

外研社杯·国才杯·2018 年阅读大赛初赛第三场

Questions 1-3 (Suggested completion time: 3 minutes)

Directions: Read the following quotes and choose the correct author for each quote. Please note there are two extra options you do not need.

- | | |
|-----------------------|---|
| A. Napoleon Bonaparte | 1. Mankind must put an end to war, or war will put an end to mankind. |
| B. John F. Kennedy | 2. There are but two powers in the world, the sword and the mind. In the long run the sword is always beaten by the mind. |
| C. Mahatma Gandhi | 3. First they ignore you, then they laugh at you, then they fight you, then you win. |
| D. Winston Churchill | |
| E. Abraham Lincoln | |

Question 4 (Suggested completion time: 2 minutes)

Directions: *Read the text and answer the question according to the text.*

The headline act for the PowerWatch is unquestionably the ability to thrive solely on your body heat. It was refreshing to not have to worry about a draining battery bar.

However, the positives stop there. The design is ugly and cumbersome, while the only worthwhile fitness features are step counting and sleep tracking — both of which you can get from the most basic of trackers.

The biggest kicker of all though is the price. At \$199 it’s ridiculously pricey for what it offers. To put things in perspective the upcoming Fitbit Versa will retail for an almost-identical figure, yet features a heart-rate sensor, GPS, on-board music storage, NFC (Near-field communication) payments and smart notifications to boot. Side by side, the PowerWatch just looks embarrassing.

4. What does the author say about the PowerWatch?

- | | |
|---|--|
| A) It outperforms other products in many aspects. | C) Its features are well worth the money it costs. |
| B) Its unique advantage is the way it is powered. | D) It has a poor design compared with other watches. |

Question 5 (Suggested completion time: 2 minutes)

Directions: Read the text and answer the question according to the text.

What are the practical results of this modern cult of beauty? The exercises and the massage, the health motors and the skin foods — to what have they led? Are women more beautiful than they were? Do they get something for the enormous expenditure of energy, time, and money demanded of them by the beauty-cult? These are questions which are difficult to answer. For the facts seem to contradict themselves. The campaign for more physical beauty seems to be both a tremendous success and a lamentable failure. It depends on how you look at the results.

5. Which word best describes the author’ s attitude towards the modern cult of beauty?

- A) scrupulous B) scornful C) detached D) doubtful

Question 6 (Suggested completion time: 2 minutes)

Directions: Read the text and answer the question according to the text.

Unless you are a recent arrival from another universe, you’ ve no doubt heard that this one is expanding. It’ s getting bigger all the time. What’ s more, its growth rate is accelerating. Every day, the universe expands a little bit faster than it did the day before.

Those day-to-day differences are _____, though, for astronomers trying to measure the universe’ s expansion rate. They want to know how fast it is expanding “today,” meaning the current epoch of cosmic history. That rate is important for understanding how the universe works, knowing what its ultimate fate will be and even what it is made of. After all, the prime mission of the Hubble Space Telescope when it was launched in 1990 was to help determine that expansion rate (known, not coincidentally, as the Hubble constant, named for the astronomer Edwin Hubble).

6. Which word best fits in the blank?

- A) negligible B) ambiguous C) insufficient D) unreadable

Question 7 (Suggested completion time: 2 minutes)

Directions: Read the text and answer the question according to the text.

_____①_____ With a few exceptions, the Nobel Prizes have honored good science, not pseudoscientific fads. _____②_____ “A lot of scientists who do [good] work...get passed over because there can only be a limited number of winners,” notes Harriet Zuckerman, a sociologist at Columbia University.

_____③_____ Even scientists who participated in a discovery might not win a Nobel. The committees that initially set the prize rules decided that a maximum of three people in any category could win each year. Back then, many scientists worked alone or in small groups. But this means that if there was a fourth scientist in a group, they were out of luck. Now, scientists often work in large groups to make major discoveries. _____④_____ In a team of 100, which three would deserve to share that year’ s Nobel Prize?

7. Which blank does the following sentence best fit in?

A bigger issue is that there are many more impressive scientific achievements than there are Nobel Prizes.

- A) ① B) ④ C) ③ D) ②

Question 8 (Suggested completion time: 2 minutes)

Directions: Read the text and answer the question according to the text.

