

Writing and Language

Questions 12-22

The symbol **12** indicates that question 12 references this portion of the passage.

Tiny Exhibit, Big Impact

The first time I visited the Art Institute of Chicago, I expected to be impressed by its famous large paintings.

12 On one hand, I couldn't wait to view **13** painter, Georges Seurat's, 10-foot-wide *A Sunday Afternoon on the Island of La Grande Jatte* in its full size. It took me by surprise, then, when my favorite exhibit at the museum was one of **14** it's tiniest; the Thorne Miniature Rooms.

Viewing the exhibit, I was amazed by the intricate details of some of the more ornately decorated rooms. I marveled at a replica of a salon (a formal living room) dating back to the reign of French king Louis XV. **15** Built into the dark paneled walls are bookshelves stocked with leather-bound volumes. The couch and chairs, in keeping with the style of the time, are characterized by elegantly curved arms and **16** legs, they are covered in luxurious velvet. A dime-sized portrait of a French aristocratic woman hangs in a golden frame.

This exhibit showcases sixty-eight miniature rooms inserted into a wall at eye level. Each furnished room consists of three walls; the fourth wall is a glass pane through which museumgoers observe. The rooms and their furnishings were painstakingly created to scale at 1/12th their actual size, so that one inch in the exhibit correlates with one foot in real life. A couch, for example, is seven inches long, and **17** that is based on a seven-foot-long couch. Each room represents a distinctive style of European, American, or Asian interior design from the thirteenth to twentieth centuries.

The plainer rooms are more sparsely **18** furnished. Their architectural features, furnishings, and decorations are just as true to the periods they represent. One of my favorite rooms in the whole exhibit, in fact, is an 1885 summer kitchen. The room is simple but spacious, with a small sink and counter along one wall, a cast-iron wood stove and some hanging pots and pans against another wall, and **19** a small table under a window of the third wall. Aside from a few simple wooden

35 chairs placed near the edges of the room, the floor is open and obviously well worn.

As I walked through the exhibit, I overheard a **20** visitors' remark, "You know, that grandfather clock actually runs. Its glass door swings open, and the clock can be wound up." **21**

40 Dotted with pin-sized knobs, another visitor noticed my fascination with a tiny writing desk and its drawers. "All of those little drawers pull out. And you see that hutch? Can you believe it has a secret compartment?" Given the exquisite craftsmanship and level of detail I'd already seen, I certainly
45 could.