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READING TEST

35 Minutes – 40 Questions

DIRECTIONS: This test includes four passages, each followed by ten questions. Read the passages and choose the best answer to each question. After you have selected your answer, fill in the corresponding bubble on your answer sheet. You should refer to the passages as often as necessary when answering the questions.

PASSAGE I

PROSE FICTION: *“Assimilating in the Promised Land”*

Before she was born, Eui Thi’s parents fled the communist rule of North Vietnam to settle in Laos. Although Eui Thi was born in Laos, her family never truly belonged there. While they spoke “the language,” it was with a foreign accent. Her father found odd jobs that provided food and shelter for the family, but she never felt at home — and she never felt truly safe.

As the oldest child, ten-year-old Eui Thi’s responsibilities were many, but her parents’ trust did not include the sharing of adult concerns. Nevertheless, Eui Thi recognized the worried tones of their late-night whispers. As the last U.S. troops evacuated Saigon, the communist enemy was once again too close. Her parents hurriedly packed up the family and fled to Thailand. Suddenly, surrounded by thousands of other refugees, Eui Thi found herself longing for the “stability” of Laos.

Eui Thi now dreamed of going to America. She had heard it called a “melting pot” because people from all over the world lived there; it was the promised land where she would no longer be an outsider! America was huge, with room to run, play, and grow food. She couldn’t remember the last time she wasn’t hungry.

And then, in October 1975, the word came. Her family was being sent to Iowa. She tried to hide her disappointment as she politely asked, “Where is Iowa? I thought we might be going to America.” Her parents laughed. “Oh, sweet child — Iowa is in America!” Eui Thi was too excited to feel embarrassed. She was finally going to America.

Weeks later, her family arrived in Iowa. Despite the fact that they had traveled with hundreds of other refugees, her family was suddenly alone with strangers who spoke an unintelligible language. The strangers ushered Eui Thi’s family into a car and drove to a house — not just any house — her new home. The strangers walked her to a vast building surrounded by playground equipment. “In a few days,” one said, “you will go to school

here.” America was all Eui Thi had hoped it would be — and more.

Her zeal quickly faded. On her first day of school, many children pointed, waved, and smiled at her, but she could not understand what they were saying. The friendly strangers had given her clothes for school, but she could plainly see that her clothes were older and more faded than those of the other children. When she voiced this concern to her parents, they scolded her. “We have been given a tremendous gift — a new home in a safe land, school for you children, and a job for your father — and you don’t like the clothes these people have provided?” Ashamed, Eui Thi vowed never to share such petty concerns again.

Eui Thi learned quickly, and occasionally wished she hadn’t. As she began to understand a few words and phrases, she realized that she was a topic of conversation. She overheard some of the other girls talking about “the funny smells” that wafted from her home. When a child in her brother’s class was discovered to have lice, her family was blamed as the source. Despite the challenges, Eui Thi did her best to dress and act like the other girls, and gradually made a few friends.

Time quickly passed, and soon it was time for Eui Thi’s first junior high dance. She was so excited. Dancing was universal! How she had missed the celebratory dancing of the Tai-Dam. When Eui Thi arrived at the dance and her eyes slowly adjusted to the darkness, she realized she knew nothing of *this* kind of dance. Eui Thi silently prayed that no one would ask her to dance. And then, as no one did, she reached a sudden, horrible conclusion. She was from a different world — and there were no other Asians at her school. Everyone else at the dance had fair skin and fine hair, and they had all paired up to dance with each other.

She may have been able to approximate Suzanne Somers’ charms, and Farrah Fawcett hairstyles, and even, eventually, American slang, but she would never be the same as the other girls. Although surrounded by other adolescents, Eui Thi was alone. “Some melting pot!” she thought. “Will I ever truly belong?”