Most people know they can use their phones for selfies and vacation pictures. But smartphone cameras have become helpful memory aids. Maybe you are buying a house and you want to refer to certain architectural details later on. Maybe you need the minutes of a meeting, but you can’ t wait for the secretary to transcribe them. Or maybe you have to re-enter your Wi-Fi password, but the password is printed on a little sticker on the back of the router, and your desktop is in another room. Take a picture!

Just remember, when photographing important or sensitive information (like your passport, passwords, and special documents), you store them safely. *Memory aids are great, as long as they stay in the right hands.*

8. What does the last sentence mean?

- A) People should use the right hands to take photographs.
- B) Privacy must be protected when stored in phones.
- C) Most people can make full use of smartphones.
- D) Smartphone cameras can serve as useful memory aids.

Question 9 (Suggested completion time: 2 minutes)

Directions: Read the text and answer the question according to the text.



Detailing their findings in a new study published by the journal *Cell*, the researchers, led by the University of Bonn, found evidence that our body’ s defense system reacts the same way to high-calorie foods packed with fats as it does to bacterial infections. In other words, whenever we eat unhealthy and fatty fast foods, our immune system thinks that it must go into battle mode to fight off a disease. The study found that the behavior of the immune system can remain quite active even after a switch to a healthier diet.

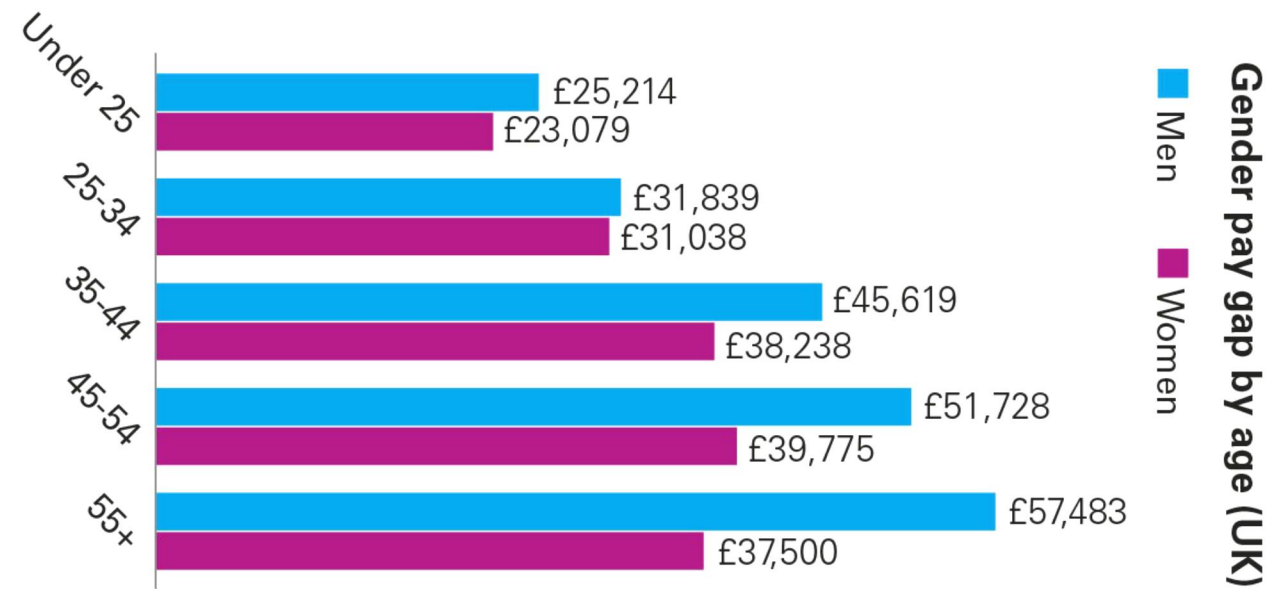
The researchers say long-term changes to the immune system may be involved in increasing the risk for arteriosclerosis, the hardening, and thickening of arteries, as well as diabetes and other diseases that have been linked to many Western diets.

9. Which of the following statements best summarizes the findings of the new study?

- A) High-calorie foods lead to bacterial infections.
- C) Western diets are linked to many diseases.
- B) Fast foods can help fight off some diseases.
- D) Junk food puts the immune system on fight.

