After becoming president of Purdue University in 2013, Mitch Daniels asked the faculty to prove that their students have actually achieved one of higher education's most important goals: critical thinking skills. Two years before, a nationwide study of college graduates had shown that more than a third had made no \_\_26\_\_ gains in such mental abilities during their school years. Mr. Daniels needed to \_\_27\_\_ the high cost of attending Purdue to its students and their families. After all, the percentage of Americans who say a college degree is "very important" has fallen \_\_28\_\_ in the last 5-6 years.

Purdue now has a pilot test to assess students' critical thinking skills. Yet like many college teachers around the U.S., the faculty remain \_\_29\_\_ that their work as educators can be measured by a "learning \_\_30\_\_" such as a graduate's ability to investigate and reason. However, the professors need not worry so much. The results of a recent experiment showed that professors can use \_\_31\_\_ metrics to measure how well students do in three key areas: critical thinking, written communication, and quantitative literacy.

Despite the success of the experiment, the actual results are worrisome, and mostly \_\_32\_\_ earlier studies. The organizers of the experiment concluded that far fewer students were achieving at high levels on critical thinking than they were doing for written communication or quantitative literacy. And that conclusion is based only on students nearing graduation.

American universities, despite their global \_\_33\_\_ for excellence in teaching, have only begun to demonstrate what they can produce in real-world learning. Knowledge-based degrees are still important, but employers are \_\_34\_\_ advanced thinking skills from college graduates. If the intellectual worth of a college degree can be \_\_35\_\_ measured, more people will seek higher education—and come out better thinkers.

A. accurately

B. confirm

C. demanding

D. doubtful

E. drastically

F. justify

G. monopolized

H. outcome

I. predominance

J. presuming

K. reputation

L. significant

M. signify

N. simultaneously

O. standardized

The Price of Oil and the Price of Carbon

A) Fossil fuel prices are likely to stay "low for long". Notwithstanding important recent progress in developing renewable fuel sources, low fossil fuel prices could discourage further innovation in, and adoption of, cleaner energy technologies. The result would be higher emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases.

B) Policymakers should not allow low energy prices to derail the clean energy transition. Action to restore appropriate price incentives, notably through corrective carbon pricing, is urgently needed to lower the risk of irreversible and potentially devastating effects of climate change. That approach also offers fiscal benefits.

C) Oil prices have dropped by over 60% since June 2014. A commonly held view in the oil industry is that "the best cure for low oil prices is low oil prices". The reasoning behind this saying is that low oil prices discourage investment in new production capacity, eventually shifting the oil supply curve backward and bringing prices back up as existing oil fields—which can be tapped at relatively low marginal cost—are depleted. In fact, in line with past experience, capital expenditure in the oil sector has dropped sharply in many producing countries, including the United States. The dynamic adjustment to low oil prices may, however, be different this time around.

D) Oil prices are expected to remain lower for longer. The advent of new technologies has added about 4.2 million barrels per day to the crude oil market, contributing to a global over-supply. In addition, other factors are putting downward pressure on oil prices: change in the strategic behavior of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries, the projected increase in Iranian exports, the scaling-down of global demand (especially from emerging markets), the long-term drop in petroleum consumption in the United States, and some displacement of oil by substitutes. These likely persistent forces, like the growth of shale (页岩) oil, point to a "low for long" scenario. Futures markets, which show only a modest recovery of prices to around $60 a barrel by 2019, support this view.

E) Natural gas and coal—also fossil fuels—have similarly seen price declines that look to be long-lived. Coal and natural gas are mainly used for electricity generation, whereas oil is used mostly to power transportation, yet the prices of all these energy sources are linked. The North American shale gas boom has resulted in record low prices there. The recent discovery of the giant Zohr gas field off the Egyptian coast will eventually have impact on pricing in the Mediterranean region and Europe, and there is significant development potential in many other places, notably Argentina. Coal prices also are low, owing to over-supply and the scaling-down of demand, especially from China, which bums half of the world's coal.

F) Technological innovations have unleashed the power of renewables such as wind, hydro, solar, and geothermal (地热). Even Africa and the Middle East, home to economies that are heavily dependent on fossil fuel exports, have enormous potential to develop renewables. For example, the United Arab Emirates has endorsed an ambitious target to draw 24% of its primary energy consumption from renewable sources by 2021.

G) Progress in the development of renewables could be fragile, however, if fossil fuel prices remain low for long. Renewables account for only a small share of global primary energy consumption, which is still dominated by fossil fuels—30% each for coal and oil, 25% for natural gas. But renewable energy will have to displace fossil fuels to a much greater extent in the future to avoid unacceptable climate risks.

H) Unfortunately, the current low prices for oil, gas, and coal may provide little incentive for research to find even cheaper substitutes for those fuels. There is strong evidence that both innovation and adoption of cleaner technology are strongly encouraged by higher fossil fuel prices. The same is true for new technologies for alleviating fossil fuel emissions.

I) The current low fossil fuel price environment will thus certainly delay the energy transition from fossil fuel to clean energy sources. Unless renewables become cheap enough that substantial carbon deposits are left underground for a very long time, if not forever, the planet will likely be exposed to potentially catastrophic climate risks.

J) Some climate impacts may already be discernible. For example, the United Nations Children's Fund estimates that some 11 million children in Africa face hunger, disease, and water shortages as a result of the strongest El Nino (厄尔尼诺) weather phenomenon in decades. Many scientists believe that El Nino events, caused by warming in the Pacific, are becoming more intense as a result of climate change.