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1. One of the points suggested in Paragraph 2 regarding Eui Thi's longing for Laos was that:
 - A. Laos was now more politically stable.
 - B. the threat of communism was no longer present in Laos and it was safe to return.
 - C. Thailand is plagued by earthquakes, making Laos safer by comparison.
 - D. feeling like an outsider in Laos was preferable to the chaos of the refugee camp.
2. As it is used in the passage (line 44), the word *zeal* most nearly means:
 - F. intensity.
 - G. diligence.
 - H. understanding.
 - J. enthusiasm.
3. The passage states that:
 - A. Eui Thi was too young to be responsible.
 - B. Eui Thi always had enough to eat.
 - C. Eui Thi was immediately disappointed by America.
 - D. Eui Thi did not feel at home in Laos.
4. It can reasonably be inferred from Paragraph 2 that Eui Thi's parents were whispering about:
 - F. the military conflict in Vietnam.
 - G. Eui Thi's lack of close friends.
 - H. Eui Thi's lack of appreciation.
 - J. an anticipated sibling for Eui Thi.
5. According to the passage, which of the following were provided for Eui Thi's family?
 - I. A job for her father
 - II. Hand-me-down clothes
 - III. An account at the local supermarket
 - A. II only
 - B. I and II only
 - C. II and III only
 - D. I, II, and III
6. According to the passage, Eui Thi's "the promised land" would include:
 - I. a sense of belonging
 - II. room to run
 - III. the communist enemy
 - IV. adequate food
 - F. I and II only
 - G. II and IV only
 - H. I, II, and III only
 - J. I, II, and IV only
7. The original homeland of Eui Thi's parents was:
 - A. Laos.
 - B. Vietnam.
 - C. Thailand.
 - D. America.
8. According to the passage, Eui Thi was able to mimic her peers in all aspects EXCEPT:
 - F. language.
 - G. hairstyle.
 - H. culture.
 - J. attitude.
9. The dancing at Eui Thi's Junior High, as compared to traditional Tai-Dam dancing, was judged in this passage to be:
 - A. upbeat and celebratory.
 - B. a universal style.
 - C. an entirely different style.
 - D. dark and exciting.
10. According to the passage, Eui Thi's American school was:
 - F. on a hill.
 - G. within driving distance of her home.
 - H. within walking distance of her home.
 - J. surrounded by trees.

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PASSAGE II**SOCIAL SCIENCE: “Mayan Dependency on Agriculture”**

Eleven thousand years ago, the Yucatán Peninsula of Mexico was home to nomadic hunters and gatherers. About 6,500 years later, these nomads abandoned their wandering ways; they started cultivating maize, a native corn, and settling in villages surrounded by cornfields. From this early agrarian beginning grew the grand Mayan civilization.

The ancient Maya spread until they occupied much of Central and South America. Although the Mayan civilization spanned from 2000 B.C. to 1500 A.D. it is most famous for its Classical Period (300–900 A.D.). During this time, the Mayas built awe-inspiring temples, pyramids, and cities and formed a political and social order. They developed the most complex system of writing in the Americas. Many of their enduring ancient arts, including weaving, pottery, basket weaving, and woodcarving, are now recognized worldwide. One of the truly remarkable achievements of the ancient Mayas was their complex system of calendars, which reached an accuracy of being within one day every 6,000 years — far more accurate than our modern calendar.

The reason for the Mayan civilization’s collapse in the tenth century is still shrouded in mystery, although many hypotheses exist. What is known is that, by the 900s, the cities were being consumed by the jungle. By the time European explorer and conqueror Hernán Cortés reached the area in the 1500s, the empire had long been abandoned and the wandering barbarian tribes could provide no recollection of its rich history.

In the 1800s, abandoned cities were discovered in Yucatán, Guatemala, and Honduras. Since then, the Mayas have attracted a great deal of academic and popular attention. The living descendants of the Mayas have been studied so much that an anthropologist can now be found in or near most of today’s Mayan communities. Accordingly, understanding of Mayan society before European influence has grown considerably. One sure conclusion resulting from these studies is that the Maya perpetually depended on agriculture. Even in the present day, the inhabitants of Yucatán are almost exclusively agriculturalists. They are able to earn a comfortable living by raising maize, their chief crop, from soil so shallow that modern farming methods cannot be used. Experts believe that the present agricultural methods are the same as those used by the ancients. Hence, through a study of these methods, the ancient Mayan population can be estimated with some degree of accuracy.