Question 10 (Suggested completion time: 5 minutes)

Directions: The following figures show the pay gap between men and women in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Math) in the UK, released by the *New Scientist*/SRG annual salary survey in 2017. Answer the question according to the information in the figures.



10. Which of the following about the gender pay gap in STEM in the UK is correct?

- A) The gender pay gap increases with age and working experience.
- B) From 2012 to 2017, the gender gap widens over time.
- C) Women are paid less from the moment they start working.
- D) Male workers outnumber female workers in the STEM industry.

Question 11 (Suggested completion time: 4 minutes)

Directions: Read the following definition of a logical fallacy. Answer the question according to the definition.

Complex Question Fallacy

A question that has a presupposition built in, which implies something but protects the one asking the question from accusations of false claims. It is a form of misleading discourse, and it is a fallacy when the audience does not detect the assumed information implicit in the question and accepts it as a fact. It is not a fallacy if the implied information in the question is known to be an accepted fact.

11. Which of the following is NOT an example of *Complex Question Fallacy*?

- A) Did your misleading claims result in you getting promoted?
- B) How long can a healthy man survive without water in normal cases?
- C) What did you use to wipe your fingerprints from the gun?
- D) How many school shootings should we tolerate before we change the gun laws?

Question 12 (Suggested completion time: 4 minutes)

Directions: Read the following definition of a logical fallacy. Answer the question according to the definition.

Why does the law state that you have to be 21 years old to drink? Does it really make any difference if you are 20 years and 364 days old? That is absurd. Therefore, if a single day makes no difference, then a collection of 1095 single days won’ t make any difference. Therefore, changing the drinking age to 18 will not make any difference.

12. Which of the following is of the same logical fallacy as in the text?

- A) We took some pictures of the native girls, but they weren’ t developed. But we’ re going back again in a couple of weeks.
- B) It is said that we have a good understanding of our universe. Therefore, we know exactly how it began and exactly when.

- C) I really hope that I don’ t have to spend my eternity with my Aunt Edna, who really loved me. She drove me crazy with her constant gossiping.
- D) A single grain of sand does not make a heap of sand. Also, a single grain of sand won’ t turn a non-heap into a heap. Therefore, there are no heaps of sand.

Questions 13-14 Reasoning (Suggested completion time: 10 minutes)

13.

The sugar industry advertised its product with the claim that “Sugar is an essential component of the body, a key material in all sorts of metabolic processes.”

Which of the following, if true, would most undermine the claim of the sugar industry?

- A) The average school-aged child should consume two-ounce sugar every day.
- B) Sugar excess in children’ s diet can aggravate the symptoms of asthma.
- C) Blood sugar is a key material in all sorts of metabolic processes, while it isn’ t ordinary table sugar.
- D) Artificial sweeteners can take the place of sugar, but cannot create chemicals crucial for metabolism.

14.

S. J. Sam: Asian people in this country are systematically passed over in the tech field for non-Asians.

Cindy: Actually, according to most research, employers are biased in favor of Asian technical workers.

S. J. Sam: Unless you are Asian, keep your mouth shut. You can’ t possibly know the struggles of the Asian community!

Which of the following, if true, would most undermine S. J. Sam’ s claim?

- A) S. J. Sam holds very high expertise in the tech field.
- B) S. J. Sam is an Asian employee who works very hard.
- C) Cindy is an experienced electrical technician for the Pacific Bell Corporation.
- D) Cindy has done a lot of research on the employment of Asians.

Questions 15-18 (Suggested completion time: 8 minutes)

Directions: Read the text about a scientist. Answer the questions according to the text.

Nettie Stevens was born in Vermont in 1861 and got her start in science at the relatively late age of 35, when she had saved up enough to enroll in a small startup university in California. It was Stanford, and she thrived there, earning both a bachelor’ s and a master’ s degree by 1900.

After Stanford, Stevens pursued a PhD — a level of education very rare for women of her time — at Bryn Mawr in Pennsylvania. It was there that she turned her attention to solving the problem of sex determinism.

In the early 1900s, the idea that chromosomes contained hereditary information was still a brash new theory. The works of Gregor Mendel himself were only rediscovered in 1900 (Mendel had no audience for his ideas while he was alive), and the scientific community was trying to work out the mechanisms of how traits — including sex determination — were passed between generations.

