

外研社杯·国才杯·2018 年阅读大赛复赛第三场

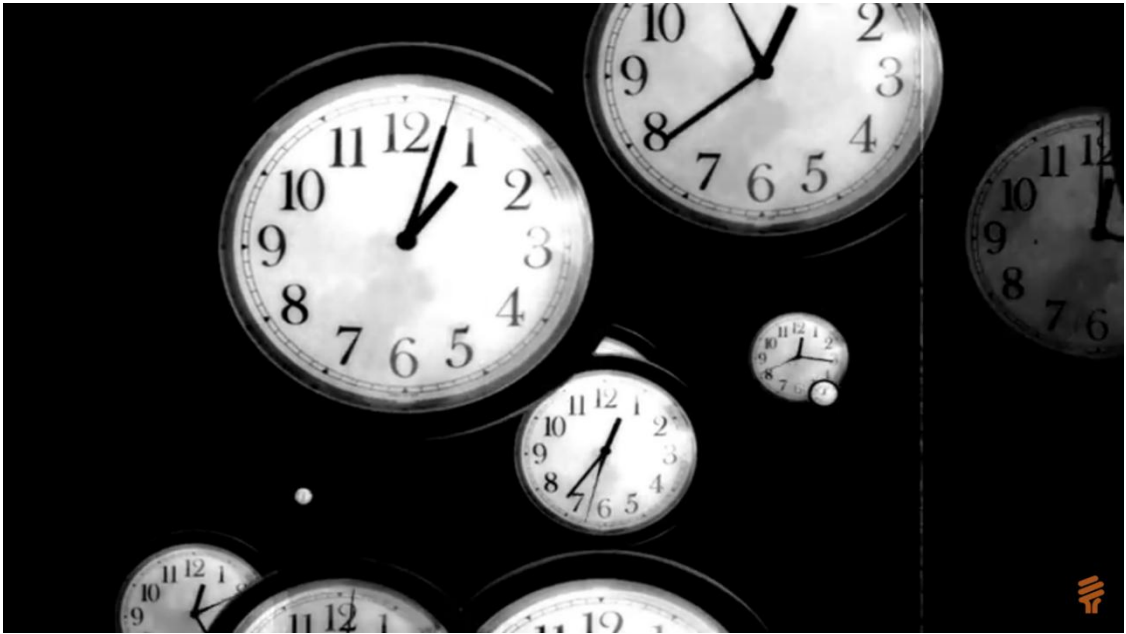
Questions 1-3 (Suggested completion time: 3 minutes)

Directions: Read the following excerpts and match the book name with each excerpt. Please note there are two extra options.

<div><div>A. <i>The Social Contract</i></div><div>B. <i>The Republic</i></div><div>C. <i>To the Lighthouse</i></div><div>D. <i>The Call of the Wild</i></div><div>E. <i>The Moon and Sixpence</i></div></div>	<div><div>1. If we were seeking for a piece of gold, you would not imagine that we were “knocking under to one another,” and so losing our chance of finding it. And why, when we are seeking for justice, a thing more precious than many pieces of gold, do you say that we are weakly yielding to one another and not doing our utmost to get at the truth?</div><div>2. What is the meaning of life? That was all — a simple question; one that tended to close in on one with years. The great revelation had never come. The great revelation perhaps never did come. Instead there were little daily miracles, illuminations, matches struck unexpectedly in the dark.</div><div>3. Each one of us is alone in the world. He is shut in a tower of brass, and can communicate with his fellows only by signs, and the signs have no common value, so that their sense is vague and uncertain.</div></div>
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Question 4 (Suggested completion time: 2 minutes)

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



Accuracy in timekeeping is measured by how precisely the length of each “tick” matches the length of every other “tick” . The atomic clock’ s form of timekeeping is so accurate that our current definition of what a “second” is comes from the best atomic clocks currently around — cesium atomic clocks. Scientists measure clock accuracy by their level of systematic uncertainty, which is a type of error rate.

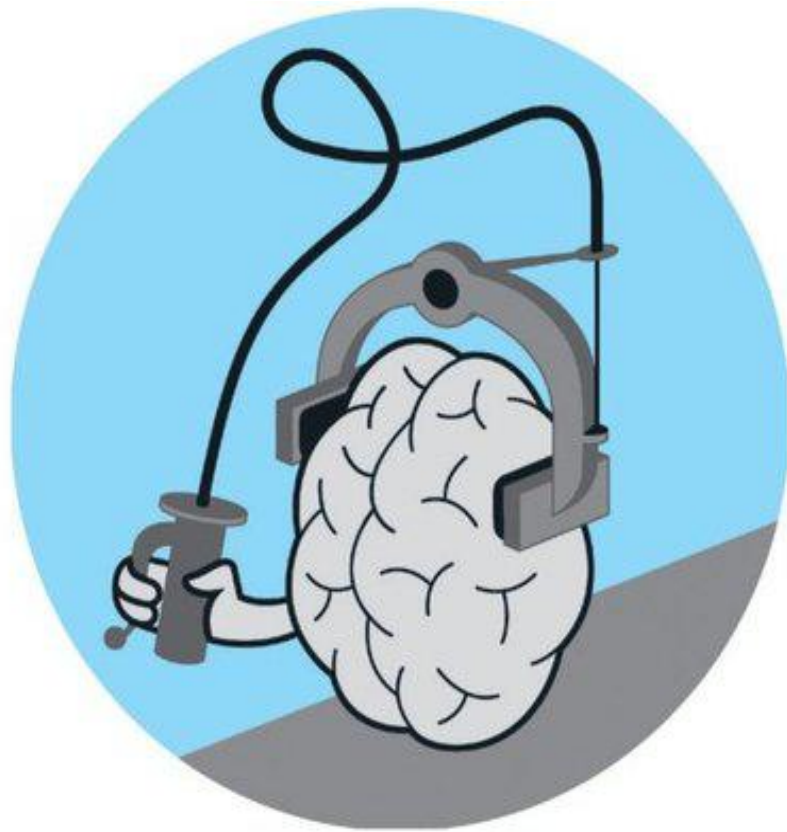
The Germans’ single-ion clock kicks the atomic clock’ s timekeeping butt on that score. Its systematic uncertainty is 3×10^{-18} . That’ s 100 times better than a cesium atomic clock, an accuracy that scientists have been trying to attain since physicist Hans Dehmelt said it was possible back in 1981.