K) Nations from around the world have gathered in Paris for the United Nations Climate Change Conference, COP 21, with the goal of a universal and potentially legally-binding agreement on reducing greenhouse gas emissions. We need very broad participation to fully address the global tragedy that results when countries fail to take into account the negative impact of their carbon emissions on the rest of the world. Moreover, non-participation by nations, if sufficiently widespread, can undermine the political will of participating countries to act.

L) The nations participating at COP 21 are focusing on quantitative emissions-reduction commitments. Economic reasoning shows that the least expensive way for each country is to put a price on carbon emissions. The reason is that when carbon is priced, those emissions reductions that are least costly to implement will happen first. The International Monetary Fund calculates that countries can generate substantial fiscal revenues by eliminating fossil fuel subsidies and levying carbon charges that capture the domestic damage caused by emissions. A tax on upstream carbon sources is one easy way to put a price on carbon emissions, although some countries may wish to use other methods, such as emissions trading schemes. In order to maximize global welfare, every country's carbon pricing should reflect not only the purely domestic damage from emissions, but also the damage to foreign countries.

M) Setting the right carbon price will therefore efficiently align the costs paid by carbon users with the true social opportunity cost of using carbon. By raising relative demand for clean energy sources, a carbon price would also help align the market return to clean-energy innovation with its social return, spurring the refinement of existing technologies and the development of new ones. And it would raise the demand for technologies such as carbon capture and storage, spurring their further development. If not corrected by the appropriate carbon price, low fossil fuel prices are not accurately signaling to markets the true social profitability of clean energy. While alternative estimates of the damage from carbon emissions differ, and it's especially hard to reckon the likely costs of possible catastrophic climate events, most estimates suggest substantial negative effects.

N) Direct subsidies to research and development have been adopted by some governments but are a poor substitute for a carbon price: they do only part of the job, leaving in place market incentives to over-use fossil fuels and thereby add to the stock of atmospheric greenhouse gases without regard to the collateral (附带的) costs.

O) The hope is that the success of COP 21 opens the door to future international agreement on carbon prices. Agreement on an international carbon-price floor would be a good starting point in that process. Failure to address comprehensively the problem of greenhouse gas emissions, however, exposes all generations, present and future, to incalculable risks.

36.A number of factors are driving down the global oil prices not just for now but in the foreseeable future.

37.Pricing carbon proves the most economical way to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

38.It is estimated that extreme weather conditions have endangered the lives of millions of African children.

39.The prices of coal are low as a result of over-supply and decreasing demand.

40.Higher fossil fuel prices prove to be conducive to innovation and application of cleaner technology.

41.If fossil fuel prices remain low for a long time, it may lead to higher emissions of greenhouse gases.

42.Fossil fuels remain the major source of primary energy consumption in today's world.

43.Even major fossil exporting countries have great potential to develop renewable energies.

44.Greenhouse gas emissions, if not properly dealt with, will pose endless risks for mankind.

45.It is urgent for governments to increase the cost of using fossil fuels to an appropriate level to lessen the catastrophic effects of climate change.

Passage One

Questions 46 to 50 are based on the following passage.

Open data sharers are still in the minority in many fields. Although many researchers broadly agree that public access to raw data would accelerate science, most are reluctant to post the results of their own labors online.

Some communities have agreed to share online—geneticists, for example, post DNA sequences at the GenBank repository (库) , and astronomers are accustomed to accessing images of galaxies and stars from, say, the Sloan Digital Sky Survey, a telescope that has observed some 500 million objects—but these remain the exception, not the rule. Historically, scientists have objected to sharing for many reasons: it is a lot of work; until recently, good databases did not exist; grant funders were not pushing for sharing; it has been difficult to agree on standards for formatting data; and there is no agreed way to assign credit for data.

But the barriers are disappearing, in part because journals and funding agencies worldwide are encouraging scientists to make their data public. Last year, the Royal Society in London said in its report that scientists need to "shift away from a research culture where data is viewed as a private preserve". Funding agencies note that data paid for with public money should be public information, and the scientific community is recognizing that data can now be shared digitally in ways that were not possible before. To match the growing demand, services are springing up to make it easier to publish research products online and enable other researchers to discover and cite them.

Although calls to share data often concentrate on the moral advantages of sharing, the practice is not purely altruistic (利他的). Researchers who share get plenty of personal benefits, including more connections with colleagues, improved visibility and increased citations. The most successful sharers—those whose data are downloaded and cited the most often---get noticed, and their work gets used. For example, one of the most popular data sets on multidisciplinary repository Dryad is about wood density around the world; it has been downloaded 5,700 times. Co-author Amy Zanne thinks that users probably range from climate-change researchers wanting to estimate how much carbon is stored in biomass, to foresters looking for information on different grades of timber. "I'd much prefer to have my data used by the maximum number of people to ask their own questions," she says. "It's important to allow readers and reviewers to see exactly how you arrive at your results. Publishing data and code allows your science to be reproducible."

Even people whose data are less popular can benefit. By making the effort to organize and label files so others can understand them, scientists become more organized and better disciplined themselves, thus avoiding confusion later on.