Stevens wanted to know how (and if) sex was passed on through genetic inheritance. She was making observations with a microscope of the chromosomes in *Tenebrio molitor* — the mealworm beetle — when she discovered something that had eluded humanity for millennia.

Stevens observed that the female mealworm’ s cells had 20 large chromosomes. The male had 20 chromosomes as well, but the 20th was notably smaller than the other 19. “This seems to be a clear case of sex determination,” Stevens wrote in a report summarizing her findings.

She concluded (correctly) that this difference could be traced back to differences in the mealworm sperm. The sperm had either the small version of the 20th chromosome or the large one. “The spermatozoa which contain the small chromosome [determine] the male sex,” she wrote, “while those that contain 10 chromosomes of equal size determine the female sex.”

(She didn’ t call these chromosomes X or Y. That naming convention would come later.)

Her sex chromosome discovery in 1905 “was the culmination of more than two thousand years of speculation and experiment on how an animal, plant, or human becomes male or female,” historian Stephen Brush explains in *The History of Science Society*. “At the same time it provided an important confirmation for the recently revived Mendelian genetics that was to become a central part of modern biology.”

15-17 Decide whether the following statements are True or False according to the text.

15. Nettie Stevens paid the tuition on her own when entering Stanford University.

A) True B) False

16. Gregor Mendel’s efforts to explore hereditary information were not recognized until 1900.

A) True B) False

17. Owning a PhD in Stanford helps Nettie Stevens carry out more researches on sex determinism.

A) True B) False

18. Which of the following CANNOT be inferred according to Stevens’ research?

- A) The purpose of the research is to study how sex is inherently determined.
- B) The only genetic difference between male and female mealworm is the size of the 20th chromosome.
- C) The mealworm sperm that contained smaller chromosomes will determine the male sex.
- D) The research contributed greatly to the acknowledgement of Mendelian genetics.

Questions 19-21 (Suggested completion time: 7 minutes)

Directions: Read the text about beer. Answer the questions according to the text.

For many world travelers, the process of learning a local language will extend only to three words: “Please,” “Thank-you,” and “Cheers!” If that’s too many, you can probably forget the first two.

Without question, the best way to integrate into a new culture is to share a tippie with the locals, and the world’s favorite alcoholic drink is beer. According to *Chartsbin.com* (a data visualization web tool), beer is the most drunk alcoholic

beverage in 81 countries, including in the U.S., Canada, the United Kingdom and Australia.

The Czechs consume the most beer per capita of anyone (more than 30 gallons per person per year), with the average American drinking around 16.5 gallons each. And although you may think the advertising power of Anheuser-Busch

InBev would make an American beer the most sold in the world, you would be wrong. China’s Snow is by far the most popular brand globally, accounting for 5.5 percent of the world’s total beer sales. Bud Light accounts for only 2.6

percent, and Budweiser 2.3 percent.

Newsweek’s beer gallery takes a look at the best-selling beers in the most populous nations in the world (countries where alcohol is prohibited have been excluded). Remember, “best-selling” is rarely the same as “best,” so don’t

expect beer connoisseurs to be heading out to their local craft brewery and seeking pints of any of these. However, if you ever find yourself in a bar in the Ivory Coast, the Philippines, Tanzania or Colombia, it might be useful to know

what your neighbor is most likely drinking.

19. What is the text mainly about?

- A) Best-selling and best beers.
- B) The popularity of beer across the globe.
- C) Brands and market share of beer.
- D) Beers and cultural integration.

20. According to the text, which of the following is INCORRECT about beer?

- A) China’s Snow has the largest share in global beer sales.
- B) Anheuser-Busch InBev’s marketing strategy is not as successful as expected.
- C) Beer is the most favorite alcoholic drink in many parts of the world.
- D) The newly learnt local expression for “beer” can be easily forgotten.

21. What does the author indicate by the underlined sentence in the last paragraph?

- A) You will know which beer is the best by looking at what your neighbors in the bar choose to drink.

- B) You will know “best-selling” is rarely the same as “best” by looking at what your neighbors in the bar choose to drink.
- C) You will know beer is a necessity in people’s daily life in these countries by looking at what your neighbors in the bar choose to drink.
- D) You will know which beer is the best-selling by looking at what your neighbors in the bar choose to drink.