4. What can we know from the text?

- A) The cesium atomic clock has an error rate of 3×10^{-18} .
- B) The single-ion clock is currently the most accurate in timekeeping.
- C) Best atomic clocks boost perfect systematic certainty.
- D) The length of each clock tick defines what a “second” is.

Question 5 (Suggested completion time: 2 minutes)

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



Everyone has unwelcome thoughts from time to time. But such intrusions can signal serious psychiatric conditions — from “flashbacks” in post-traumatic stress disorder to obsessive negative thinking in depression to hallucinations in schizophrenia. “These are some of the most debilitating symptoms,” says neuroscientist Michael Anderson at the University of Cambridge.

New research led by Anderson and neuroscientist Taylor Schmitz, now at McGill University, suggests these symptoms may all stem from a faulty brain mechanism responsible for blocking thoughts. Researchers studying this faculty usually focus on the prefrontal cortex, a control center that directs the activity of other brain regions. But Anderson and his colleagues noticed that conditions featuring intrusive thoughts — such as schizophrenia — often involve increased activity in the hippocampus, an important memory region. The severity of symptoms such as hallucinations also increases with this elevated activity.

5. What can we learn from Anderson’ s research?

- A) Some mental disorders have debilitating symptoms.
- B) Prefrontal cortex is mainly responsible for psychiatric diseases.
- C) Intrusive thoughts are dangerous but can be controlled.
- D) Unwanted thoughts involve elevated activity in the hippocampus.

Question 6 (Suggested completion time: 2 minutes)

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

Being an expert in one thing doesn't mean having to become an expert in everything, and loving science doesn't have to mean lots of time spent alone. As kids, kitchen experiments and basement engineering projects can mean time with friends instead of time away from them. As adults, a career in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) can mean getting to work with all kinds of different experts to see what you can do as a team.

While a single bad grade or a confusing experience with chemistry can easily convince a kid that they aren't cut out for science, imagining STEM careers as lonely futures can convince kids that they wouldn't have wanted to do it anyway. But entering the world of STEM is far from isolating; it means becoming part of a broad network of people with shared interests and experiences.

6. What does the writer say about a career in STEM?

- A) It is far from being boring and isolating.
- B) It doesn't need people to become an expert.
- C) It doesn't require good grades and talent.
- D) It means spending a lot of time alone.

Question 7 (Suggested completion time: 2 minutes)

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

Researchers believe Mars once had a liquid core, as evidenced by the magnetism this generated and which is still retained in many of the planet's rocks. Whether any of that ancient fluid persists is something InSight (a mission to Mars launched by the American space agency NASA) will test by using radio equipment to observe how Mars shifts on its axis of rotation.

"If you take a raw egg and a cooked egg and you spin them, they wobble differently because of the distribution of liquid in the interior," explained InSight's deputy project scientist, Dr. Suzanne Smrekar.

"So by tracking our spacecraft very precisely, we're able to see how Mars wobbles and that really tells us a lot of information about the core of Mars."

7. How will researchers test whether there is a liquid core on Mars?

- A) By observing how Mars rotates.
- B) By modeling its rotating orbit.
- C) By spinning different eggs on the planet.
- D) By detecting its magnetism.

Question 8 (Suggested completion time: 2 minutes)

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

It's easy to feel enticed by an airline or a hotel loyalty program. After all, who wouldn't want a free flight, a room upgrade or other lucrative benefits? The catch — as any program loyalist can attest to — is that maximizing travel rewards can be challenging. While it's often easy to join a program, attaining meaningful perks and rewards may come with a string of caveats. ***So how can you tell if a program is worth your time and effort?***

To create the sixth annual rankings, *U.S. News* editors evaluated each loyalty program based on key attributes that everyday travelers value, such as the size and diversity of each airline or hotel network and how quickly you can accumulate enough miles or points to earn a free flight or hotel stay. Our rankings also take into account the number of ways you can use rewards and the added benefits you receive as a member.

8. Why does the author pose the question at the end of the first paragraph?

- A) To challenge the reader into thinking about the possible answer.
- B) To serve as a reader guidance device and to signal the following subject.
- C) To arouse the reader's interest and to summarize the main purpose.
- D) To include the reader in the discussion with the writer.

Question 9 (Suggested completion time: 2 minutes)

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

"Does being waitlisted count as half an acceptance?"

"Literally got waitlisted everywhere."

"Being waitlisted from your top choice is the worst feeling."

