

Passage.

At the heart of the enormous boom in wine consumption that has taken place in the English speaking world over the last two decades or so is a fascinating, happy paradox. In the days when wine was exclusively the preserve of a narrow cultural elite, bought either at auctions or from gentleman wine merchants in wing collars and bow-ties, to be stored in rambling cellars and decanted to order by one's butler, the ordinary drinker didn't get a look-in. Wine was considered a highly technical subject, in which anybody without the necessary ability could only fall flat on his or her face in embarrassment. It wasn't just that you needed a refined aesthetic sensibility for the stuff if it wasn't to be hopelessly wasted on you. It required an intimate knowledge of what came from where, and what it was supposed to taste like.

Those were times, however, when wine appreciation essentially meant a familiarity with the great French classics, with perhaps a smattering of other wines — like sherry and port. That was what the wine trade dealt in. These days, wine is bought daily in supermarkets and high-street chains to be consumed that evening, hardly anybody has a cellar to store it in and most don't even possess a decanter. Above all, the wines of literally dozens of countries are available on our market. When a supermarket offers its customers a couple of fruity little numbers from Brazil, we scarcely raise an eyebrow.

It seems, in other words, that the commercial jungle that wine has now become has not in the slightest deterred people from plunging adventurously into the thickets in order to taste and see. Consumers are no longer intimidated by the thought of needing to know their Pouilly-Fume from their Pouilly-Fuisse, just at the very moment when there is more to know than ever before.

The reason for this new mood of confidence is not hard to find. It is on every wine label from Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and the United States: the name of the grape from which the wine is made. At one time that might have sounded like a fairly technical approach in itself. Why should native English-speakers know what Cabernet Sauvignon or Chardonnay were? The answer lies in the popularity that wines made from those grape varieties now enjoy. Consumer effectively recognize them as brand names, and have acquired a basic lexicon of wine that can serve them even when confronted with those Brazilian upstarts.

In the wine heartlands of France, they are scared to death of that trend—not because they think their wine isn't as good as the best from California or South Australia (what French winemaker will ever admit that?) but because they don't traditionally call their wines Cabernet Saucignon or Chardonnay. They call them Chateau Ducru Beaucaillou or Corton-Charlemagne, and they aren't about the change. Some areas, in the middle of southern France, have now produced a generation of growers using the varietal names on their labels and are tempting consumers back to French wine. It will be an uphill struggle, but there is probably no other way if France is to avoid simply becoming a specialty source of old-fashioned wines for oldfashioned connoisseurs

Wine consumption was also given a significant boost in the early 1990s by the work of Dr. Serge Renaud, who has spent many years investigating the reasons for the uncannily low incidence of coronary heart disease in the south of France. One of his major findings is that the fat-derived cholesterol that builds up in the arteries and can eventually lead to heart trouble, can be dispersed by the tannins in wine. Tannin is derived from the skins of grapes, and is therefore present in higher levels in red wines, because they have to be infused with their skins to attain the red colour. That news caused a huge upsurge in red wine consumption in the United States. It has not been accorded the prominence it deserves in the UK, largely because the medical profession still sees all alcohol as a menace to health, and is constantly calling for it to be made prohibitively expensive. Certainly, the manufacturers of anticoagulant drugs might have something to lose if we all got the message that we would do just as well by our hearts by taking half a bottle of red wine every day!

Q. The tone that the author uses while asking “what French winemaker will ever admit that?” is best described as

1. caustic
2. satirical
3. critical
4. Hypocritical

Poem

As you set out for Ithaka
hope the journey is a long one,
full of adventure, full of discovery.
Laistrygonians and Cyclops,
angry Poseidon – don't be afraid of them:
you'll never find things like that on your way
as long as you keep your thoughts raised high,
as long as a rare excitement
stirs your spirit and your body.
Laistrygonians and Cyclops,
wild Poseidon – you won't encounter them
unless you bring them along inside your soul,
unless your soul sets them up in front of you.

Hope the voyage is a long one,
may there be many a summer morning when,
with what pleasure, what joy,
you come into harbours seen for the first time;
may you stop at Phoenician trading stations
to buy fine things,
mother of pearl and coral, amber and ebony,
sensual perfume of every kind –
as many sensual perfumes as you can;
and may you visit many Egyptian cities
to gather stores of knowledge from their scholars

Keep Ithaka always in your mind.
Arriving there is what you are destined for.
But do not hurry the journey at all.
Better if it lasts for years,
so you are old by the time you reach the island,
wealthy with all you have gained on the way,
not expecting Ithaka to make you rich.

Ithaka gave you the marvelous journey,
without her you would not have set out.
She has nothing left to give you now.
And if you find her poor, Ithaka won't have fooled you.
Wise as you will have become, so full of experience,
you will have understood by then what these Ithakas mean.