Questions 22-23 (Suggested completion time: 7 minutes)

Directions: Read the following email. Answer the questions according to the email.

Greetings,

Thank you for your interest in New York University’s School of Professional Studies (NYU-SCPS). General information about NYU-SCPS financial aid options, tuition/fees, admissions events and the admissions process (including the deadlines, application requirements, admissions criteria and Frequently Asked Questions/FAQs) is available at:

<http://www.scps.nyu.edu/admissions/graduate.html>. The admissions process begins with our on-line application, which is accessible 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Please be aware of the deadlines and submit your application well in advance as you do not want to risk being closed out of the term in which you are interested. Once you submit your application we will send you periodic updates to inform you of the status of your application. You may also check your status by logging back into the online application system. Additionally, applications are reviewed once we have received sufficient information to render a decision, not necessarily from the date of submission. If you have specific questions about your degree program that cannot be answered by reviewing our website, we encourage you to reach out to the Admissions Officer assigned to your program.

Because the NYU-SCPS Admissions Office practices “*rolling admissions*,” applications are reviewed throughout the year so you may apply at any time. However, if you are applying for a specific term, please adhere to the application submission dates. NYU-SCPS master’s degree and graduate certificate programs are open to all qualified candidates who hold a bachelor’s degree from a regionally accredited college or university. International candidates who hold a degree that is equivalent to a U.S. bachelor’s degree are also eligible to apply. Students can only apply to one program within NYU.

All of our graduate program offerings are listed on our website:

<http://www.scps.nyu.edu/academics/degree-programs/graduate.html>

If there is a specific program you are interested in that is not listed in our offerings, it is most likely offered through another division at New York University. Kindly review other departments via www.nyu.edu to see which department

offers the best program for your interest.

Please let me know if I can assist you with any further questions.

Sincerely,

Benjamin Dobbs

Admissions Officer

NYU School of Professional Studies

Office of Admission

22. What does “*rolling admissions*” in the third paragraph mean?

A) It means there’s no deadline for your application. The sooner you apply, the sooner you’ll hear back.

B) It means if you submit your application late, it will be covered by others’ .

C) It means that if you are on a waiting list, you can still apply for other programs.

D) It means that it offers periodic updates once your application is submitted.

23. Which of the following statements is TRUE?

A) The email receiver has recently applied for the master’s degree program of NYU-SCPS.

B) Undergraduates can apply for the graduate certificate programs of NYU-SCPS.

C) The Office of Admission starts reviewing applications once submission is closed.

D) Eligible international candidates can apply for programs offered in other divisions at NYU.

Questions 24-26 (Suggested completion time: 7 minutes)

Directions: Read the text about cancer. Answer the questions according to the text.

Cancer, with us since the dawn of cellular life, is a companion we may never be rid of, says Arizona State University evolutionary biologist Athena Aktipis. But a fresh look at the disease could bring new strategies for managing it, she told a Harvard audience on April 4, 2018.

Aktipis’ work employs the nontraditional approach of applying models of how plants and animals relate to each other ecologically to systems in the human body. In her lecture at the Harvard Museum of Natural History, “Why Cancer Is Everywhere,” she focused on the relation of cancer cells to healthy ones, saying that cancer cells can be thought of as “cheaters” within a system of working cells. The “everywhere” in the lecture’s title was a reference to cancer’s presence in plant as well as animal life.

Aktipis began her presentation by showing a slide of a rare crested cactus that is found near her home in Arizona. “This picture is one of the reasons that I started looking at cancer from a(n) _____24_____ perspective,” she said.

The cactus displays clustered cells that have a cancer-like appearance — an example of fasciation, or abnormal growth in plants. This led her to make two observations: Humans aren’t alone in their struggle with cancer, and these plants were able to grow and survive despite the abnormal growths. These realities, she noted, have profound implications for human research.

Cancer is an inevitable byproduct of cell cooperation, Aktipis noted. “We have approximately 30 trillion cells in our bodies that cooperate with each other and coordinate their gene expression. This is far beyond any cooperation you could hope to achieve in a human society.”

As multicellular organisms evolve and the system grows larger, so does the possibility that “cheater” cells may appear to exploit the system. This is what cancer cells do: ***Proliferate*** without limit, avoid cell death, monopolize resources, co-opt the labor of other cells, and destroy the surrounding environment. When cancer is present, the rules of intercellular cooperation break down.**24.** Which word best fits in the blank in paragraph 3?