Those are just some of the thoughts that high school seniors have tweeted. They've opened their mail — or, more likely, an online portal — to finally hear decisions from colleges. But

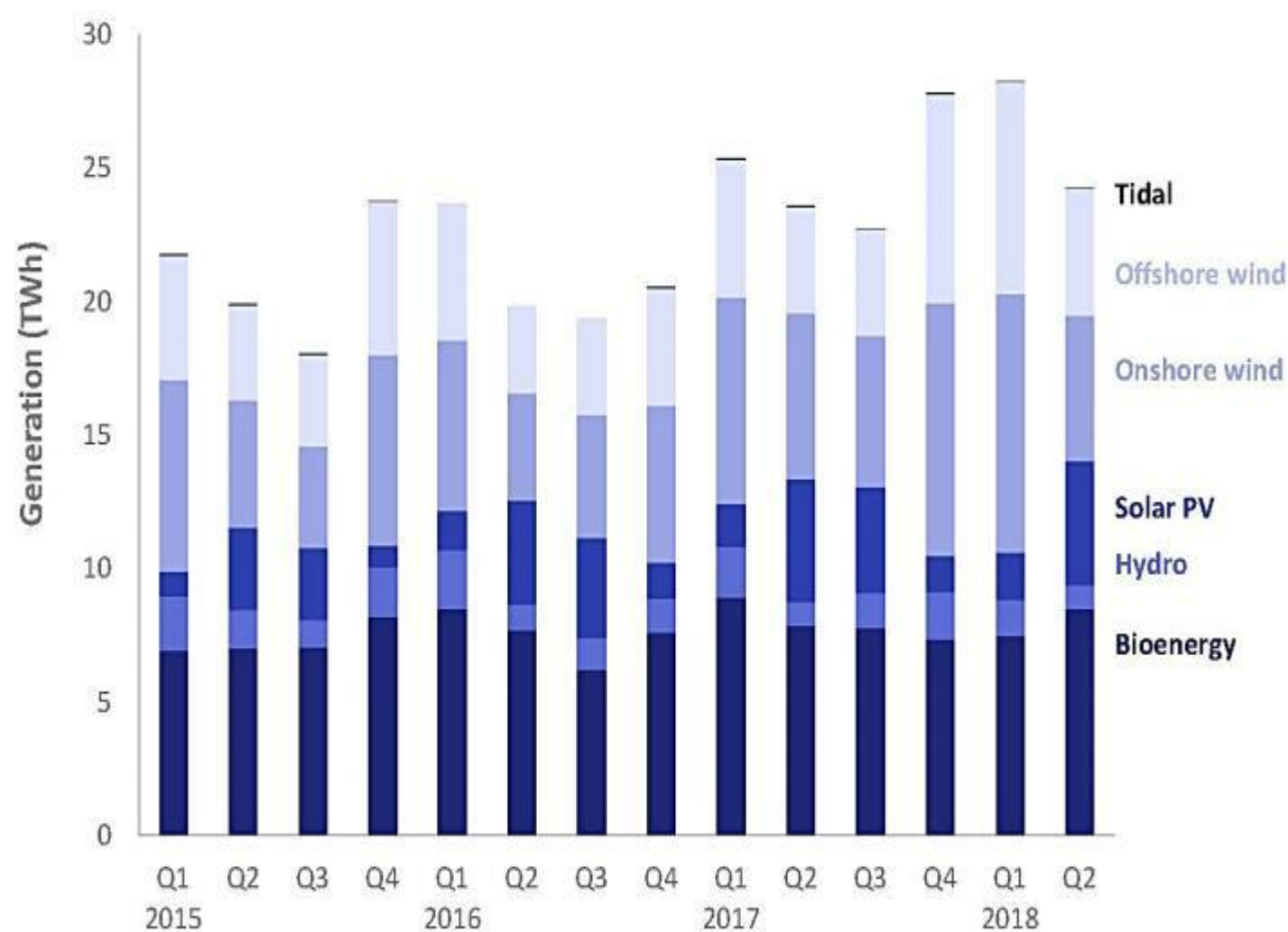
many didn't get one. The number of students placed on college waiting lists has climbed in recent years, leaving students hoping for the best — even when they might not have any reason to hope at all.

9. What does the writer imply about being waitlisted by colleges?

- A) It is hard for colleges to make the decision. C) It is equivalent to a conditioned acceptance.
B) It offers the best hope of admission. D) It does not necessarily lead to admission.

Question 10 (Suggested completion time: 5 minutes)

Directions: The figure shows power generation from renewable energies in UK from 2015 to 2018, categorized by quarters and types of energy. Answer the question according to the information in the figure.



Source : UK government report *Energy Trends*.

Note: TWh: terawatt hour; 1 TWh = 10^9 kilowatt hour

10. Which of the following is an INCORRECT description about the figure?

- A) Generally, electricity power generated by tidal energy remained the lowest from 2015 to 2018.
B) In 2017, the amount of power generated by bioenergy keeps decreasing, but starts to increase from the beginning of 2018.
C) In 2016, onshore wind takes the place of bioenergy, becoming the main power source generated by renewable energies.
D) Among all types of renewable energies, bioenergy occupies the largest portion in 2015, while the two smallest in portion are tidal energy and hydro energy.

Question 11 (Suggested completion time: 4 minutes)

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

Post-Designation

It refers to drawing a conclusion from correlations observed in a given sample, but only after the sample has already been drawn, and without declaring in advance what correlations the experimenter was expecting to find.

11. Which of the following provides a typical example of *Post-Designation*?

A) In looking at the records of my students, I have found that 9 out of 10 are an only child of their family. Therefore, society is moving towards one-child families.

C) Everybody has a brain. Therefore, there is a single brain we all share.