46. What do many researchers generally accept?

A. It is imperative to protect scientists' patents.

B. Repositories are essential to scientific research.

C. Open data sharing is most important to medical science.

D. Open data sharing is conducive to scientific advancement.

47. What is the attitude of most researchers towards making their own data public?

A. Opposed.

B. Ambiguous.

C. Liberal.

D. Neutral.

48. According to the passage, what might hinder open data sharing?

A. The fear of massive copying.

B. The lack of a research culture.

C. The belief that research data is private intellectual property.

D. The concern that certain agencies may make a profit out of it.

49. What helps lift some of the barriers to open data sharing?

A. The ever-growing demand for big data.

B. The advancement of digital technology.

C. The changing attitude of journals and funders.

D. The trend of social and economic development.

50. Dryad serves as an example to show how open data sharing \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

A. is becoming increasingly popular

B. benefits sharers and users alike

C. makes researchers successful

D. saves both money and labor

Passage Two

Questions 51 to 55 are based on the following passage.

Macy's reported its sales plunged 5.2% in November and December at stores open more than a year, a disappointing holiday season performance that capped a difficult year for a department store chain facing wide-ranging challenges. Its flagship stores in major U.S. cities depend heavily on international tourist spending, which shrank at many retailers due to a strong dollar. Meanwhile, Macy's has simply struggled to lure consumers who are more interested in spending on travel or dining out than on new clothes or accessories.

The company blamed much of the poor performance in November and December on unseasonably warm weather. "About 80% of our company's year-over-year declines in comparable sales can be attributed to shortfalls (短缺) in cold-weather goods," said chief executive Teny Lundgren in a press release. This prompted the company to cut its forecasts for the full fourth quarter.

However, it's clear that Macy's believes its troubles run deeper than a temporary aberration (偏离) off the thermometer. The retail giant said the poor financial performance this year has pushed it to begin implementing $400 million in cost-cutting measures. The company pledged to cut 600 back-office positions, though some 150 workers in those roles would be reassigned to other jobs. It also plans to offer "voluntary separation" packages to 165 senior executives. It will slash staffing at its fleet of 770 stores, a move affecting some 3,000 employees.

The retailer also announced the locations of 36 stores it will close in early 2016. The company had previously announced the planned closures, but had not said which locations would be affected. None of the chain's stores in the Washington metropolitan area are to be closed.

Macy's has been moving aggressively to try to remake itself for a new era of shopping. It has plans to open more locations of Macy's Backstage, a newly-developed off-price concept which might help it better compete with ambitious T. J. Maxx. It's also pushing ahead in 2016 with an expansion of Bluemercury, the beauty chain it bought last year. At a time when young beauty shoppers are often turning to Sephora or Ulta instead of department store beauty counters, Macy's hopes Bluemercury will help strengthen its position in the category.

One relative bright spot for Macy's during the holiday season was the online channel, where it rang up "double-digit" increases in sales and a 25% increase in the number of orders it filled. That relative strength would be consistent with what was seen in the wilder retail industry during the early part of the holiday season. While Thanksgiving, Black Friday and Cyber Monday all saw record spending online, in-store sales plunged over the holiday weekend.

51. What does the author say about the shrinking spending of international tourists in the U.S.?

A. It is attributable to the rising value of the U.S. dollar.

B. It is a direct result of the global economic recession.

C. It reflects a shift of their interest in consumer goods.

D. It poses a potential threat to the retail business in the U.S.

52. What does Macy's believe about its problems?

A. They can be solved with better management.

B. They cannot be attributed to weather only.

C. They are not as serious in its online stores.

D. They call for increased investments.

53. In order to cut costs, Macy's decided to \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

A. cut the salary of senior executives

B. relocate some of its chain stores

C. adjust its promotion strategies

D. reduce the size of its staff

54. Why does Macy's plan to expand Bluemercury in 2016?

A. To experiment on its new business concept.

B. To focus more on beauty products than clothing.

C. To promote sales of its products by lowering prices.

D. To be more competitive in sales of beauty products.

55. What can we learn about Macy's during the holiday season?

A. Sales dropped sharply in its physical stores.

B. Its retail sales exceeded those of T. J. Maxx.

C. It helped Bluemercury establish its position worldwide.

D. It filled its stores with abundant supply of merchandise.

Half of your brain stays alert and prepared for danger when you sleep in a new place, a study has revealed. This phenomenon is often \_\_26\_\_ to as the "first-night-effect". Researchers from Brown University found that a network in the left hemisphere of the brain "remained more active" than the network in the right side of the brain. Playing sounds into the right ears (stimulating the left hemisphere) of \_\_27\_\_ was more likely to wake them up than if the noises were played into their left ear.

It was \_\_28\_\_ observed that the left side of the brain was more active during deep sleep. When the researchers repeated the laboratory experiment on the second and third nights they found the left hemisphere could not be stimulated in the same way during deep sleep. The researchers explained that the study demonstrated when we are in a \_\_29\_\_ environment the brain partly remains alert so that humans can defend themselves against any \_\_30\_\_ danger.

The researchers believe this is the first time that the "first-night-effect" of different brain states has been \_\_31\_\_ in humans. It isn't, however, the first time it has ever been seen. Some animal \_\_32\_\_ also display this phenomenon. For example, dolphins, as well as other \_\_33\_\_ animals, shut down one hemisphere of the brain when they go to sleep. A previous study noted that dolphins always \_\_34\_\_ control their breathing. Without keeping the brain active while sleeping, they would probably drown. But, as the human study suggest, another reason for dolphins keeping their eyes open during sleep is that they can look out for \_\_35\_\_ while asleep. It also keeps their physiological processes working.

A. classified

B. consciously

C. dramatically

D. exotic

E. identified

F. inherent

G. marine

H. novel

I. potential

J. predators

K. referred

L. species

M. specifically

N. varieties

O. volunteers

Elite Math Competitions Struggle to Diversify Their Talent Pool

A) Interest in elite high school math competitions has grown in recent years, and in light of last summer's U.S. win at the International Math Olympiad (IMO)—the first for an American team in more than two decades—the trend is likely to continue.

