

GT Reading Mock Test 15:

Part 3: Question 28-40

You should spend about **20** minutes on Questions **28-40** which are based on the text below.

General Training Reading: The history of cinema

Read the text below and answer **Questions 28-40**.

Questions 28-30

Which **THREE** possible reasons for American dominance of the film industry are given in the text 'The history of cinema'?

*Write answers **A-F** in boxes **28-30** on your answer sheet.*

A plenty of capital to purchase what it didn't have

B making films dealing with serious issues

C being first to produce a feature film

D well-written narratives

E the effect of the First World War

F excellent special effects

28.

29.

30.

The history of cinema

The history of the cinema in its first thirty years is one of major and, to this day, unparalleled expansion and growth. Beginning as something unusual in a handful of big cities - New York, London, Paris and Berlin - the new medium quickly found its way across the world, attracting larger and larger audiences wherever it was shown and replacing other forms of entertainment as it did so. As audiences grew, so did the places where films were shown, finishing up with the 'great picture palaces' of the 1920s, which rivalled, and occasionally superseded, theatres and opera-houses in terms of opulence and splendour. Meanwhile, films themselves developed from being short 'attractions' only a couple of minutes long, to the full-length feature that has dominated the world's screens up to the present day.

Although French, German, American and British pioneers have all been credited with the invention of cinema, the British and the Germans played a relatively small role in its worldwide exploitation. It was above all the French, followed closely by the Americans, who were the most passionate exporters of the new invention, helping to start cinema in China, Japan, Latin America and Russia. In terms of artistic development it was again the French and the Americans who took the lead, though in the years before the First World War, Italy, Denmark and Russia also played a part.

In the end, it was the United States that was to become, and remain, the largest single market for films. By protecting their own market and pursuing a vigorous export policy, the Americans achieved a dominant position in the world market by the start of the First World War. The centre of film-making had moved westwards, to Hollywood, and it was

films from these new Hollywood studios that flooded onto the world's film markets in the years after the First World War, and have done so ever since. Faced with total Hollywood domination, few film industries proved competitive. The Italian industry, which had pioneered the feature film with spectacular films like *Quo vadis?* (1913) and *Cabiria* (1914), almost collapsed. In Scandinavia, the Swedish cinema had a brief period of glory, notably with powerful epic films and comedies. Even the French cinema found itself in a difficult position. In Europe, only Germany proved industrially capable, while in the new Soviet Union and in Japan, the development of the cinema took place in conditions of commercial isolation.

Hollywood took the lead artistically as well as industrially. Hollywood films appealed because they had better-constructed narratives, their special effects were more impressive, and the star system added a new dimension to the screen acting. If Hollywood did not have enough of its own resources, it had a great deal of money to buy up artists and technical innovations from Europe to ensure its continued dominance over present or future competition.

From early cinema, it was only American slapstick comedy that successfully developed in both short and feature format. However, during this 'Silent Film' era, animation, comedy, serials and dramatic features continued to thrive, along with factual films or documentaries, which acquired an increasing distinctiveness as the period progressed. It was also at this time that the avant-garde film first achieved commercial success, this time thanks almost exclusively to the French and the occasional German film.

Of the countries which developed and maintained distinctive national cinemas in the silent period, the most important were France, Germany and the Soviet Union. Of these, the French displayed the most continuity, in spite of the war and post-war economic uncertainties. The German cinema, relatively insignificant in the pre-war years, exploded onto the world scene after 1919. Yet even they were both overshadowed by the Soviets after the 1917 Revolution. They turned their back on the past, leaving the

style of the pre-war Russian cinema to the emigres who fled westwards to escape the Revolution.

The other countries whose cinemas changed dramatically are: Britain, which had an interesting but undistinguished history in the silent period; Italy, which had a brief moment of international fame just before the war; the Scandinavian countries, particularly Denmark, which played a role in the development of silent cinema quite out of proportion to their small population; and Japan, where a cinema developed based primarily on traditional theatrical and, to a lesser extent, other art forms and only gradually adapted to western influence.

Questions 31-33

Answer the questions below using **NO MORE THAN THREE WORDS** from the above reading passage for each answer.

*Write your answers in boxes **31-33** on your answer sheet.*

31. Which TWO types of film were not generally made in major studios?

32. Which type of film did America develop in both short and feature films?

33. Which type of film started to become profitable in the 'silent' period?

Questions 34 - 40

Look at the following statements (Questions **34-40**) and the list of countries below.

Match each statement with the correct country.

Write the correct letter **A-J** in boxes **34-40** on your answer sheet.

NB You may use any letter more than once.

- 34. It helped other countries develop their own film industry.
- 35. It was the biggest producer of films.
- 36. It was first to develop the 'feature' film.
- 37. It was responsible for creating stars.
- 38. It made the most money from 'avant-garde' films.
- 39. It made movies based more on its own culture than outside influences.
- 40. It had a great influence on silent movies, despite its size.

List of countries

- | | |
|-------------------|------------------------|
| A. France | F. Japan |
| B. Germany | G. Soviet Union |
| C. USA | H. Italy |
| D. Denmark | I. Britain |
| E. Sweden | J. China |

ANSWER
28-30. A, D, F (in either order) 31. cartoons, serials 32. slapstick// slapstick comedy // comedy 33. (the) avant(-)grade (film(s)) 34. A 35. C 36. H 37. C 38. A 39. F 40. D