B) A parent says that the teacher doesn't know how to teach because she graduated from a community college.

D) You claim to know David but you must be lying. You admitted you didn't know the hooded man over there in the corner, but the hooded man is David.

Question 12 (Suggested completion time: 4 minutes)

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

Lying with Statistics

Also known as Statistical Fallacy, it refers to an entire class of fallacies that result in presenting statistical data in a very biased way, and interpreting statistics without questioning the methods behind collecting and presenting the data.

12. Which of the following provides a typical example of *Lying with Statistics*?

A) Of course we should buy IBM's computers whenever we need new computers. Up till now we've bought tens of thousands IBMs.

C) Since they have asked dozens of questions concerning the topics discussed in class, the students are ready for a test.

B) Did you see that bar graph in *USA Today*? It showed a HUGE spike in the moral decline of our country!

D) What she says about Johannes Kepler's astronomy of the 1600s must be just so much garbage. Do you realize she's only fifteen years old?

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

Wine is made by crushing grapes and eventually separating the juice from the grape skins. However, the separated juice contains impurities and many wineries do not filter the juice. These wineries claim the unfiltered juice ultimately produces a more flavorful and intense wine. Since these wine makers are experts, we should trust their judgment and not shy away from unfiltered wine.

13. Which of the following, if true, most strongly supports the conclusion above?

- A) Some drinkers believe that cloudy wine is suspect — badly kept or the dog-end of the barrel that is going to make you sick.
- B) The development of wine-making craft helps keep the grape's original flavor and nutrition.
- C) Not only is unfiltered wine natural and environmentally friendly, it is also vegan-friendly and some claim that it has health benefits, too.
- D) Wine consumers drink with their eyes and, for many wine enthusiasts, opaque wine just doesn't look right.

The rapid diminishment of the ecosystem of the Amazon threatens the entire planet. Consequently, we must take immediate steps to convince the Brazilian government that planned development projects need to be curtailed for the simple reason that these development projects will greatly accelerate the loss of currently protected land.

14. Which of the following, if true, most seriously weakens the argument above?

- A) Wetlands help prevent soil erosion and can both remove greenhouse gases from the Earth's atmosphere and store them.
- B) Brazil's meat industry, as is the case with much of the world's beef sector, is highly inefficient: The average head of cattle needs one hectare.
- C) So far there is much evidence of the lately built dam that contributes to the bio-balance.
- D) Planned development projects may endanger the biological diversity of the ecosystem and increase the risk of flooding.

Questions 15-17 (Suggested completion time: 7 minutes)

Directions: Read the text about math education. Answer the questions according to the text.

In recent years, the common wisdom has been that girls are dominating when it comes to academic achievement. In reading in particular, girls have consistently outperformed boys. Some studies have also found that in a typical U.S. school district, girls have all but caught up in math — a subject in which they had historically underperformed and from which they' d been discouraged thanks to persistent stereotypes about their academic interests. Take away the burden of challenging stereotypes and discriminatory beliefs and practices, the thinking goes, and girls will do just as well as boys in the STEM fields.

But now, a new study by a team of researchers led by the Stanford education professor Sean Reardon finds that girls' dominance in school isn' t the case across demographics. Yes, the study confirms: Overall, in the average U.S. school district, girls and boys are performing about the same in math. But the study finds that in communities in which most families are affluent and white, and in which adult men far outearn women in income, girls continue to lag behind their male peers in math achievement. In some of these districts, boys on average outperformed girls in math by two-fifths of a grade level.

Described as the most comprehensive analysis of its kind to date, and drawing from roughly 260 million standardized-test scores from close to 10,000 U.S. school districts, the study looked at data from seven school years, starting in the fall of 2008. Overall the analysis found that, while girls maintain their edge in reading regardless of their geographic location, they either tend to significantly outperform or significantly lag behind boys in math.

“We set out saying that some districts are going to have more stereotypical gender achievement gaps — larger math gaps favoring boys, larger reading gaps favoring girls — and others that are maybe less stereotypical,” said Erin Fahle, who co-authored the study and earns her Ph.D. in education policy from Stanford in June, 2018. “Instead what we found was that districts tend to advantage boys or advantage girls.”

At the other end of the affluence spectrum, a near-opposite phenomenon is playing out: In poor communities of color, namely those where families are predominantly black or Latino, girls on average outperformed boys in math by one-fifth of a grade level, in addition to significantly outperforming them in reading. The new study lends credence to claims that boys in low-income black or Hispanic districts deserve some of the closest attention as policymakers, educators, and parents strive to eliminate gender disparities. “We focus so much on female children' s opportunities in STEM, which is really important and has a large potential economic consequence,” Fahle said. “But we also have to realize that boys' opportunities are constrained by gender, too.”

15. Which of the following is NOT a stereotype of girls?

- A) Girls have greater academic achievements than boys. C) Girls have not as much interest in math as boys.
B) Girls lag behind boys in math achievement. D) Girls are more proficient in reading than boys.

16. What can we learn about the new study by Stanford?

- A) Boys in rich white families tend to underperform girls in math. C) Girls still take a lead over boys in reading across the country.
B) Girls' advantage over boys in math varies from place to place. D) It's the longest continual study of this kind ever conducted.

17. What can be inferred from the findings of the new study by Stanford?

- A) Gender disparities have received too much unnecessary attention. C) The potential economic result of girls' opportunities deserves consideration.
B) It's really important to get rid of all forms of race and gender disparities. D) Boys and girls should be given equal attention in academic opportunities.