Despite its lushness and moisture, a tropical rain forest can only support small human populations. As the rain falls almost without ceasing, plant and animal growth sometimes seems out of control. Because growth is so rapid, the nutrients provided by dead plants and animal feces get used up very quickly. As a result, the soil is remarkably unfertile for agriculture.

To create arable land, the Mayas used a “slash-and-burn” technique (called *milpa* in the Mayan

language) to clear the forests. They quickly cut down a swath of forest, burned the felled trees and plants for fertilizer, and then cultivated the plot. They planted maize and secondary crops such as beans, squash, and tobacco. Then, as now, the Mayas did not employ sophisticated fertilization techniques, so the plot of land would be exhausted in two to seven years, depending on weeding techniques. As the soil nutrients were depleted, the Mayas moved their fields to new locations, allowing the old fields to lie fallow for about ten years before reusing them. One of the primary reasons for the Mayas’ elaborate system of calendars was undoubtedly their singular dependence on agriculture and the effects of time on the poor soil.

Because of the challenges replete in farming in the rain forest, it takes an immense amount of land to support a 100-member family group — among the Maya, it probably required at least seventy acres for every five people. The population, then, throughout the Classical Period was undoubtedly very small.

Slash-and-burn agriculture is labor intensive but not all-consuming. Modern-day Native Americans in Guatemala who employ this technique spend about 190 days every year in agricultural work, leaving at least 170 days (almost half of a year) for other types of labor. This excess time was clearly used during the Classical Period for the building and maintenance of their elaborate cities as well as the extensive creation of artwork. In addition to being the root of Mayan civilization, agriculture remains at the center of all the Maya achieve.

11. It can most reasonably be inferred from the passage that the nomads abandoned their wandering because:
 - A. barbarian tribes kept attacking.
 - B. they had sufficiently mastered farming techniques to allow for a more stable lifestyle.
 - C. their complex calendar indicated it was time to settle down.
 - D. Cortés taught them European farming techniques, including maize cultivation.
12. In the author’s view, would the assertion that Mayan civilization collapsed as a result of plagues be an expression of fact or opinion, and why?
 - F. Opinion, because many viable hypotheses for the collapse exist.
 - G. Opinion, because the passage argues that everything the Mayas did was because of the calendar.
 - H. Fact, because historical research has already proven that plagues occurred around 900 B.C.
 - J. Fact, because it is well known that plagues have caused the downfall of many great civilizations.
13. All of the following are examples of accomplishments made during the Mayan Classical Period EXCEPT:
 - A. basket weaving.
 - B. elaborate calendars.
 - C. nomadic hunting and gathering.
 - D. a complex writing system.

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14. According to the passage, the most likely reason the Mayas developed such an elaborate system of calendars was because:
- F. they had time left over after performing farm labor to develop elaborate systems.
 - G. European explorers gave them a simple calendar and the Mayas improved on the concept.
 - H. the agrarian lifestyle evolved from social order.
 - J. their dependence on agriculture necessitated an understanding of seasons and time.
15. The dates referred to in the passage indicate that the height of Mayan civilization occurred:
- A. between 6500 B.C. and 2000 B.C.
 - B. between 2000 B.C. and 1500 A.D.
 - C. between 900 B.C. and 300 B.C.
 - D. between 300 A.D. and 900 A.D.
16. As indicated in the passage, the *slash-and-burn* technique was used because:
- I. it an efficient way to remove trees for farmland.
 - II. the burned plants provided nutrients for the soil.
 - III. the Mayas worshiped a god of fire.
 - IV. the blazing fire provided much needed warmth.
- F. I and II only
 - G. I, II, and IV only
 - H. II, III, and IV only
 - J. I, II, III, and IV
17. Details in the passage suggest that modern-day farmers in Guatemala:
- A. are totally dependent upon nomadic hunters and gatherers.
 - B. have not learned anything from their ancient relatives.
 - C. still employ some of the techniques perfected by the ancient Maya.
 - D. spend less than six months out of the year working on their farms.
18. As it is used in line 59, the word *arable* most nearly means:
- F. fit to be cultivated.
 - G. controllable.
 - H. barren and unproductive.
 - J. technical.
19. According to the passage, *milpa* is:
- A. the Mayan word for calendar.
 - B. a lost art.
 - C. a farming technique.
 - D. Mayan fertilizer.
20. According to the passage, anthropologists are common near Mayan communities because:
- F. many indigenous students of Mayan descent have received college scholarships to study anthropology in Mexico.
 - G. anthropologists are common throughout Mexico and Central America.
 - H. anthropology originated in Classic Mayan society.
 - J. Modern-day descendants of the Mayas have attracted a great deal of attention since the discovery of abandoned Mayan cities.