B) But will such contests, which are overwhelmingly dominated by Asian and white students from middle-class and affluent families, become any more diverse? Many social and cultural factors play roles in determining which promising students get on the path toward international math recognition. But efforts are in place to expose more black, Hispanic, and low-income students to advanced math, in the hope that the demographic pool of high-level contenders will eventually begin to shift and become less exclusive.

C) "The challenge is if certain types of people are doing something, it's difficult for other people to break into it," said Po-Shen Loh, the head coach of last year's winning U.S. Math Olympiad team. Participation grows through friends and networks and if "you realize that's how they're growing, you can start to take action" and bring in other students, he said.

D) Most of the training for advanced-math competitions happens outside the confines of the normal school day. Students attend after-school clubs, summer camps, online forums and classes, and university-based "math circles", to prepare for the competitions.

E) One of the largest feeders for high school math competitions—including those that eventually lead to the IMO—is a middle school program called Math Counts. About 100,000 students around the country participate in the program's competition series, which culminates in a national game-show-style contest held each May. The most recent one took place last week in Washington, D.C. Students join a team through their schools, which provide a volunteer coach and pay a nominal fee to send students to regional and state competitions. The 224 students who make it to the national competition get an all-expenses- paid trip.

F) Nearly all members of last year's winning U.S. IMO team took part in Math Counts as middle school students, as did Loh, the coach. "Middle school is an important age because students have enough math capability to solve advanced problems, but they haven't really decided what they want to do with their lives," said Loh. "They often get hooked then."

G) Another influential feeder for advanced-math students is an online school called Art of Problem Solving, which began about 13 years ago and now has 15,000 users. Students use forums to chat, play games, and solve problems together at no cost, or they can pay a few hundred dollars to take courses with trained teachers. According to Richard Rusczyk, the company founder, the six U.S. team members who competed at the IMO last year collectively took more than 40 courses on the site. Parents of advanced- math students and Math Counts coaches say the children are on the website constantly.

H) There are also dozens of summer camps—many attached to universities—that aim to prepare elite math students. Some are pricey---a three-week intensive program can cost $4,500 or more—but most offer scholarships. The Math Olympiad Summer Training Program is a three-week math camp held by the Mathematical Association of America that leads straight to the international championship and is free for those who make it. Only about 50 students are invited based on their performance on written tests and at the USA Math Olympiad.

I) Students in university towns may also have access to another lever for involvement in accelerated math: math circles. In these groups, which came out of an Eastern European tradition of developing young talent, professors teach promising K-12 students advanced mathematics for several hours after school or on weekends. The Los Angeles Math Circle, held at the University of California, Los Angeles, began in 2007 with 20 students and now has more than 250. "These math circles cost nothing, or they're very cheap for students to get involved in, but you have to know about them," said Rusczyk. "Most people would love to get students from more underserved populations, but they just can't get them in the door. Part of it is communication; part of it is transportation."

J) It's no secret in the advanced-math community that diversity is a problem. According to Mark Saul, the director of competitions for the Mathematical Association of America, not a single African-American or Hispanic student—and only a handful of girls—has ever made it to the Math Olympiad team in its 50 years of existence. Many schools simply don't prioritize academic competitions. "Do you know who we have to beat?" asked Saul. "The football team, the basketball team—that's our competition for resources, student time, attention, school dollars, parent efforts, school enthusiasm."

K) Teachers in low-income urban and rural areas with no history of participating in math competitions may not know about advanced-math opportunities like Math Counts—and those who do may not have support or feel trained to lead them.

L) But there are initiatives in place to try to get more underrepresented students involved in accelerated math. A New York City-based nonprofit called Bridge to Enter Mathematics runs a residential summer program aimed at getting underserved students，mostly black and Hispanic, working toward math and science careers. The summer after 7th grade, students spend three weeks on a college campus studying advanced math for seven hours a day. Over the next five years, the group helps the students get into other elite summer math programs, high-performing high schools, and eventually college. About 250 students so far have gone through the program, which receives funding from the Jack Kent Cooke Foundation.

M) "If you look at a lot of low-income communities in the United States, there are programs that are serving them, but they' re primarily centered around 'Let's get these kids' grades up', and not around 'Let's get these kids access to the same kinds of opportunities as more-affluent kids,'" said Daniel Zaharopol, the founder and executive director of the program. "We're trying to create that pathway." Students apply to the program directly through their schools. "We want to reach parents who are not plugged into the system," said Zaharopol.

N) In the past few years, Math Counts added two new middle school programs to try to diversify its participant pool---the National Math Club and the Math Video Challenge. Schools or teachers who sign up for the National Math Club receive a kit full of activities and resources, but there's no special teacher training and no competition attached.

O) The Math Video Challenge is a competition, but a collaborative one. Teams of four students make a video illustrating a math problem and its real-world application. After the high-pressure Countdown round at this year's national Math Counts competition, in which the top 12 students went head to head solving complex problems in rapid fire, the finalists for the Math Video Challenge took the stage to show their videos. The demographics of that group looked quite different from those in the competition round—of the 16 video finalists, 13 were girls and eight were African-American students. The video challenge does not put individual students on the hot seat—so it's less intimidating by design. It also adds the element of artistic creativity to attract a new pool of students who may not see themselves as "math people".

