

READING PASSAGE 3

You should spend about 20 minutes on **Questions 27-40**, which are based on Reading Passage 3 below.

Petrol power: an eco-revolution?

Laura Ingalls Wilder's semi-autobiographical novel *The Long Winter* describes how the inhabitants of a small town called De Smet in the American Midwest narrowly avoided starvation during the severe winter of 1880–1881. Over three metres of snow fell on the northern plains, immobilising the railways and cutting off the settlers from the rest of the world. Laura and her neighbours were only saved when her fiancé and his friend trudged 30 kilometres through the snow to fetch food, risking their lives in the process. The story is a reminder of how lethal geographical isolation and crop failures could be before the advent of modern farming and transportation technologies. Not long ago, subsistence farmers in many countries had to cope with the 'lean season' – the period of greatest scarcity before new crops became available. In England, late spring was once referred to as the 'hungry gap'. The situation was made worse by the cost of moving heavy things over muddy dirt roads; three centuries ago, moving goods 50 kilometres on land between, say, Liverpool and Manchester was as expensive as shipping them across the North Atlantic.

The development of coal-powered railways and steamships in the 19th century revolutionized the lives of farmers. Instead of having to grow everything they needed, they could now specialise in what they did best and rely on other producers for their remaining needs. The result was not only food and ever-cheaper prices, but the end of widespread famine and starvation, as the surplus from regions with good harvests could now be transported to those that had experienced mediocre ones. Since then, petroleum-derived fuels have largely displaced coal because of their higher energy density, cleaner combustion and greater ease of extraction, further improving road and rail transportation systems.

While the convenience of modern methods of transportation is obvious, few people grasp their historical significance in terms of their beneficial impact on large cities and the health of residents. In 1898, delegates gathered in New York City for the world's first international urban-planning conference.

The topic that dominated discussions was not infrastructure or housing, but horse manure. The problem was that as the populations of cities like New York and London grew, the number of horses there also grew, and in New York these produced nearly two million kilograms of manure each day. If this problem continued, it was estimated that by 1950 every street in London would be buried three metres deep in horse manure. Unable to think of any solution, the delegates concluded that urban living was inherently unsustainable.

Paradoxically, much of the urban manure problem was related to the growth of the railways. The ability to deliver perishable goods, such as meat and dairy products, from locations that benefited from better soil and climate, put many farms located near cities out of business. As these had relied on manure from city workhorses for fertiliser, the demand for this was greatly reduced.

The impact of urban workhorses was felt both in the cities and in the countryside. In cities, apart from their overpowering stench, the manure piles were prime breeding grounds for house flies, perhaps three billion of which hatched each day in US cities in the early 20th century. With flies came outbreaks of typhoid, cholera and diphtheria. Workhorses sometimes panicked in heavy traffic and kicked or bit bystanders. The clatter of wagon wheels on cobblestone pavement could be deafening, and since a horse and wagon occupied more street space than a modern truck, they also created significant traffic congestion, while a horse that collapsed on the road created an obstruction that was difficult to remove. The countryside also suffered. To supply the workhorses with oats and hay, additional land had to be cleared of its natural animal life and vegetation, and sometimes water had to be diverted to irrigate it, with considerable negative effects on the whole area.

So, while the trains, cars and trucks of the early 20th century were noisy and polluting by today's standards, they were regarded as a significant improvement on what had gone before. Before they were available, poor soils often meant that a large amount of land was required to sustain a household, and much environmental damage, primarily in the form of soil erosion, was caused by trying to farm these soils. It could be argued that modern transportation allowed the development of remote regions like the Canadian Prairies and allowed more suitable crops to be grown in the poorer soils in Europe before being sold elsewhere.

Over time, the concentration of food production in the world's best locations allowed some agricultural land to revert to a wild state. For instance, France benefited from an expansion of its forest area by one third between 1830 and 1960. This so-called 'forest transition' occurred in the context of a doubling of the French population and a dramatic increase in standards of living.