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PASSAGE III**HUMANITIES: "Teen Heartthrob"**

It was 1977 when I first read his name: Shaun Cassidy. I was flipping through the pages of a *Tiger Beat* magazine when my older sister came up behind me and casually pointed at his picture.

- 5 "He's cute. Isn't he the one who sings that 'Da Doo Ron Ron' song you like?"

"No, I don't think so," I replied. "I think he's one of the guys on *The Hardy Boys* show I watch on Sunday nights."

- 10 As my sister walked away, I began reading about Shaun. His older brother was David Cassidy — the one I could remember my sister swooning over in years past. I learned that Shaun Cassidy was, in fact, both the guy on the radio and
15 the guy on *The Hardy Boys*. I became enthralled and quickly developed my first adolescent crush. The walls of my room were soon covered with over 100 images of Shaun's big blue eyes and toothy grin. I became a card-carrying member
20 of The Hardy Boys fan club. His sultry voice serenaded me each night as I drifted off to sleep with his debut album playing on my bright-green record player.

- Although part of my appreciation for Cassidy
25 stemmed from his physical allure, my admiration of his talent was not inappropriate. Like most teen pop stars, his fame as a teenage heartthrob was destined to be short-lived. But his artistic ability was real. After his singing popularity waned and his television
30 show was cancelled, Shaun performed in several other television series and made-for-television movies. Eventually, however, he turned his attention to a new challenge — the theatre.

- By this time, my pubescent crush on this "cute
35 boy" had long since passed. Nevertheless, his name popped out to me occasionally as I scanned the news or glanced through a magazine. In this haphazard way, I casually followed his career through the years. And as I learned of each of his accomplishments, I couldn't help but be pleased for my former
40 idol.

- On and off Broadway, Cassidy continued to develop his acting skills. He soon proved his talent as a stage actor, winning a Critics Circle Award for
45 *The Subject Was Roses* and a Drama-Logue award for his performance in *Diary of a Hunger Strike*. Although he appeared to enjoy performing, the world of television once again beckoned.

- Throughout his television career, Cassidy had
50 been curious about the production side of the business. Despite having occasional questions for the camera crew and others on the technical end, he was especially interested in the responsibilities of the writers, directors, and producers.

- 55 Several years into his stage-acting career, Cassidy's early fascination with the production end of the entertainment industry beckoned, and he felt compelled to learn more. His first foray into the

- world of television production was naively ambitious. He worked hard as the supervising producer and show developer for a TV series that never aired. After this rude awakening, he decided to learn more about his new craft from more experienced specialists in the entertainment industry.

- 65 As he wrote and co-produced the TV movie *Strays*, Cassidy realized that writing provided a tremendous outlet for his creativity and he spent several of the subsequent years as a television scriptwriter. Later, Cassidy made a second attempt
70 at producing and was far more successful. Although Cassidy occasionally performs on stage and screen (even singing the theme song for one of the television series he created), he spends most of his time now as a creator and executive producer of television shows
75 for several networks. My youthful admiration of Shaun Cassidy was naive and shallow, but his talent was real and is standing the test of time.