- A) interactive B) evolutionary C) preliminary D) objective

25. What does the word ***proliferate*** in the last paragraph mean?

- A) control completely B) oppose
C) increase rapidly D) extinct

26. Which of the following is correct according to the text?

- A) To cure cancer is to find the “cheater” cells and eradicate them.
B) In human’s evolution, cancer cells are unavoidable byproducts.
C) Cactus can more easily survive their “cancer” than other plants.

D) Aktipis found new therapies to cure human’ s cancer.

Questions 27-30 (Suggested completion time: 8 minutes)

Directions: Read the text about email newsletters. Answer the questions according to the text.

On any given day, most of our email inboxes are flooded with a barrage of automated email newsletters that do little else besides giving us another task to do on our commutes to work — namely, marking them all as read without reading, or unsubscribing altogether.

But every now and then, we get a newsletter that’ s so good, not only do we read it, but we click it, share it, and recommend it to our friends.

What Makes an Effective Email Marketing Campaign?

Effective email marketing campaigns need to be cleverly written to attract attention in busy inboxes. Here are three things your next email campaign should have.

1. _____ **27**

Marketing emails need to be personalized to the reader and filled with interesting graphics. Few people want to read emails that are addressed “Dear Sir/Madam” — as opposed to their first or last name — and even fewer people want to read an email that simply gives them a wall of text. Visuals help your recipients quickly understand what the point of the email is.

2. _____ **28**

Effective email marketing campaigns are designed for all devices on which users can read their emails — desktop, tablet, and smartphone. Email campaigns that are designed for mobile devices are especially important — a quality known as “responsive design.” In fact, 67% of emails today are read on either a smartphone or tablet.

3. _____ **29**

Above all, exceptional marketing emails must contain a meaningful call-to-action (CTA). After all, if brands are taking up subscribers’ time — and inbox space — with another email, every message must have a point to it. ***Internet users get multiple emails per day — why should they care about yours?***

27. 27-29 Select ONE subtitle for each blank from the options below.

- A. Personalization and Imagery
- B. Be Extraordinary in Emails
- C. Design for All

- D. An Appropriate Call-to-Action
- E. Respective Greetings
- F. Responsive Design

30. Why does the author say *Internet users get multiple emails per day — why should they care about yours?*

- A) To explain why Internet users get interested in a certain email.
- B) To raise reader’s concern about endless junk emails.
- C) To stress the importance of considering subscribers’ feelings.
- D) To oppose the current email marketing strategies.

Questions 31-40 (Suggested completion time: 35 minutes)

Directions: Read three passages about *keeping up with the Joneses*. Answer the questions according to the passages.

Passage A



“Keeping up with the Joneses” was a common phrase in 20th century America that is still in use today. It refers to the practice of buying items to impress neighbors or increase social standing, rather than from a desire for the items themselves. This practice is also known as “conspicuous consumption.” “Keeping up with the Joneses” originated as the title of a popular comic strip in the early 20th century. It quickly passed into popular usage as a way of describing American consumer culture.

In 1913, cartoonist Arthur “Pop” Mom and launched his comic strip *Keeping up with the Joneses* in the *New York Globe*. The strip chronicled the misadventures of Aloysius P. McGinnis, whose wife was obsessed with maintaining a social standing equal to that of their well-to-do neighbors, the Jones family. Ironically, the Joneses of the title were never actually seen by readers of the comic. The popular strip was syndicated nationally, inspiring an animated film, a stage musical, and several tie-in books. The title phrase had become part of the American lexicon by the time the comic ended in 1938.

The 20th century saw the rise of American consumer culture. Advertisers and manufacturers played on the love of novelty and affluence to sell everything from cars to kitchen appliances. By the 1950s, a key part of this marketing

strategy was selling new items to consumers who already owned similar items. One method to achieve this was “planned obsolescence,” designing items to be useless or outdated within a short time. Another method was promoting *conspicuous consumption*, often referred to as “keeping up with the Joneses.”

