As it is used in the passage, the term *avarice* can best be described as
A. insane belief. C. insatiable greed for riches.
B. foolishness. D. touch of gold.

233. In the passage, *that being rich, we are so poor; that being mighty, we can yet have nothing* means
A. that we can't really be happy and satisfied with material wealth and power.
B. that we might have the power over some people, but not over everything.
C. that we can't have everything in life.
D. that we should lead a humble life.

PASSAGE 4

The night was dark, for the moon was young
And the stars were asleep and rare;
The clouds were thick, yet Youth went out
To see his Maiden Fair.

"Dear One," – he pleaded as he knelt
Before her feet, in tears,
"My love is true; why have you kept
Me waiting all these years?"

The maiden looked at him, unmoved,
It seemed, and whispered low:
"Persistent Youth, you have to prove
By deeds your love is true."

"There's not a thing I would not do
For you, Beloved," said he.
"Then go," said she, "to your mother dear,
And bring her heart to me."

Without another word, Youth left
And went to his mother dear,
And ope'd her breast and took her heart...
He did not shed a tear.

Then back to his Maiden fair he ran,
Unmindful of the rain,
But his feet slipped and he fell down
And loud he groaned with pain.

Still in his hand he held the prize
That would win his Maiden's hand:
And he thought of his Mother dear...
So kind, so sweet, so fond.

And then he heard a voice, not from
His lips, but all apart:
“Get up,” it said, “were you hurt, Child?”
It was his mother’s heart.

- *Ballad of a Mother's Heart*, Jose La Villa Tierra

234. The youth could best be described as

 - A. someone who would go to any length to achieve his wants, unmindful of whom he hurts.
 - B. someone who would do anything to please those around him.
 - C. someone ashamed of his parents.
 - D. someone who longed to be loved by everyone whom he believed mattered most.

235. The *maiden* in the poem best represents

 - A. peer pressure.
 - B. distractions in today's society.
 - C. fame and fortune.
 - D. human's desire and wants.

236. The youth didn't shed a tear for his mother because
- A. he thought what he did was only natural.
 - B. he believed he hadn't killed his mother.
 - C. he was unable to feel any emotion.
 - D. he was only thinking about the maiden's reward for him.
237. What does the last stanza express?
- A. a mother's selfless love for her child
 - B. a mother's concern for her child
 - C. a mother's gentle admonition
 - D. a mother's hope
238. Based on the poem, which of the following is not true?
- A. The youth believed the maiden's hand was worth his mother's heart.
 - B. The maiden bore grudges against the youth's mother.
 - C. The youth has been deceived into believing his deed would be justified in the end.
 - D. The maiden was a vain one for demanding another's life in exchange for her hand.
239. The whole poem relates
- A. how youth sacrifices everything else for his wants.
 - B. how peer pressure affects one's way of thinking.
 - C. how forgiving and how great the love of a mother is.
 - D. how youth is easily influenced by different factors around him.

PASSAGE 5

The Battle of Chancellorsville, one of the most famous battles of the Civil War, took place in Virginia in the spring of 1863. For months, the two armies had been staked out on opposite banks of a narrow river. The Confederate troops were led by perhaps the most revered military tactician in American history, General Robert E. Lee. The Union soldiers were led by "Fighting" Joe Hooker.

In appearance, personality, and lifestyle, these men were nearly perfect opposites. Lee, an older man in poor health with a gray beard, had a somber, measured demeanor. Hooker was a blond, strapping young man whose vanity over his appearance was but one aspect of his egotism. Whereas Lee was devout and principled, Hooker was known for his rollicking enjoyment of both women and whiskey.

Despite the fact that the Confederacy had won the last four major battles and the Union soldiers were famished, exhausted, and demoralized, Hooker proclaimed, "My plans are perfect. And when I start to carry them out, may God have mercy on Bobby Lee, for I shall have none." Why, aside from a propensity for narcissism, was Hooker so confident?

Hooker had used spies, analysts, and even hot air balloons to compile a vast amount of intelligence about Lee's army. He had discerned, for example, that Lee had only 61,000 men to Hooker's own 134,000. Buoyed by his superior numbers, Hooker covertly moved 70,000 of his men fifteen miles up and across the river, and then ordered them to sneak back down to position themselves behind Lee's army. In effect, Hooker had cut off the Confederate soldiers in front and behind. They were trapped. Satisfied with his advantage, Hooker became convinced that Lee's only option was to retreat to Richmond, thus assuring a Union victory.

Yet Lee, despite his disadvantages of both numbers and position, did not retreat. Instead, he moved his troops into position to attack. Union soldiers who tried to warn Hooker that Lee was on the offensive were dismissed as cowards. Having become convinced that Lee had no choice but to retreat, Hooker began to ignore reality. When Lee's army attacked the Union soldiers at 5:00 p.m., they were eating supper, completely unprepared for battle. They abandoned their rifles and fled as Lee's troops came shrieking out of the brush, bayonets drawn. Against all odds, Lee won the Battle of Chancellorsville, and Hooker's forces withdrew in defeat.

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240. Why is the direct quotation, "My plans are perfect. And when I start to carry them out, may God have mercy on Bobby Lee, for I shall have none" important for the selection?
- A. It demonstrates Hooker's belief in the infallibility of his plans.
 - B. It serves as a foreshadowing of Hooker's defeat because of his overconfidence.
 - C. It portrays Hooker as an insecure general who was hungry for victory.
 - D. It shows that Hooker is also a believer of God.
241. Is there a need to point out the differences of Lee and Hooker?
- A. Yes, because it shows that any person, no matter what his beliefs and values are, can be in a good position for power.
 - B. No, because it only lengthens the text without adding value to the narrative.
 - C. Yes, because it implies that Lee is a better man than Hooker in so many ways.
 - D. There was no mention of the differences of Lee and Hooker.
242. The word *buoyed* in the selection most nearly means
- A. confused
 - B. heartened
 - C. improved
 - D. braced
243. Based on the passage, what may have caused Hooker's defeat?
- A. gluttony
 - B. overconfidence
 - C. insecurity
 - D. faulty information
244. Hooker's advantages going into the Battle of Chancellorsville include _____.
- A. position and numbers
 - B. position and strategy
 - C. numbers and strategy
 - D. numbers only
245. What does the word *propensity* in paragraph 3 mean?
- A. inclination
 - B. weakness
 - C. obsession
 - D. skill