21. Which of the following descriptions most accurately and completely represents this passage?
- A. A thoughtful and heartfelt reminiscence of the singer Shaun Cassidy
 - B. A biographical overview of Shaun Cassidy's entertainment career from the 1970s to the present
 - C. A careful and impartial critique of the singing talent of Shaun Cassidy
 - D. A discussion of the author's own singing career in relation to that of Shaun Cassidy
22. All of the following aspects of Shaun Cassidy's life were described EXCEPT:
- F. his childhood.
 - G. his singing career.
 - H. his acting career.
 - J. his television writing career.
23. The passage states that:
- A. Shaun Cassidy was more popular than his brother David.
 - B. Shaun Cassidy personally serenaded the author.
 - C. Shaun Cassidy was not interested in acting.
 - D. Shaun Cassidy remains in the entertainment industry.
24. As it is used in the last paragraph, the word *naive* most nearly means:
- F. uncomplicated.
 - G. childish.
 - H. unsophisticated.
 - J. untested.
25. It can be inferred from the passage that the writer, in her adolescence, most valued which of the following in a performer?
- A. Physical attractiveness
 - B. Strong teeth
 - C. Famous siblings
 - D. Writing ability

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26. It can be most reasonably concluded from the writer's reference to Cassidy's fame being "destined to be short-lived" that:
- F. most teen performers enjoy longer periods of fame and fortune.
 - G. Cassidy had no talent.
 - H. most teen performers who rise quickly to fame fall out of favor just as quickly.
 - J. teen fans are usually very loyal.
27. According to the passage, in which order did the following events occur in the writer's life?
- I. Recovering from her adolescent crush
 - II. Casually following Cassidy's career
 - III. Reading about Cassidy in *Tiger Beat*
- A. I, II, III
 - B. II, III, I
 - C. III, II, I
 - D. III, I, II
28. Which of the following best describes the writer's immediate reaction to reading about Cassidy for the first time?
- F. Envy of Cassidy's musical and acting ability
 - G. Serious interest in learning about careers in entertainment
 - H. Apathy toward entertainers in general
 - J. Awe and admiration of the teen idol
29. According to the passage, Cassidy's achievements include all of the following EXCEPT:
- A. operating a camera.
 - B. stage acting.
 - C. television production.
 - D. television writing.
30. The writer describes Shaun Cassidy as having:
- I. big blue eyes.
 - II. a toothy grin.
 - III. a green record player.
 - IV. a sultry voice.
- F. I and II only
 - G. I, II, and IV only
 - H. II, III, and IV only
 - J. I, II, III, and IV

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PASSAGE IV

NATURAL SCIENCE: "The Need to Succeed"

After the archeological discoveries of two samples of early humans—the very primitive-appearing Neanderthals and the more modern-looking Cro-Magnons—archeologists throughout the world wondered about the relationship between the two. Evidence of Neanderthals is nearly 300,000 years old. Evidence of Cro-Magnon people is about 130,000 years old. Did Cro-Magnons evolve from Neanderthals? Did they co-exist? Did they associate with one another? Why did evidence of Neanderthals' existence stop 30,000 years ago? Although many mysteries still surround these early humans, more is known today than at any other time.

Early understanding of Neanderthals was that they had small brains and could not speak. In fact, their brains were as big as modern humans' and they were (at least anatomically) capable of speech. Neanderthals were strong, capable of making basic tools, and, from the beginning, controlled fire. The spearheads they carved even have an aesthetic elegance we can appreciate today.

Scientists have argued over two rival theories about the relationship between Neanderthals and modern humans. One theory claims that the descendants of Neanderthals live on to this day; these scientists use the phrase, "*Homo sapiens neanderthalensis*." (*Homo sapiens* is a Latin phrase, meaning "sapient — or intelligent — mankind"). A rival theory hypothesized that Neanderthals were an evolutionary dead end — a species that became extinct about 30,000 years ago; these scientists therefore use the phrase, "*Homo neanderthalensis*." The latter theory now appears to be correct. The skulls of Neanderthals and modern human beings differ too much for Neanderthals to be our relatives. In addition, DNA analysis shows that current humans share many genes with early *Homo sapiens* but very few with Neanderthals.

So, given that Cro-Magnons (an example of *Homo sapiens sapiens*) did not evolve from Neanderthals, did these two species of early humans ever meet? And why did Neanderthals become extinct? Based on extensive data from sediment cores, archaeological artifacts such as fossils and tools, radiometric dating, and climate models, we now have better answers to these questions.

Evidence of Cro-Magnons and Neanderthals overlaps by 100,000 years; they clearly coexisted. In fact, where geography dictated, they occasionally occupied the same cave sites. Whether their associations were always amicable is questionable, but archeologists have found no evidence of violence between the two groups. Instead, a combination of other factors likely conspired against Neanderthals, leading to their ultimate demise.