Improvements in logistics also allowed the production and export of food from locations where water was abundant to regions where it was scarce, thus preventing the depletion of water resources there. It also made possible a drastic increase in the size of our cities. Contrary to what most people believe, the growth in cities is a positive development. In the words of economist Ed Glaeser: 'Residing in a forest might seem to be a good way of showing one's love of nature, but living in a concrete jungle is actually far more ecologically friendly... If you love nature, stay away from it.' It could be argued that modern transportation technologies have been a major contributor to a wealthier, cleaner and more sustainable world.

Questions 27–30

*Choose the correct letter, **A**, **B**, **C** or **D**.*

Write the correct letter in boxes 27–30 on your answer sheet.

27 Why were the inhabitants of De Smet in danger of starvation?

- A** The trains were unable to operate normally.
- B** The harvest had been completely destroyed.
- C** The roads to the town had not yet been built.
- D** The farmers were reluctant to sell their produce.

28 What problem did subsistence farmers have in the past?

- A** They had no effective means of storing food.
- B** Food was expensive because of high shipping costs.
- C** Their access to food was limited at certain times.
- D** Food could not be transported for long distances by road.

29 The writer says that the use of coal to power railways and steamships

- A** led to a greater range of fresh vegetables being available in urban areas.
- B** was less efficient than the use of petroleum-derived products.
- C** allowed farmers to be more self-sufficient than they were previously.
- D** was better for the environment than using petroleum-derived products.

30 The writer refers to an urban-planning conference held in 1898 in order to

- A** illustrate a problem that was later solved by modern technology.
- B** give an example of poor decisions made about urban planning.
- C** show that urban issues were misunderstood in the past.
- D** indicate the disregard at the time for public health concerns.

Questions 31–35

Complete the summary using the list of words, A–J, below.

Write the correct letter, A–J, in boxes 31–35 on your answer sheet.

Problems caused by urban workhorses

In cities, the large amounts of horse manure led to 31 _____ in the streets and were also linked to the spread of 32 _____. In certain situations, the horses might even cause 33 _____ to passers-by. There were also the problems of noise and congestion caused by horse-drawn vehicles. In the countryside, there were problems too. The 34 _____ was damaged because of the need to provide 35 _____ for urban workhorses.

- | | | |
|---------------------|---------------------|------------------|
| A rich landowners | B injuries | C food |
| D accidental falls | E environment | F dangerous area |
| G use of irrigation | H unpleasant smells | I treatment |
| J diseases | | |

Questions 36–40

Do the following statements agree with the views of the writer in Reading Passage 3?

In boxes 36–40 on your answer sheet, write

- YES** if the statement agrees with the views of the writer
NO if the statement contradicts the views of the writer
NOT GIVEN if it is impossible to say what the writer thinks about this

- 36 Farmers whose land was poor failed to benefit from modern forms of transport.
- 37 Between 1830 and 1960 there were positive effects associated with changing patterns of agriculture in France.
- 38 A fairer distribution of the world's water resources is needed.
- 39 Living in the countryside does less harm to the environment than living in a city.
- 40 It is possible that modern developments in transportation have had an beneficial impact on the world.

选择题 (27–30)