Questions 18-20 (Suggested completion time: 7 minutes)

Directions: Read the text about the English accent. Answer the questions according to the text.

People often talk about the English language as if it is a thing to keep pretty — a petticoat that might be sullied by the spread of glottal stops, text-speak or slang. The latest to weigh in is the writer and critic Jonathan Meades, in a column mourning the decline of Received Pronunciation (RP). Meades argues that the accent — also known as the Queen's English or BBC English — should be regarded as “a sort of glue, a force for uniting the country” and “celebrated as a tool of social mobility” .

The term RP has murky origins, but it is regarded as the accent of those with power, influence, money and a fine education — and was adopted as a standard by the BBC in 1922. Today, it is used by 2% of the population.

The idea that an accent should facilitate or hinder a person's success is, of course, distasteful, but entirely true: the powerful elite will recoil from those who sound different from them; those who sound different feel out of place and unwelcome.

My own accent is slightly confusing. People are frequently surprised to learn that I come from Lancashire and went to my local comprehensive — save for the flat vowels of, say, “bath” and

“laugh” , I don’ t have much northernness. Often, people assume that I deliberately modified my accent when I went to Oxford, joined *The Guardian* or started presenting for the BBC, but these people were never party to my school years, where I was teased mercilessly for sounding “posh” and like a “snob” .

The truth is a little plainer: my mum was the esteemed winner of the elocution prize at her school in Wigan in the 1960s and when my brother and I were growing up she continually corrected our speech, spurred, I imagine, by the fear that unless we spoke “properly” we wouldn’ t go anywhere.

The world has changed since then, and it’ s a world I like better. The voices we hear on the radio and TV and in positions of power are slowly shifting and this gladdens me. I would be lying if I said that the RP tinges of my accent have not helped me move through the world, but also I know that my shades of Lancastrian have helped, too — at times, each has given me something to push against; at others, it is my support.

Perhaps these days we are seeing not so much a decline in RP as a growing accent fluidity. True social mobility should allow us to move in all directions; to know and welcome all people, to speak and listen to everyone. Surely that, Mr. Meades, should be our glue; our force for uniting the country?

18. Why was the author laughed at in her school years?

- A) The author couldn’ t pronounce the word “posh” accurately. C) The author spoke with a Received Pronunciation accent.
B) The author had a pronounced Lancashire accent. D) The author modified her accent on purpose.

19. What is the author’ s attitude towards the fate that RP may be dying out?

- A) Sentimental. B) Long-expected. C) Indifferent. D) Nostalgic.

20. Which of the following is NOT true according to the text?

- A) The author agrees with Mr. Meades’ remark on the function of Received Pronunciation. C) The author’ s mother has played an important role in helping her speak with an RP accent.
B) Received Pronunciation is now only used by a tiny fraction of the population. D) The author’ s RP accent has assumed both positive and negative functions in her life.

Questions 21-23 (Suggested completion time: 7 minutes)

Directions: Read the text about smartphone sensors. Answer the questions according to the text.



Consider everything your smartphone has done for you today. Counted your steps? Deposited a check? Transcribed notes? Navigated you somewhere new?

Smartphones make for such versatile pocket assistants because they're equipped with a suite of sensors, including some we may never think — or even know — about, sensing, for example, light, humidity, pressure and temperature.

Because smartphones have become essential companions, those sensors probably stayed close by throughout your day: the car cup holder, your desk, the dinner table and nightstand. If you're like the vast majority of smartphone

users, the phone' s screen may have been black, but the device was probably on the whole time.

“Sensors are finding their ways into every corner of our lives,” says Maryam Mehrnezhad, a computer scientist at Newcastle University in England. That’s a good thing when phones are using their observational dexterity to do our bidding. But the plethora of highly personal information that smartphones are privy to also makes them powerful potential spies.

Online app store Google Play has already discovered apps abusing sensor access. Google recently ***booted*** 20 apps from Android phones and its app store because the apps could — without the user's knowledge — record with the microphone, monitor a phone's location, take photos, and then extract the data. Stolen photos and sound bites (a brief recorded statement broadcast especially on a television news program) pose obvious privacy invasions. But even seemingly innocuous sensor data can potentially broadcast sensitive information. A smartphone's movement may reveal what users are typing or disclose their whereabouts. Even barometer readings that subtly shift with increased altitude could give away which floor of a building you're standing on, suggests Ahmed Al-Haiqi, a security researcher at the National Energy University in Kajang, Malaysia.

These sneaky intrusions may not be happening in real life yet, but concerned researchers in academia and industry are working to head off eventual invasions. Some scientists have designed invasive apps and tested them on volunteers to shine a light on what smartphones can reveal about their owners. Other researchers are building new smartphone security systems to help protect users from myriad real and hypothetical privacy invasions, from stolen PIN codes to stalking.

21. Which statement is NOT true according to the text?

- A) It is sensors that make smartphones our versatile assistants. C) Sensors stop working only when smartphones are not in use.

- B) Sensors are serving every aspect of our daily life. D) There are many unknown sensors in our smartphones.

22. The word **booted** in Paragraph 5 is closest in meaning to _____.

- A) ingested B) installed C) removed D) recalled

23. Why did some scientists design and test invasive apps?

- A) They aimed to develop new security systems for smartphones. C) They wanted to stop privacy from being leaked through smartphones.
B) They strove to learn how to distinguish invasive apps from others. D) They attempted to protect the whereabouts of smartphone users.