36. Middle school is a crucial period when students may become keenly interested in advanced mathematics.

37. Elite high school math competitions are attracting more interest throughout the United States.

38. Math circles provide students with access to advanced-math training by university professors.

39. Students may take advantage of online resources to learn to solve math problems.

40. The summer program run by a nonprofit organization has helped many underserved students learn advanced math.

41. Winners of local contests will participate in the national math competition for free.

42. Many schools don't place academic competitions at the top of their priority list.

43. Contestants of elite high school math competitions are mostly Asian and white students from well-off families.

44. Some math training programs primarily focus on raising students' math scores.

45. Some intensive summer programs are very expensive but most of them provide scholarships.

Passage One

Questions 46 to 50 are based on the following passage.

We live today indebted to McCardell, Cashin, Hawes, Wilkins, and Maxwell, and other women who liberated American fashion from the confines of Parisian design. Independence came in tying, wrapping, storing, harmonizing, and rationalizing that wardrobe. These designers established the modem dress code, letting playsuits and other active wear outfits suffice for casual clothing, allowing pants to enter the wardrobe, and prizing rationalism and versatility in dress, in contradiction to dressing for an occasion or allotment of the day. Fashion in America was logical and answerable to the will of the women who wore it. Implicitly or explicitly, American fashion addressed a democracy, whereas traditional Paris-based fashion was prescriptive and imposed on women, willing or not.

In an earlier time, American fashion had also followed the dictates of Paris, or even copied and pirated specific French designs. Designer sportswear was not modeled on that of Europe, as "modem art" would later be; it was genuinely invented and developed in America. Its designers were not high-end with supplementary lines. The design objective and the business commitment were to sportswear, and the distinctive traits were problem-solving ingenuity and realistic lifestyle applications. Ease of care was most important: summer dresses and outfits, in particular, were chiefly cotton, readily capable of being washed and pressed at home. Closings were simple, practical, and accessible, as the modem woman depended on no personal maid to dress her. American designers prized resourcefulness and the freedom of women who wore the clothing.

Many have argued that the women designers of this time were able to project their own clothing values into a new style. Of course, much of this argument in the 1930s-40s was advanced because there was little or no experience in justifying apparel (服装) on the basis of utility. If Paris was cast aside, the tradition of beauty was also to some degree slighted. Designer sportswear would have to be verified by a standard other than that of pure beauty; the emulation of a designer's life in designer sportswear was a crude version of this relationship. The consumer was ultimately to be mentioned as well, especially by the likes of Dorothy Shaver, who could point to the sales figures at Lord &amp; Taylor.

Could utility alone justify the new ideas of the American designers? Fashion is often regarded as a pursuit of beauty, and some cherished fashion's trivial relationship to the fine arts. What the designers of the American sportswear proved was that fashion is a genuine design art, answering to the demanding needs of service. Of course these practical, insightful designers have determined the course of late twentieth-century fashion. They were the pioneers of gender equity, in their useful, adaptable clothing, which was both made for the masses and capable of self-expression.

46. What contribution did the women designers make to American fashion?

A. They made some improvements on the traditional Parisian design.

B. They formulated a dress code with distinctive American features.

C. They came up with a brand new set of design procedures.

D. They made originality a top priority in their fashion design.

47. What do we learn about American designer sportswear?

A. It imitated the European model.

B. It laid emphasis on women's beauty.

C. It represented genuine American art.

D. It was a completely new invention.

48. What characterized American designer sportswear?

A. Pursuit of beauty.

B. Decorative closings.

C. Ease of care.

D. Fabric quality.

49. What occurred in the design of women's apparel in America during the 1930s-40s?

A. A shift of emphasis from beauty to utility.

B. The emulation of traditional Parisian design.

C. A search for balance between tradition and novelty.

D. The involvement of more women in fashion design.

50. What do we learn about designers of American sportswear?

A. They catered to the taste of the younger generation.

B. They radically changed people's concept of beauty.

C. They advocated equity between men and women.

D. They became rivals of their Parisian counterparts.

Passage Two

Questions 51 to 55 are based on the following passage.

Massive rubbish dumps and sprawling landfills constitute one of the more uncomfortable impacts that humans have on wildlife. They have led some birds to give up on migration. Instead of flying thousands of miles in search of food, they make the waste sites their winter feeding grounds.

Researchers in Germany used miniature GPS tags to track the migrations of 70 white storks (鹳) from different sites across Europe and Asia during the first five months of their lives. While many birds travelled along well-known routes to warmer climates, others stopped short and spent the winter on landfills, feeding on food waste, and the multitudes of insects that thrive on the dumps.

In the short-term, the birds seem to benefit from overwintering (过冬) on rubbish dumps. Andrea Flack of the Max Planck Institute found that birds following traditional migration routes were more likely to die than German storks that flew only as far as northern Morocco, and spent the winter there on rubbish dumps. "For the birds it's a very convenient way to get food. There are huge clusters of organic waste they can feed on," said Flack. The meals are not particularly appetising, or even safe. Much of the waste is discarded rotten meat, mixed in with other human debris such as plastic bags and old toys.

"It's very risky. The birds can easily eat pieces of plastic or rubber bands and they can die," said Flack. "And we don't know about the long-term consequences. They might eat something toxic and damage their health. We cannot estimate that yet."

The scientists tracked white storks from different colonies in Europe and Africa. The Russian, Greek and Polish storks flew as far as South Africa, while those from Spain, Tunisia and Germany flew only as far as the Sahel.