Q. Which of the following best reflects the tone of the poem?

1. Prescribing. 2. Exhorting. 3. Pleading. 4. Consoling.

Passage

Marketing executives in television work with a relatively stable advertising medium. In many ways, the television ads aired today are similar to those aired two decades ago. Most television ads still feature actors, still run 30 or 60 seconds, and still show a product. However, the differing dynamics of the Internet pose unique challenges to advertisers, forcing them to adapt their practices and techniques on a regular basis.

In the early days of Internet marketing, online advertisers employed banner and pop-up ads to attract customers. These techniques reached large audiences, generated many sales leads, and came at a low cost. However, a small number of Internet users began to consider these advertising techniques intrusive and annoying. Yet because marketing strategies relying heavily on banners and pop-ups produced results, companies invested growing amounts of money into purchasing these ad types in hopes of capturing market share in the burgeoning online economy. As consumers became more sophisticated, frustration with these online advertising techniques grew. Independent programmers began to develop tools that blocked banner and pop-up ads. The popularity of these tools exploded when the search engine Google, at the time an increasingly popular website fighting to solidify its place on the Internet with giants Microsoft and Yahoo, offered free software enabling users to block pop-up ads. The backlash against banner ads grew as new web browsers provided users the ability to block image-based ads such as banner ads. Although banner and pop-up ads still exist, they are far less prominent than during the early days of the Internet.

A major development in online marketing came with the introduction of pay-per-click ads. Unlike banner or pop-up ads, which originally required companies to pay every time a website visitor saw an ad, pay-per-click ads allowed companies to pay only when an interested potential customer clicked on an ad. More importantly, however, these ads circumvented the pop-up and banner blockers. As a result of these advantages and the incredible growth in the use of search engines, which provide excellent venues for pay-per-click advertising, companies began turning to pay-per-click marketing in droves. However, as with the banner and pop-up ads that preceded them, pay-per-click ads came with their drawbacks. When companies began pouring billions of dollars into this emerging medium, online advertising specialists started to notice the presence of what would later be called click fraud: representatives of a company with no interest in the product advertised by a competitor click on the competitor's ads simply to increase the marketing cost of the competitor. Click fraud grew so rapidly that marketers sought to diversify their online positions away from pay-per-click marketing through new mediums.

Although pay-per-click advertising remains a common and effective advertising tool, marketers adapted yet again to the changing dynamics of the Internet by adopting new techniques such as pay-per-performance advertising, search engine optimization, and affiliate marketing. As the pace of the Internet's evolution increases, it seems all the more likely that advertising successfully on the Internet will require a strategy that shuns constancy and embraces change.

Q. Which of the following words best describes the author's tone in the passage?

- A) Critical
- B) Analytical
- C) Frustrated
- D) Biased
- E) Surprised

Passage

Although websites such as Facebook and MySpace experienced exponential growth during the middle of the first decade of the 21st century, some users remain oblivious to the fact that the information they post online can come back to haunt them. First, employers can monitor employees who maintain a blog, photo diary, or website. Employers can look for controversial employee opinions, sensitive information disclosures, or wildly inappropriate conduct. For example, a North Carolina newspaper fired one of its features writers after she created a blog on which she anonymously wrote about the idiosyncrasies of her job and coworkers.

The second unintended use of information from social networking websites is employers who check on prospective employees. A June 11, 2006 *New York Times* article reported that many companies recruiting on college campuses use search engines and social networking websites such as MySpace, Xanga, and Facebook to conduct background checks. Although the use of MySpace or Google to scrutinize a student's background is somewhat unsettling to many undergraduates, the *Times* noted that the utilization of Facebook is especially shocking to students who believe that Facebook is limited to current students and recent alumni.

Corporate recruiters and prospective employers are not the only people interested in college students' lives. The third unintended use of social networking websites is college administrators who monitor the Internet—especially Facebook—for student misconduct. For example, a college in Boston's Back Bay expelled its student Government Association President for joining a Facebook group highly critical of a campus police sergeant. In addition, fifteen students at a state university in North Carolina faced charges in court for underage drinking because of photos that appeared on Facebook.

Although more users of websites such as Facebook are becoming aware of the potential pitfalls of online identities, many regular users still fail to take three basic security precautions. First, only make your information available to a specific list of individuals whom you approve. Second, regularly search for potentially harmful information about yourself that may have been posted by mistake or by a disgruntled former associate. Third, never post blatantly offensive material under your name or on your page as, despite the best precautions, this material will likely make its way to the wider world. By taking these simple steps, members of the digital world can realize the many benefits of e-community without experiencing some of the damaging unintended consequences.

Q. The tone of the passage suggests that the author's view toward e-community and the digital world can best be described as:

- A) Largely Pessimistic
- B) Frustrated
- C) Guardedly Optimistic
- D) Distressed
- E) Strongly Optimistic

Passage.