Questions 24-27 (Suggested completion time: 9 minutes)

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

Your skin is your largest organ and a crucial part of several bodily functions. Not only is it the flexible, self-healing barrier that supports the immune system, but it's also part of the integumentary system, the network of dead epidermal cells – hair, fingernails and toenails – that helps slough off cellular waste material. Sweat glands in the skin also play active roles in the excretory system, or the organs and glands that flush out toxins and excess minerals from the body.

Dead skin cells are a form of bodily waste that facilitates the growth of new epidermal cells. Every minute, you lose 30,000 to 40,000 dead skin cells, all of which are replaced immediately by fresh skin tissue. The body does an excellent job of sloughing off skin cells through normal activity, but regular bathing is definitely a plus.

You don't need to exfoliate, or remove dead skin cells with special cleansers or washcloths, to get rid of dead skin waste, but beauty experts believe you should for a healthier complexion.

However, dermatologists (皮肤病专家) warn against overexfoliation, which can leave skin raw, red and vulnerable to bacteria.

Sweating is another way that skin helps remove waste from the body, but it's not as effective as sauna lovers might think. The chief role of sweat is thermoregulation, cooling us off when exercise or high temperatures cause our internal mercury to rise. The negligible detoxifying benefits of sweat are simply a side effect of this cooling process.

Most of us come with two types of sweat glands: eccrine glands and apocrine glands. Eccrine glands cover the majority of your body and are responsible for the cooling effect of sweating.

Eccrine sweat is almost entirely water with a little salt and potassium, but it also contains trace amounts of ammonia, uric acid and urea – all waste byproducts of the body's metabolism of nitrogen.

Since sweat is associated with body odor, you might think that that foul stench has something to do with the toxins and bodily waste flushed out by sweating. But that's not the case. The liver and kidneys – with help from the rest of the urinary system and digestive system – do 99 percent of the heavy lifting when it comes to ridding the body of waste, toxic or otherwise. Only tiny amounts of toxins and waste products, like the ammonia and urea mentioned above, are found in sweat.

Sweat itself has no odor. The smelly effect is the fault of apocrine glands located in the groin, armpits and other hairy body parts. These glands produce sweat that's rich with fatty proteins.

Apocrine sweat is still odorless, but bacteria colonies in these warm, moist areas metabolize the proteins, creating that famously foul smell.

24-26 Decide whether the following statements are True or False according to the text.

24. Dermatologists disagree with beauty experts concerning how to remove dead skin cells with special cleansers or washcloths.

A) True. B) False.

25. Sauna lovers make use of sweating to remove body wastes.

A) True. B) False.

26. The smelly odor of sweat is not caused by toxins and waste products in sweat but by fatty proteins.

A) True. B) False.

27. What is the best title for the text?

A) Do You Really Know Your Skin?

C) Things Dermatologists Didn' t Tell You

B) How Does Your Skin Eliminate Waste?

D) The Secrets and Misconceptions of Sweating

Questions 28-30 (Suggested completion time: 7 minutes)

Directions: Read the following news and answer the questions according to the news.

The number of calls to fire crews to help lift obese people from their homes has more than doubled in five years, figures revealed on July 15, 2018. In 2017 firefighters were called out 909 times to help move morbidly obese patients, compared to 426 times in 2012.

Between 2012 and 2017, the latest figures available show there were 3,873 callouts made to help the immobile and overweight in Britain. One patient who had to be moved weighed 60

stones (about 381 kilograms), according to West Midlands fire chiefs. Campaigners say the figures are draining already overstretched fire services and are further proof that the Government urgently needs to get a grip on the spiraling obesity crisis.

Dispatching a fire engine is thought to cost in the region of £400, meaning such callouts may have cost more than £1.4 million since 2012.

Tam Fry, chairman of the National Obesity Forum, a charity which raises awareness in Britain, said: “The rise comes as no surprise. It’s not only a drain but the fire service is there to put out fires and each time they are called to an emergency rescue of an obese person they are away from doing their proper job. It will be truly awful if some overweight person is responsible for diverting a fire crew from their day job. The rescues have been building up steadily for the last 15 years and will continue to do so until we have a proper obesity strategy delivered by the Government. The fall, if any, _____28_____ for another 10 years because of the huge number of people who are being increasingly affected by morbid obesity.”

The figures, which were released following Freedom of Information requests, might be even higher because only 42 of the 52 fire services in Britain responded.

One obesity victim, John Morris, was twice **hoisted** from his home by firefighters for medical treatment following a fall. The 25st. cafe boss was lifted 50ft out of his home in Aberystwyth, west Wales. Paramedics said John, then 69, was too big to be carried down the stairs. They were forced to call in a fire brigade high ladder to get him out and to a hospital. John’s route to the waiting ambulance swung him out over a pub where regulars gathered outside to watch.

28. Which of the following most logically fills in the blank?

- | | |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| A) assumes massive proportions | C) brings a favorable turn |
| B) will solve the problem | D) will probably not take place |

29. What is the meaning of the word **hoisted**?

- A) elevated B) ousted C) dragged D) held

30. Which is the best title for the news?

- | | |
|--|---|
| A) Fire service to be banned from rescuing obese people | C) UK’s pressure in fighting against obesity mounting |
| B) Firefighters’ new job in the UK: Be the help of the obese | D) Heavy toll on firefighters as call-outs to move the obese soar |

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

Directions: Read three passages about gender equality. Answer the questions according to the passages.

Passage A

Equal does not mean identical

One might object that there are meaningful differences between males and females, and these in turn are the source of gender inequality. Some believe that “equality” is the wrong word to use, because males and females can’t be equal if they are different.