Landfill sites on the Iberian peninsula have long attracted local white storks, but all of the Spanish birds tagged in the study flew across the Sahara desert to the western Sahel. Writing in the journal, the scientists describe how the storks from Germany were clearly affected by the presence of waste sites, with four out of six birds that survived for at least five months overwintering on rubbish dumps in northern Morocco, instead of migrating to the Sahel.

Flack said it was too early to know whether the benefits of plentiful food outweighed the risks of feeding on landfills. But that's not the only uncertainty. Migrating birds affect ecosystems both at home and at their winter destinations, and disrupting the traditional routes could have unexpected side effects. White storks feed on locusts (蝗虫) and other insects that can become pests if their numbers get out of hand. "They provide a useful service," said Flack.

51. What is the impact of rubbish dumps on wildlife?

A. They have forced white storks to search for safer winter shelters.

B. They have seriously polluted the places where birds spend winter.

C. They have accelerated the reproduction of some harmful insects.

D. They have changed the previous migration habits of certain birds.

52. What do we learn about birds following the traditional migration routes?

A. They can multiply at an accelerating rate.

B. They can better pull through the winter.

C. They help humans kill harmful insects.

D. They are more likely to be at risk of dying.

53. What does Andrea Flack say about the birds overwintering on rubbish dumps?

A. They may end up staying there permanently.

B. They may eat something harmful.

C. They may evolve new feeding habits.

D. They may have trouble getting adequate food.

54. What can be inferred about the Spanish birds tagged in the study?

A. They gradually lose the habit of migrating in winter.

B. They prefer rubbish dumps far away to those at home.

C. They are not attracted to the rubbish dumps on their migration routes.

D. They join the storks from Germany on rubbish dumps in Morocco.

55. What is scientists' other concern about white storks feeding on landfills?

A. The potential harm to the ecosystem.

B. The genetic change in the stork species.

C. The spread of epidemics to their homeland.

D. The damaging effect on bio-diversity.

Let's all stop judging people who talk to themselves. New research says that those who can't seem to keep their inner monologues (独白) in are actually more likely to stay on task, remain \_\_26\_\_ better and show improved perception capabilities. Not bad, really, for some extra muttering.

According to a series of experiments published in the Quarterly Journal of Experimental Psychology by professors Gary Lupyan and Daniel Swignley, the act of using verbal clues to \_\_27\_\_ mental pictures helps people function quicker.

In one experiment, they showed pictures of various objects to twenty \_\_28\_\_ and asked them to find just one of those, a banana. Half were \_\_29\_\_ to repeat out loud what they were looking for and the other half kept their lips \_\_30\_\_. Those who talked to themselves found the banana slightly faster than those who didn't, the researchers say. In other experiments, Lupyan and Swignley found that \_\_31\_\_ the name of a common product when on the hunt for it helped quicken someone's pace, but talking about uncommon items showed no advantage and slowed you down.

Common research has long held that talking themselves through a task helps children learn, although doing so when you've \_\_32\_\_ matured is not a great sign of \_\_33\_\_. The two professors hope to refute that idea, \_\_34\_\_ that just as when kids walk themselves through a process, adults can benefit from using language not just to communicate, but also to help "augment thinking".

Of course, you are still encouraged to keep the talking at library tones and, whatever you do, keep the information you share simple, like a grocery list. At any \_\_35\_\_, there's still such a thing as too much information.

A. apparently

B. arrogance

C. brilliance

D. claiming

E. dedicated

F. focused

G. incur

H. instructed

I. obscurely

J. sealed

K. spectators

L. trigger

M. uttering

N. volume

O. volunteers

Rich Children and Poor Ones Are Raised Very Differently

A) The lives of children from rich and poor American families look more different than ever before.

B) Well-off families are ruled by calendars, with children enrolled in ballet, soccer and after-school programs, according to a new Pew Research Center survey. There are usually two parents, who spend a lot of time reading to children and worrying about their anxiety levels and hectic schedules.

C) In poor families, meanwhile, children tend to spend their time at home or with extended family. They are more likely to grow up in neighborhoods that their parents say aren't great for raising children, and their parents worry about them getting shot, beaten up or in trouble with the law.

D) The class differences in child rearing are growing—a symptom of widening inequality with far-reaching consequences. Different upbringings set children on different paths and can deepen socioeconomic divisions, especially because education is strongly linked to earnings. Children grow up learning the skills to succeed in their socioeconomic stratum (阶层), but not necessarily others.

E) "Early childhood experiences can be very consequential for children's long-term social, emotional and cognitive development," said Sean Reardon, professor of poverty and inequality in education at Stanford University. "And because those influence educational success and later earnings, early childhood experiences cast a lifelong shadow." The cycle continues: Poorer parents have less time and fewer resources to invest in their children, which can leave children less prepared for school and work, which leads to lower earnings.

F) American parents want similar things for their children, the Pew report and past research have found: for them to be healthy and happy, honest and ethical, caring and compassionate. There is no best parenting style or philosophy, researchers say, and across income groups, 92% of parents say they are doing a good job at raising their children. Yet they are doing it quite differently. Middle-class and higher-income parents see their children as projects in need of careful cultivation, says Annette Lareau, whose groundbreaking research on the topic was published in her book Unequal Childhoods: Class, Race and Family Life. They try to develop their skills through close supervision and organized activities, and teach children to question authority figures and navigate elite institutions.

G) Working-class parents, meanwhile, believe their children will naturally thrive, and give them far greater independence and time for free play. They are taught to be compliant and respectful to adults. There are benefits to both approaches. Working-class children are happier, more independent, complain less and are closer with family members, Ms. Lareau found. Higher-income children are more likely to declare boredom and expect their parents to solve their problems. Yet later on, the more affluent children end up in college and on the way to the middle class, while working-class children tend to struggle. Children from higher-income families are likely to have the skills to navigate bureaucracies and succeed in schools and workplaces, Ms. Lareau said.