The strategy was simple: advertisements suggested that people who did not purchase the latest car or popular item risked being seen as impoverished or socially backward by their peers. This “keeping up with the Joneses” approach was quite effective, even if those peers, like the Joneses of the comic strip, were never actually seen. The practice of purchasing the latest items to display social standing has persisted into the 21st century, with items like smartphones and media players. New generations of these high-tech devices are sometimes introduced to the market within months of the previous versions. The phrase and its variations still enjoy wide currency in everyday use and popular culture.

Passage B

One of the easiest ways to feel bad about oneself is to compare yourself unfavorably to others. We may be tempted to compare ourselves with those who have more accomplishments, seem more attractive, make more money, or boast more Facebook friends.

When you find yourself envious of what someone else has, and feel jealous, inferior or inadequate as the result, you’ re having a negative social comparison moment.

Habitual negative social comparisons can cause a person to experience greater stress, anxiety, depression, and make self-defeating choices.

Two interesting notes about negative social comparison:

1. Negative social comparison has elements of narcissism.

When we wish to look, be, or have like others, we’ re not really wishing for everything about that person, but only the idealized aspects of the individual. This idealized and grandiose (浮夸的) perception of another is narcissistic in nature. Chances are, not even those whom you compare yourself with can live up to your idealized images of them. This is why so often when people spend some length of time with their “heroes,” “heroines,” “role models,” or “idols,” they discover that those whom they look up to also have weaknesses, flaws, difficulties and problems just like everyone else.

2. It’ s relatively easy to change from idealizing to humanizing.

For example, you may wish that you had the perfect career and a lot of money like your manager Joe, or the good looks of your friend Kelly, or a wonderful romantic relationship like Samantha. Comparing yourself with them might cause you to feel somehow “lesser.” But when you look at their lives more objectively, you know that Joe has health problems and family issues, Kelly is actually insecure about her looks, and it took Samantha a painful divorce and many hard lessons before she found a compatible mate. Looking at them from a more balanced perspective, you realize there’ s more than meets the eye, and that they’ re human beings with their own share of challenges like you.

There are four conditions in life which might cause sufferings: birth, aging, illness, and death. No one, no matter how powerful, successful, wealthy, or fabulous they seem on the outside, can escape these truths. _____34_____. What’s left, then, are values which truly make our brief existence on this earth worthwhile: self-acceptance, quality relationships, and a meaningful life’s purpose. For each of these, the answers and our ability to realize them come from WITHIN. No external accomplishments, privileges, entitlements or materialism alone can achieve them. No superficial status, ranks, stations, or possessions are required to realize them.

Passage C

I’ll read or hear about someone’s fantastic vacation or amazing restaurant meal or their cruise and I’ll feel jealous.

I want that experience, too.

I want to “keep up with the Joneses,” not in terms of stuff, but in terms of experiences. I want to see the world. I want to taste the foods. I want to attend the shows.

The thing is, it would be very easy, as a fairly financially responsible person, to fall into that trap. It’s a tricky trap to fall into, too, because you’re not even accumulating any stuff to point out to yourself all of the money you’re spending.

So, how do I solve this?

One strategy, of course, is to just further trim my social circle down to people who just don’t take on expensive experiences — or at least don’t share them. *That’s a non-starter.* There are people that I deeply value in my life who have the financial means to travel to Paris or Tokyo every year, and they do so. It’s on me to deal with it, not on them. I would do the same thing as them if I were in their financial state.

Here are several real strategies I use to handle that situation.

One, I think about experiences outside of the glare of social media and social relationships. I don’t consider what we’ll do for our family vacation next year while staring at gorgeous pictures of Tuscany that a friend posted to Facebook. Instead, I think about it after a day or two spent with my family and with time to think about what we really enjoy and what we can sensibly afford.

This often points me toward trips like our family vacation this past summer, where we camped at Yellowstone using a free national parks pass. That trip absolutely nailed the things that my family loves, and it happened on a shoestring budget. When I think about delicious meals, I don’t stare at pictures of amazing restaurants that friends are talking about. Instead, I look around my own kitchen and wonder what I can create myself for my family.

My decisions about the experiences I enjoy are ones that I make far away from sources that might tempt me and might drive up my “jealousy” factor.