But when feminists refer to gender equality, we are not arguing that males and females are identical or indistinguishable on all behaviours, preferences and abilities. Nor does it mean all gender differences must be eliminated, or that we must have equal gender representation in every field.

For instance, there are many more male firefighters than female firefighters. Part of this is likely due to gender differences in work preferences. But it is also partly due to the physical strength tests used in recruiting firefighters. These include being able to lift a 72kg mannequin and drag it for 45 metres. Many fit men can achieve this feat, but substantially fewer fit women can.

Even in the absence of gender discrimination, we might always have fewer female firefighters simply because of such physical requirements. But as long as these requirements are reasonable for the job and no woman is excluded because she is a woman, then gender discrimination is not a problem. Gender equality doesn’t mean we must have a 50:50 balance of men and women in every profession purely for the sake of equal representation.

Equality or equity?

Gender equality also does not mean that males and females must always be treated the same. Given the existence of biological sex differences, it is reasonable for males and females to have different legal rights in some instances. For example, only females can ever require maternity leave specifically for pregnancy and birth.

In cases such as these, what is required is not 32 treatment, but 32 treatment. Equity means recognising that differences in ability mean that fairness often requires treating people differently so that they can achieve the same outcome. At times 32 is necessary to achieve gender 32, but there are many instances where this is not the case.

Most of the time, women and girls are at no inherent disadvantage due to a lack of ability that warrants differential treatment. Gender equality can often be achieved just by holding everyone to the same standard. The problem is the irrational gender bias that women and girls are routinely subjected to.

The purpose of affirmative action policies to increase female representation is to counteract systemic discrimination against women. Affirmative action creates gender equity by overcoming the barriers women face simply because of their gender. If we can eliminate this gender-based discrimination, no such action will be necessary.

Achieving gender equality

So if gender equality does not mean that males and females must be identical or always require the same treatment in order to achieve fairness, what does it mean?

Gender equality is seeing males and females as being of equal status and value. It is judging a person based on their merit, and not viewing them as inferior or superior purely based on their gender.

Passage B

If women don't like how much they're being paid by their employers, they should simply quit their jobs and work for themselves.

After all, if you're your own boss then you set the pay; if you don't like it, simply pay yourself more. Because that's exactly how self-employment works.

Sadly this simple solution to the gender pay gap runs into a problem when we look at the evidence. Research from the ONS (National Office of Statistics in the UK) shows that in 2016 full-time, self-employed men earned an average of £363 per week, while their female counterparts earned a third less at £243. And for a second there we thought we had the whole problem fixed.

The reality is that women in self-employment run into exactly the same problems that those working for someone else's business do. For a start we know that a large number of self-employed women are in sectors which are traditionally lower paid.

Clerical, caring and cleaning are less profitable professions dominated by self-employed women. This tendency to value female work less has been at the route of the employed gender pay gap debate; is it that women choose to work in sectors that are just naturally worth less, or is it that we value the work done by women less than the work done by men? We could debate this for days.

There is also the belief that women tend to ask for less than men, so therefore they are simply paid less. I'm always slightly skeptical of this idea and particularly when it comes to self-employment. As someone who has been freelancing for two years I can confirm that the first thing you learn is that if you don't earn, you don't eat, so you better get used to asking for money pretty fast.

I do however believe there is a difference in how we all treat men and women when they ask for money. A 2016 academic study showed that in employment both men and women would treat a female asking for a pay rise differently from a male. Although they might get the raise, the company would tend to hold it against them and see them as difficult or demanding.

This instinctive reaction teaches women that they can ask for money but it's going to be a difficult experience and they're going to be resented for it. Is it then any wonder that women become reluctant to ask?

For me, however, the greatest reason for the pay gap in self-employment is the motivation behind striking out on your own. For men, the most common reason is because they want to be their own boss, for women it's because they want a better work-life balance.

Passage C

What explains the tendency for nations that have traditionally less gender equality to have more women in science and technology than their gender-progressive counterparts do?

According to a new paper published in *Psychological Science* by the psychologists Gijsbert Stoet, at Leeds Beckett University, and David Geary, at the University of Missouri, it could have to do with the fact that women in countries with higher gender inequality are simply seeking the clearest possible path to financial freedom. And often, that path leads through STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) professions.

The issue doesn't appear to be girls' aptitude for STEM professions. In looking at test scores across 67 countries and regions, Stoet and Geary found that girls performed about as well or better than boys did on science in most countries, and in almost all countries, girls would have been capable of college-level science and math classes if they had enrolled in them.

But when it comes to their *relative* strengths, in almost all the countries — all except Romania and Lebanon — boys' best subject was science, and girls' was reading. (That is, even if an average girl was as good as an average boy at science, she was still likely to be even better at reading.) Across all countries, 24 percent of girls had science as their best subject, 25 percent of girls' strength was math, and 51 percent excelled in reading. For boys, the percentages were 38 for science, 42 for math, and 20 for reading. And the more gender-equal the country, as measured by the World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Index, the larger this gap between boys and girls in having science as their best subject. (The most gender-equal countries are the typical snowy utopias you hear about, like Sweden, Finland, and Iceland. Turkey and the United Arab Emirates rank among the least equal, according to the Global Gender Gap Index.)

The gap in reading "is related at least in part to girls' advantages in basic language abilities and a generally greater interest in reading; they read more and thus practice more," Geary told me.

What's more, the countries that minted the most female college graduates in fields like science, engineering, or math were also some of the least gender-equal countries. They posit that this is because the countries that empower women also empower them, indirectly, to pick whatever career they'd enjoy most and be best at.