During the time of their coexistence, Neanderthals competed with anatomically modern humans for mutually required resources. This occurred at a time when the increasingly severe

cold was affecting not only the early humans but also the food resources on which they relied. Although Neanderthals tolerated temperatures as cold as zero degrees Fahrenheit, winter temperatures during the last ice age dipped to well below that. To compensate for the reduced temperatures, Neanderthals would have needed significantly more food than normal. Unfortunately, the severe cold and the competition of their contemporaries were negatively impacting the availability of food.

Anatomically modern humans were better at dealing with the cold. Early *Homo sapiens* utilized what was then advanced technology in the prehistoric world. They wore warm clothing made of fur and woven materials and lived in enclosed dwellings. They possessed a sophisticated range of weaponry, including bows, arrows, snares, traps, nets, and spears. Their spearheads were carved from a variety of materials, including flint and obsidian. Some of the spears were designed as projectile weapons (javelins), complete with spear throwers to increase effective range. Finally, *Homo sapiens* exhibited the beginnings of communal activity, living, hunting, and fishing in organized groups.

Neanderthals, on the other hand, used general-purpose spears—the identical pattern they had used for 100,000 years. These spears, though reasonably effective, required close-range contact with increasingly scant prey. The Neanderthals lacked the innovation skills necessary to survive in a changing world. Adapting to changing conditions, our ancestors used technology to win the prehistoric battle for survival. In essence, the Cro-Magnons won the ultimate "Survivor" contest 30,000 years ago.

31. According to the passage, most scientists now believe that *Homo sapiens*:
 - A. evolved from *Homo sapiens neanderthalensis*.
 - B. evolved from *Homo neanderthalensis*.
 - C. killed off the *Homo neanderthalensis*.
 - D. is not the same species as *Homo neanderthalensis*.
32. According to the passage, during colder weather, Neanderthals needed:
 - F. to move to a warmer climate.
 - G. more food than normal.
 - H. flint and obsidian.
 - J. less clothing.
33. According to the passage, DNA testing of Neanderthal remains reveal that:
 - A. Neanderthals and modern-day humans share very few of the same genes.
 - B. Neanderthals were genetically similar to Cro-Magnons.
 - C. Neanderthals and modern-day humans are descended from Cro-Magnons.
 - D. Neanderthals' brains were as large as the modern human brain.

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34. The passage states that *Homo neanderthalensis* is:
F. an abbreviated form of the phrase *Homo sapiens neanderthalensis*.
G. an extinct species.
H. a communal hunter.
J. a rival of *Homo sapiens neanderthalensis*.
35. According to the passage, all of the following evidence led to a better understanding of Neanderthals EXCEPT:
A. comparative femur measurements.
B. radiometric dating.
C. sediment cores.
D. climate models.
36. According to the passage, the last evidence of Neanderthals is:
F. about 100,000 years old.
G. about 30,000 years old.
H. 130,000 years old.
J. 300,000 years old.
37. As it is used in line 73, the word *technology* most nearly refers to:
A. technical language.
B. living in organized groups.
C. applied science.
D. objects necessary for human survival.
38. According to the passage, some of the weapons used by Cro-Magnons included all of the following EXCEPT:
F. bows and arrows.
G. snares and traps.
H. gill nets.
J. javelins.
39. According to the passage, all of the following factors led to the extinction of the Neanderthals EXCEPT:
A. increasingly cold winters.
B. Cro-Magnons' slaughter of many Neanderthals.
C. Neanderthals' lack of innovation.
D. superior competitors for scarce resources.
40. Place the following events in chronological order:
I. The first Cro-Magnon exists
II. Neanderthals control fire
III. The first Neanderthal exists
IV. Cro-Magnons develop tools
F. III, II, I, IV
G. I, II, III, IV
H. I, III, II, IV
J. IV, III, II, I

END OF THE READING TEST**STOP! IF YOU HAVE TIME LEFT OVER, CHECK YOUR WORK ON THIS SECTION ONLY.**