Prior to the fall of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR), Mikhail Gorbachev, seeing a country falling behind its Western rival and a people increasingly clamoring for change, addressed the growing internal unrest in the summer of 1987 by introducing a series of reforms known as perestroika (literally, restructuring). In *Perestroika: New Thinking for Our Country and the World*, Mikhail Gorbachev discussed his analysis of the problems facing the USSR and his plans to solve them.

Perhaps the most pressing and visible problem facing the USSR in the last 1980s came in the form of the country's consistently mediocre economic performance, despite its vast natural resource wealth and large labor force. Gorbachev flatly admitted that economic failures were increasing and current policies were failing to offer a sustainable remedy. Failing to take advantage of the numerous scientific and technological advancements available, the USSR relied on inefficient and outdated business models. As a result, Gorbachev said, "in the last fifteen years the national income growth rates had declined by more than a half and by the beginning of the eighties had fallen to a level close to economic stagnation." With business executives focused on using more resources (in order to employ more people) instead of becoming more efficient, the country produced poor quality products unable to compete in a global economy. Further, this inefficiency led to shortages: "the Soviet Union, the world's biggest producer of steel, raw materials, fuel and energy, has shortfalls in them due to wasteful or inefficient use."

The decrepit economy engendered social unrest and woe that only compounded economic difficulties and societal misery. Gorbachev wrote of "a gradual erosion of the ideological and moral values of our people" and noted the considerable growth in "alcoholism, drug addiction and crime." Accentuating these difficulties, the Communist government often ignored the needs of the average citizen, causing distrust and resentment. Perhaps the most destructive element of the social unraveling and inadequate government response was the mediocre education system. Gorbachev said, "Creative thinking was driven out from the social sciences, and superfluous and voluntarist assessments and judgments were declared indisputable truths."

Although Gorbachev also opined about the growing public disbelief in the content of the immense government propaganda campaigns, the extent to which economic underdevelopment and social deviance gripped Soviet culture made the collapse of the USSR virtually inevitable in the minds of many observers. When combined with *glasnost* (literally, openness), Gorbachev's plan that allowed greater transparency, *perestroika* actually served to hasten the collapse of the USSR. Contrary to its purpose, *perestroika* ensured that the fall of the USSR would occur sooner rather than later. Only a few years after Gorbachev implemented changes that would have been unthinkable and antithetical to the philosophy of previous leaders like Lenin, Stalin, and Khrushchev, the USSR fell.

Q. Which of the following words best describes the passage's tone?

- A) Primarily Analytical
- B) Highly Critical
- C) Frustrated
- D) Not Objective
- E) Deeply Introspective

Passage.

On the surface, the conquest of the Aztec empire by Hernan Cortes is one of the most amazing military accomplishments in history. With a small fighting force numbering in the hundreds, Cortes led the Spanish explorers into victory against an Aztec population that many believe topped 21 million. In light of such a seemingly impossible victory, the obvious question is: how did a small group of foreign fighters manage to topple one of the world's strongest, wealthiest, and most successful military empires?

Several factors led to Cortes' success. First, the Spanish exploited animosity toward the Aztecs among rival groups and convinced thousands of locals to fight. In one account of a battle, it is recorded that at least 200,000 natives fought with Cortes. Next, the Spanish possessed superior military equipment in the form of European cannons, guns, and crossbows, leading to effective and efficient disposal of Aztec defenses. For example, Spanish cannons quickly defeated large Aztec walls that had protected the empire against big and less technically advanced armies.

Despite the Spanish advantages, the Aztecs probably could have succeeded in defending their capital city of Tenochtitlan had they leveraged their incredible population base to increase their army's size and ensured that no rogue cities would ally with Cortes. In order to accomplish this later goal, Aztec leader Motecuhzoma needed to send envoys to neighboring cities telling their inhabitants about the horrors of Spanish conquest and the inevitability of Spanish betrayal.

In addition, the Aztecs should have exploited the fact that the battle was taking place on their territory. No reason existed for the Aztecs to consent to a conventional battle, which heavily favored the Spanish. Motecuhzoma's forces should have thought outside the box and allowed Cortes into the city, only to subsequently use hundreds of thousands of fighters to prevent escape and proceed in surprise "door-to-door" combat. With this type of battle, the Aztecs would have largely thwarted Spanish technological supremacy. However, in the end, the superior weaponry of the Spanish, the pent-up resentment of Aztec rivals, the failure of Aztec diplomacy, and the lack of an unconventional Aztec war plan led to one of the most surprising military outcomes in the past one thousand years.

Q. The author's tone can best be described as?

- A) Frustrated
- B) Angry
- C) Optimistic
- D) Analytical
- E) Introspective