Two, I think about why I’m jealous. The easy answer might be that I wish I could go to Paris on a long weekend, but the real answer is that I wish I could afford a trip to Paris without any long-term financial ramifications. Thinking in that fashion, and realizing that it has less to do with the trip itself and more to do with recognizing that I’m not yet where I want to be financially, pushes me to do better. It pushes me to spend less on unimportant things so that I can have the important things.

It pushes me to not sweat about that trip to Paris right now, but to make smart financial moves so that when we do eventually take a trip like that, the real financial impact is minimal. I don’t yet deserve that experience because I haven’t

t yet achieved the financial change necessary to make such an experience happen without financial stress. Until then, it’ s on me.

Three, I reflect on the financial state of those enjoying the experience. Some of them are at retirement age and are enjoying the fruits of thirty-five years of financial planning and hard choices. Others are spending themselves into a deep hole of debt that’ s going to add a lot of stress to their life. Still others can outright afford those experiences, but they’ re lassoed (用套索套住) to a high-stress career to be able to afford it, which takes away from the joys of daily life.

On the whole, I’ m pretty happy ***forgoing*** most of those “great experiences” in order to be able to enjoy lower stress and contentment in other areas of my life. I don’ t have any debt whatsoever. I’ m building toward a state of financial independence where I won’ t have to work at all, and if I push a little bit past that, I’ ll be able to afford such things without any long term financial risk — but I’ m not there yet. I have a pretty low-stress life, all told, without incredible career pressure. I wouldn’ t trade those things away for an annual trip to Jakarta.

In the end, experiences can become all about “keeping up with the Joneses” as material items are, especially in the age of social media. The best tool that you have in your repertoire is to step back, breathe, and reflect on why you feel that way.

31. What is ***conspicuous consumption*** according to Passage A?

- A) It refers to the behavior of buying a lot of useless stuff.
- B) It is a kind of blind consumption in order to show off.
- C) It refers to a popular American consumer culture.
- D) It can act as a way to determine one’ s social standing.

32. What is Passage A mainly about?

- A) The variations of the phrase “keeping up with the Joneses” in today’ s society.
- B) The background information of the phrase “keeping up with the Joneses” .
- C) The usage of the phrase “keeping up with the Joneses” as a marketing strategy.
- D) The origin of the phrase “keeping up with the Joneses” and its application.

33. Which of the following is NOT negative social comparison according to Passage B?

- A) Fantasizing about owning an idealized and perfect life.

- B) Focusing on others’ success and feeling inferior to them.
- C) Feeling envious of people who are quite wealthy.
- D) Finding out weaknesses and flaws of one’s own idols.

34. Which of the following best fits in the blank in Passage B?

- A) The purpose of life is to experience happiness out of sufferings
- B) These conditions effectively make all of us equal
- C) These common experiences make human life complete
- D) The only way to avoid the pain is to stop comparing

35. Which is the best title for Passage B?

- A) Do not Get Lost in Comparing Yourself to Others
- B) How to Avoid Negative Comparison with Others
- C) Understandings about Negative Social Comparison
- D) How to Find a Meaningful Purpose in Your Life

36. What does the sentence ***That’s a non-starter*** in Passage C mean?

- A) The author will not give up friends only because they are better off.
- B) The author will regard social comparing useless and impractical.
- C) The author will not blame the friends who travel abroad every year.
- D) The author will share his own fancy trips in a smaller social media circle.

37. The word ***forgoing*** in Passage C is closest in meaning to _____.

- A) persisting in considering

- B) losing the right to experience
- C) experiencing in advance
- D) giving up the enjoyment

38. Which of the following statements is TRUE according to Passage C?

- A) Discontent with the limited choices in career is the origin of social comparison.
- B) A low-stress life outweighs a trip abroad for the author.
- C) Financial status interferes with the vacation plan of the author’ s family.
- D) Trip to Paris is feasible if the author goes there on a long weekend.

39. What message is contained in both Passage A and Passage C about “keeping up with the Joneses” ?

- A) It takes on different forms.
- B) Its influence spreads over social media.
- C) Its essence is comparison of financial status.
- D) It may motivate people to work hard.

40. What can be inferred from both Passage B and Passage C?

- A) If you feel jealous about other’ s life or experiences, you will get lost in your life.
- B) It is better not to compare yourself with other successful people.
- C) Everyone has challenges in life though their life or experiences may seem great.
- D) Even though you are inferior to some people, you should never lose heart.