题号	答案	题干翻译	定位句 (段落)	详细解释
27	A	De Smet 的居民为什么面临挨饿的危险?	"Over three metres of snow... immobilising the railways and cutting off the settlers..." (第1段)	大雪使铁路瘫痪, 与 A “火车无法正常运行”同义。B “收成被毁”文中未提; C “道路尚未修建”无据; D “农民不愿卖粮”无据。
28	C	过去自给农民遇到的是什么问题?	"the 'lean season' – the period of greatest scarcity before new crops became available." (第1段)	关键词“在新作物上市前最缺乏的时期”= 有一段时间获取食物受限, 对应 C。A “无法储存”未述; B “运输费高导致食物贵”并非自给农民的核心痛点; D “食物不能长途公路运输”不符原文 (后文恰谈到铁路/轮船可长距运输)。
29	B	作者说用煤来驱动铁路与轮船怎样?	"Since then, petroleum-derived fuels have largely displaced coal because of their higher energy density, cleaner combustion and greater ease of extraction..." (第2段)	由于能量密度更高等原因, 石油取代煤 → 说明煤效率更低, 对应 B。A “让城市有更多新鲜蔬菜选择”未在谈“煤”的段落中出现; C 与原文相反 (煤运输出现后农民不再事事自给); D “比石油更环保”相反。
30	A	提到 1898 年城市规划会议是为了.....	"The topic that dominated discussions was... horse manure... Unable to think of any solution... concluded that urban living was inherently unsustainable." (第4段) + "trains, cars and trucks... regarded as a significant improvement on what had gone before." (第7段)	当时认为“马粪问题无解”, 但随后机动车出现被视为巨大改进——用来说明一个后来被现代技术解决的问题。B “糟糕决策”并非重点; C “误解城市问题”非主旨; D “忽视公共健康”恰好相反, 他们很关注。

摘要填空 (31–35)

Problems caused by urban workhorses (城市役马带来的问题)

题号	答案	题干翻译	定位句 (段落)	详细解释
31	H	城市里, 大量马粪导致街道上出现 _____	"apart from their overpowering stench" (第6段)	stench = 恶臭 → H unpleasant smells。
32	J	并且与 _____ 的传播有关	"manure piles were prime breeding grounds for house flies... With flies came outbreaks of typhoid, cholera and diphtheria." (第6段)	这些是疾病 → J diseases。
33	B	有时马甚至会让行人遭受 _____	"Workhorses sometimes panicked... and kicked or bit bystanders." (第6段)	踢咬路人= 伤害 → B injuries。
34	E	在乡村也有问题: 为了供给城市役马, 造成 _____ 受损	"additional land had to be cleared... water had to be diverted... with considerable negative effects on the whole area." (第6段)	对整片区域的环境产生负面影响 → E environment。
35	C	因为需要提供 _____ 给城市役马	"To supply the workhorses with oats and hay ..." (第6段)	燕麦、干草 = 食物 → C food。

判断题 (36–40)

题号	答案	题干翻译	定位句 (段落)	详细解释
36	NO	土地贫瘠的农民没有从现代交通中获益。	"Before they were available, poor soils... much environmental damage... It could be argued that modern transportation ... allowed more suitable crops to be grown in the poorer soils in Europe before being sold elsewhere." (第7段)	现代交通让贫瘠土壤也能种更合适的作物并外销 ⇒ 他们是受益的, 题干与文意相反, 选 NO。
37	YES	1830–1960 年间, 法国农业格局变化伴随正面影响。	"France benefited from an expansion of its forest area by one third... in the context of... a dramatic increase in standards of living." (第8段)	关键词 benefited / increase in standards of living ⇒ 正面影响, 选 YES。
38	NOT GIVEN	世界水资源需要更公平的分配。	"Improvements in logistics... allowed production and export of food from places where water was abundant to regions where it was scarce, thus preventing the depletion of water resources there." (第9段)	文中陈述“物流改进实现了从水多到水少的调配并避免枯竭”, 但未评价“是否需要更公平的分配”(价值判断“needed/fairer”)。信息缺失 → NG。
39	NO	住乡村比住城市对环境伤害更小。	引用 Glaeser: "living in a concrete jungle is actually far more ecologically friendly... If you love nature, stay away from it." (第9段)	作者观点恰相反: 城市更环保 ⇒ 题干与文意相反, 选 NO。
40	YES	现代交通发展可能给世界带来积极影响。	"It could be argued that modern transportation technologies have been a major contributor to a wealthier, cleaner and more sustainable world." (第9段)	明确“可能被论证为使世界更富裕、更清洁、更可持续” ⇒ 可能有积极影响, 选 YES。

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