"Countries with the highest gender equality tend to be welfare states," they write, "with a high level of social security." Meanwhile, less gender-equal countries tend to also have less social support for people who, for example, find themselves unemployed. Thus, the authors suggest, girls in those countries might be more inclined to choose STEM professions, since they offer a more certain financial future than, say, painting or writing.

31. In Passage A, what does the author intend to argue for by citing the example of firefighters?

- A) The differences between males and females cannot be ignored.
- B) Women should not be denied the job because of gender.
- C) Females are generally too weak to meet the job requirements.
- D) Gender differences are not the reason for gender inequality.

32. Choose the proper words to fill in the blanks in Passage A.

- A) equal...equitable...equality...equity
- B) equal...equitable...equity...equality
- C) equitable...equal...equality...equity
- D) equitable...equal...equity...equality

33. According to Passage A, what shall we do to achieve gender equality?

- A) Eliminate the differences between men and women.
- B) Offer the same treatment to men and women.
- C) Avoid judging a person with gender biases.
- D) Set the same requirements for both genders.

34. What can we conclude from the research conducted by the ONS in Passage B?

- A) Self-employment does not narrow the gender pay gap.
- B) Men are generally paid more than women doing the same work.
- C) Working for oneself doesn't generate more income than for others.
- D) Women can overcome being lower-paid with self-employment.

35. According to Passage B, what is the main reason that self-employed women earn less than men?

- A) It is that they are incapable to work as long as men.
- B) It is that they are reluctant to ask for more payment.
- C) It is that they have different understandings of values.
- D) It is that they tend to choose those less profitable careers.

36-37 Decide whether the following statements are True or False according to Passage C

36. Stoet and Geary have found in their study that there is no remarkable gender difference on the study capability of science.

- A) True.
- B) False.

37. Financial security in the future rather than interest motivates girls to choose STEM in less gender-equal countries.

- A) True.
- B) False.

38-40. Read the following summaries. Decide which passage each summary corresponds to.

38. Equal rights are not enough. Inequality exists in our minds, in our biases and prejudices, and that remains to be fixed.

- A) Passage A B) Passage B C) Passage C D) None of the passages

39. The gender wage gap gets a lot of attention, and for good reasons. At the current snail's pace by which it's closing worldwide, the World Economic Forum says it will take about 200 years to close the pay gap. But there are other financial imbalances holding many women back and keeping them from economic independence.

- A) Passage A B) Passage B C) Passage C D) None of the passages

40. Self-employed women are doing the same juggling act their employed peers are doing, and they're being punished for it in the same way. The gender pay gap doesn't disappear because you work for yourself.

- A) Passage A B) Passage B C) Passage C D) None of the passages

Question 41 (Suggested completion time: 40 minutes)

Directions: Read the following two excerpts. Excerpt A is from *The Renaissance: A Very Short Introduction* by Jerry Brotton. Excerpt B is from *Humanism and the Culture of Renaissance Europe* by Charles G. Nauert. Write a short essay according to the two excerpts.

Excerpt A

Humanism's success lay in its claim to offer two things to its followers. First, it fostered a belief that the mastery of the classics made you a better, more "humane" person, able to reflect on the moral and ethical problems that the individual faced in relation to his/her social world. Secondly, it convinced students and employers that the study of classical texts provided the practical skills necessary for a future career as an ambassador, lawyer, priest, or secretary within the layers of bureaucratic administration that began to emerge throughout 15th-century Europe. Humanist training in translation, letter-writing, and public speaking was viewed as a highly marketable education for those who wanted to enter the ranks of the social elite.

This sounds a long way from the romantic, idealized picture of humanists rescuing the great books of classical culture and absorbing their wisdom in creating a civilized society. It is. Renaissance humanism had a pragmatic aim to supply a framework for professional advancement, in particular to prepare men for government. A modern humanities education is constructed on the same model (the term is itself drawn from the Latin *studia humanitatis*). It promises the same benefits, and arguably retains the same flaws. It relies on the assumption that a non-vocational study of the liberal arts makes you a more civilized person, and gives you the linguistic and rhetorical skills required to succeed in the workplace. However, there are abiding tensions built into this assumption, tensions that can be traced back to Renaissance humanism.

Excerpt B

What is hard for modern people to grasp but seemed obvious to Italians of the Renaissance is that education in humanistic subjects appeared practical while education in logic and natural science, the dominant subjects in the medieval liberal-arts curriculum, seemed to breed idle debate about purely speculative issues that were useless for real life. What was useful was not primarily knowledge of facts about nature (even if the facts were true) but the making of wise moral choices. This moral goal and the related need for skill in persuading others through aptly shaped speech and writing already found clear expression in Petrarch (a scholar, poet of Renaissance Italy and the founder of Humanism). Rhetorical skill and character development became and remained the advantages claimed for humanistic education, even though recent scholarship suggests that actual classroom practice gave far more attention to questions of Latin style than to close analysis of the moral issues raised by the treatises and orations of Cicero (Roman statesman, orator, lawyer and philosopher) and other classical moralists whose books were studied in the schools.

41. Write a short essay of about 300 words based on your understanding of the two excerpts. Remember to write in your OWN words. Your essay should respond to the following questions:

- 1) What benefits did Renaissance humanism promise to offer (people) according to Excerpt A?
- 2) What do Excerpt A and Excerpt B agree on the goal of humanistic education?
- 3) What is your opinion on the role of humanistic education in modern society?