H) "Do all parents want the most success for their children? Absolutely," she said. "Do some strategies give children more advantages than others in institutions? Probably they do. Will parents be damaging children if they have one fewer organized activity? No, I really doubt it."

I) Social scientists say the differences arise in part because low-income parents have less money to spend on music class or preschool, and less flexible schedules to take children to museums or attend school events. Extracurricular activities reflect the differences in child rearing in the Pew survey, which was of a nationally representative sample of 1,807 parents. Of families earning more than $75,000 a year, 84% say their children have participated in organized sports over the past year, 64% have done volunteer work and 62% have taken lessons in music, dance or art. Of families earning less than $30,000, 59% of children have done sports, 37% have volunteered and 41% have taken arts classes.

J) Especially in affluent families, children start young. Nearly half of high-earning, college-graduate parents enrolled their children in arts classes before they were 5, compared with one-fifth of low-income, less- educated parents. Nonetheless, 20% of well-off parents say their children's schedules are too hectic, compared with 8% of poorer parents.

K) Another example is reading aloud, which studies have shown gives children bigger vocabularies and better reading comprehension in school. 71% of parents with a college degree say they do it every day, compared with 33% of those with a high school diploma or less. White parents are more likely than others to read to their children daily, as are married parents. Most affluent parents enroll their children in preschool or day care, while low-income parents are more likely to depend on family members. Discipline techniques vary by education level: 8% of those with a postgraduate degree say they often beat their children, compared with 22% of those with a high school degree or less.

L) The survey also probed attitudes and anxieties. Interestingly, parents' attitudes toward education do not seem to reflect their own educational background as much as a belief in the importance of education for upward mobility. Most American parents say they are not concerned about their children's grades as long as they work hard. But 50% of poor parents say it is extremely important to them that their children earn a college degree, compared with 39% of wealthier parents.

M) Less-educated parents, and poorer and black and Latino parents are more likely to believe that there is no such thing as too much involvement in a child's education. Parents who are white, wealthy or college- educated say too much involvement can be bad. Parental anxieties reflect their circumstances. High- earning parents are much more likely to say they live in a good neighborhood for raising children. While bullying is parents' greatest concern over all, nearly half of low-income parents worry their child will get shot, compared with one-fifth of high-income parents. They are more worried about their children being depressed or anxious.

N) In the Pew survey, middle-class families earning between $30,000 and $75,000 a year fell right between working-class and high-earning parents on issues like the quality of their neighborhood for raising children, participation in extracurricular activities and involvement in their children' s education.

O) Children were not always raised so differently. The achievement gap between children from high- and low-income families is 30-40% larger among children born in 2001 than those born 25 years earlier, according to Mr. Reardon's research. People used to live near people of different income levels; neighborhoods are now more segregated by income. More than a quarter of children live in single-parent households—a historic high, according to Pew—and these children are three times as likely to live in poverty as those who live with married parents. Meanwhile, growing income inequality has coincided with the increasing importance of a college degree for earning a middle-class wage.

P) Yet there are recent signs that the gap could be starting to shrink. In the past decade, even as income inequality has grown, some of the socioeconomic differences in parenting, like reading to children and going to libraries, have narrowed.

Q) Public policies aimed at young children have helped, including public preschool programs and reading initiatives. Addressing differences in the earliest years, it seems, could reduce inequality in the next generation.

36. Working-class parents teach their children to be obedient and show respect to adults.

37. American parents, whether rich or poor, have similar expectations of their children despite different ways of parenting.

38. While rich parents are more concerned with their children's psychological well-being, poor parents are more worried about their children's safety.

39. The increasing differences in child rearing between rich and poor families reflect growing social inequality.

40. Parenting approaches of working-class and affluent families both have advantages.

41. Higher-income families and working-class families now tend to live in different neighborhoods.

42. Physical punishment is used much less by well-educated parents.

43. Ms. Lareau doesn't believe participating in fewer after-class activities will negatively affect children's development.

44. Wealthy parents are concerned about their children's mental health and busy schedules.

45. Some socioeconomic differences in child rearing have shrunk in the past ten years.

Passage One

Questions 46 to 50 are based on the following passage.

Tennessee's technical and community colleges will not outsource (外包) management of their facilities to a private company, a decision one leader said was bolstered by an analysis of spending at each campus.

In an email sent Monday to college presidents in the Tennessee Board of Regents system, outgoing Chancellor John Morgan said an internal analysis showed that each campus' spending on facilities management fell well below the industry standards identified by the state. Morgan said those findings—which included data from the system's 13 community colleges, 27 technical colleges and six universities—were part of the decision not to move forward with Governor Bill Haslam's proposal to privatize management of state buildings in an effort to save money.

"While these numbers are still being validated by the state, we feel any adjustments they might suggest will be immaterial," Morgan wrote to the presidents. "System institutions are operating very efficiently based on this analysis, raising the question of the value of pursuing a broad scale outsourcing initiative."

Worker's advocates have criticized Haslam's plan, saying it would mean some campus workers would lose their jobs or benefits. Haslam has said colleges would be free to opt in or out of the out souring plan, which has not been finalized.

Morgan notified the Haslam administration of his decision to opt out in a letter sent last week. That letter, which includes several concerns Morgan has with the plan, was originally obtained by The Commercial Appeal in Memphis.

In an email statement from the state's Office of Customer Focused Government, which is examining the possibility of outsourcing, spokeswoman Michelle R. Martin said officials were still working to analyze the data from the Board of Regents. Data on management expenses at the college system and in other state departments will be part of a "business justification" the state will use as officials deliberate the specifics of an outsourcing plan.

"The state's facilities management project team is still in the process of developing its business justification and expects to have that completed and available to the public at the end of February," Martin said. "At this time there is nothing to take action on since the analysis has yet to be completed."

Morgan's comments on outsourcing mark the second time this month that he has come out against one of Haslam's plans for higher education in Tennessee. Morgan said last week that he would retire at the end of January because of the governor's proposal to split off six universities of the Board of Regents system and create separate governing boards for each of them. In his resignation letter, Morgan called the reorganization "unworkable".

46. What do we learn about the decision of technical and community colleges in Tennessee?

A. It is backed by a campus spending analysis.

B. It has been flatly rejected by the governor.

C. It has neglected their faculty's demands.

D. It will improve their financial situation.

47. What does the campus spending analysis reveal?

A. Private companies play a big role in campus management.

B. Facilities management by colleges is more cost-effective.

C. Facilities management has greatly improved in recent years.

D. Colleges exercise foil control over their own financial affairs.

48. Workers' supporters argue that Bill Haslam's proposal would \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

A. deprive colleges of the right to manage their facilities

B. make workers less motivated in performing duties

C. render a number of campus workers jobless

D. lead to the privatization of campus facilities

49. What do we learn from the state spokeswoman's response to John Morgan's decision?

A. The outsourcing plan is not yet finalized.

B. The outsourcing plan will be implemented.

C. The state officials are confident about the outsourcing plan.

D. The college spending analysis justifies the outsourcing plan.

50. Why did John Morgan decide to resign?

A. He had lost confidence in the Tennessee state government.

B. He disagreed with the governor on higher education policies.

C. He thought the state's outsourcing proposal was simply unworkable.

D. He opposed the governor's plan to reconstruct the college board system.

Passage Two

Questions 51 to 55 are based on the following passage.

Beginning in the late sixteenth century, it became fashionable for young aristocrats to visit Paris, Venice, Florence, and above all, Rome, as the culmination (终极) of their classical education. Thus was born the idea of the Grand Tour, a practice which introduced Englishmen, Germans, Scandinavians, and also Americans to the art and culture of France and Italy for the next 300 years. Travel was arduous and costly throughout the period, possible only for a privileged class—the same that produced gentlemen scientists, authors, antique experts, and patrons of the arts.

The Grand Tourist was typically a young man with a thorough grounding in Greek and Latin literature as well as some leisure time, some means, and some interest in art. The German traveler Johann Winckelmann pioneered the field of art history with his comprehensive study of Greek and Roman sculpture; he was portrayed by his friend Anton Raphael Mengs at the beginning of his long residence in Rome. Most Grand Tourists, however, stayed for briefer periods and set out with less scholarly intentions, accompanied by a teacher or guardian, and expected to return home with souvenirs of their travels as well as an understanding of art and architecture formed by exposure to great masterpieces.

London was a frequent starting point for Grand Tourists, and Paris a compulsory destination; many traveled to the Netherlands, some to Switzerland and Germany, and a very few adventurers to Spain, Greece, or Turkey. The essential place to visit, however, was Italy. The British traveler Charles Thompson spoke for many Grand Tourists when in 1744 he described himself as "being impatiently desirous of viewing a country so famous in history, a country which once gave laws to the world, and which is at present the greatest school of music and painting, contains the noblest productions of sculpture and architecture, and is filled with cabinets of rarities, and collections of all kinds of historical relics". Within Italy, the great focus was Rome, whose ancient ruins and more recent achievements were shown to every Grand Tourist. Panini's Ancient Rome and Modem Rome represent the sights most prized, including celebrated Greco-Roman statues and views of famous ruins, fountains, and churches. Since there were few museums anywhere in Europe before the close of the eighteenth century, Grand Tourists often saw paintings and sculptures by gaining admission to private collections, and many were eager to acquire examples of Greco-Roman and Italian art for their own collections. In England, where architecture was increasingly seen as an aristocratic pursuit, noblemen often applied what they learned from the villas of Palladio in the Veneto and the evocative (唤起回忆的) ruins of Rome to their own country houses and gardens.

51. What is said about the Grand Tour?

A. It was fashionable among young people of the time.

B. It was unaffordable for ordinary people.

C. It produced some famous European artists.

D. It made a compulsory part of college education.

52. What did Grand Tourists have in common?

A. They had much geographic knowledge.

B. They were courageous and venturesome.

C. They were versed in literature and interested in art.

D. They had enough travel and outdoor-life experience.

53. How did Grand Tourists benefit from their travel?

A. They found inspiration in the world's greatest masterpieces.

B. They got a better understanding of early human civilization.

C. They developed an interest in the origin of modem art forms.

D. They gained some knowledge of classical art and architecture.

54. Why did many Grand Tourists visit the private collections?

A. They could buy unique souvenirs there to take back home.

B. Europe hardly had any museums before the 19th century.

C. They found the antiques there more valuable.

D. Private collections were of greater variety.

55. How did the Grand Tour influence the architecture in England?

A. There appeared more and more Roman-style buildings.

B. Many aristocrats began to move into Roman-style villas.

C. Aristocrats' country houses all had Roman-style gardens.

D. Italian architects were hired to design houses and gardens.