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3

## 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: *Born in Paradise*

Martin spent most of his childhood in a tropical paradise on the island of Barbados. Despite the pleasant climate, Martin's early life was difficult. His father left when Martin was a baby, and his mother, Sheila, worked long hours as a housekeeper at a nearby hotel. Martin was left to be cared for by his teenage brothers. In the best of times, the selfish boys let Martin fend for himself; in the worst of times, they made Martin the target of their pranks. Eventually, Martin's mother recognized his plight and enlisted the help of Martin's grandmother.

Granny loved Martin dearly, but the elderly woman did not have the energy to keep up with a feisty toddler. As often as possible, she took Martin to the rundown neighborhood playground so that he could burn off some of his excess energy. On the endless rainy days of summer, she was often heard to exclaim, "Oh, Martin! What am I gonna do with you?"

To help fill the long, muggy days, Granny began taking Martin to the island's library. There they sat for hours as she slowly read him story after story. When her voice grew tired, young Martin would beg her to teach him to read. "Oh, Martin. You're too young to read, dear," she would reply. But Martin was determined, and his inquisitiveness prevailed. Soon, the symbols on the page took on meaning; as the rainy season ended, Martin begged to continue their library excursions.

"Sheila, Martin is special."

Sheila absently looked up.

"What's that, Mom?"

"I said, 'Martin is special!'"

"Oh. Yeah. And, listen, I really appreciate you taking care of him like you have. In a couple of years he can go to school and then it will all be so much easier!"

"I'm not sure it will. When I said he was special I didn't just say it because I'm his grandmother. He's special." She paused and then continued, "You know, he can read."

"It is wonderful the way he likes books and all."

"Have you ever let him read to you?"

"Of course! He comes into my room almost every morning and recites his favorite book. He even turns the pages. It's very cute!"

"Sheila! Pay attention! I know you're tired from working long hours, but Martin isn't reciting — he's reading! In all my years I have never seen a four-year-old like him. By next month he'll be reading books that are beyond me!"

Sheila's mother continued: "Honey, the schools here will be too easy for Martin, and you can't afford to send him to one of those fancy international schools. You have got to get to America where they'll have schools for a child like Martin."

"Mom, think what you're saying! I can't just pick up and move to another country! The older boys aren't even finished with school yet, and there's no way they'd leave their friends! Besides, I can't possibly afford to move to America. Do you have any idea how much it costs to live there?"

"Slow down! I'm not telling you to leave today. I'm telling you to start planning and saving. Your older boys will be done with school in a few years. Then they can fend for themselves. Oh, don't give me that look—I'll look after 'em! But you gotta start makin' plans for Martin. Honey, he doesn't like to be bored, and that's gonna be a problem pretty soon. He's a good boy, and he'll behave in these schools while he's still young. But I can't promise that he'll be able to control himself when he realizes he knows more than the teachers! I don't want to see that precious baby wasting his life and getting into trouble! Sweetie, he's got a gift, and you gotta do something with that gift."

Sheila paused for a long moment as she struggled to comprehend all that her mother was telling her. Finally, she sighed. "Okay."

GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE.

3

3

80 “What’s that?”

“I said, ‘okay.’ I trust you. I’ll start finding out what I need to do to get Martin and me to America. But I don’t know what we’re gonna do when we get there!”

85 “Just work on getting there. You can figure out the rest later.”

1. When Granny says, “I’m not sure it will,” (line 38) she is expressing her concern that:
  - A. schools in Barbados are dangerous.
  - B. Martin is hyperactive and will likely behave poorly in school.
  - C. school will not provide the academic challenge that Martin requires.
  - D. life never gets any easier.
2. It can be reasonably inferred from their conversation that Granny believes Sheila is:
  - F. not as well-educated as Martin is.
  - G. too overworked to recognize Martin’s gift.
  - H. an incompetent parent.
  - J. overly solicitous with her sons.
3. The idea that Martin’s mother is unaware of his abilities is best exemplified by which of the following quotations from the passage?
  - A. “He even turns the pages. It’s very cute!”
  - B. “Do you have any idea how much it costs to live there?”
  - C. “Mom, think what you’re saying!”
  - D. “I really appreciate you taking care of him like you have.”
4. As it is used in line 10, the word *plight* most nearly means:
  - F. happiness.
  - G. engagement.
  - H. predicament.
  - J. flexibility.
5. It can be inferred from the passage that Granny is:
  - A. Martin’s paternal grandmother.
  - B. Sheila’s mother-in-law.
  - C. Martin’s maternal grandmother.
  - D. an unknown wealthy benefactor.
6. The passage makes it clear that Martin and his mother:
  - F. plan to move to America.
  - G. will remain distant.
  - H. will be alienated from Martin’s brothers.
  - J. may never see Granny again.
7. You may reasonably infer from the details in the passage that Sheila is:
  - A. self-confident.
  - B. in her early 20s.
  - C. negligent in her care of her older sons.
  - D. willing to do whatever it takes to help Martin succeed.
8. You may reasonably infer from the passage that Martin’s brothers:
  - F. attended a school for juvenile delinquents.
  - G. mistreated Martin because they were jealous of his intelligence.
  - H. were not well-liked in school.
  - J. cared more for themselves than for Martin.
9. The word *gift*, as it is used in the passage, most nearly means:
  - A. endowment.
  - B. interest.
  - C. talent.
  - D. present.
10. The title, “Born in Paradise,” combined with details presented in the passage implies that:
  - F. everyone loves a tropical island.
  - G. Caribbean islands tend to have subpar educational systems.
  - H. children in single-parent homes need someone like Granny.
  - J. paradise is a relative term.

GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE.

3

3

**PASSAGE II**

**SOCIAL SCIENCE:** *This passage is adapted from "History of the Donner Party," by C. F. McGlashan, originally published in 1880.*

The pioneers of a new country are deserving of a niche in the country's history. The pioneers who became martyrs to the cause of the development of an almost unknown land deserve to have a place in the hearts of its inhabitants. The members of the far-famed Donner Party are, in a peculiar sense, pioneer martyrs of California. Before the discovery of gold, before the highway across the continent was fairly marked out, while untold dangers lurked by the way-side, and unnumbered foes awaited the emigrants, the Donner Party started for California. None but the brave and venturesome, none but the energetic and courageous, could undertake such a journey. In 1846, comparatively few had dared attempt to cross the almost unexplored plains, which lay between the Mississippi and the fair, young land called California. Hence it is that a certain grandeur, a certain heroism seems to cling about the men and women composing this party, even from the day they began their perilous journey across the plains. California, with her golden harvests, her beautiful homes, her dazzling wealth, and her marvelous commercial facilities, may well enshrine the memory of these noble-hearted pioneers, pathfinders, martyrs.

The states along the Mississippi were but sparsely settled in 1846, yet the fame of the fruitfulness, the healthfulness, and the almost tropical beauty of the land bordering the Pacific tempted the members of the Donner Party to leave their homes. These homes were situated in Illinois, Iowa, Tennessee, Missouri, and Ohio. Families from each of these states joined the train and participated in its terrible fate; yet the party proper was organized in Sangamon County, Illinois, by George and Jacob Donner and James F. Reed. Early in April of 1846, the party set out from Springfield, Illinois, and by the first week in May reached Independence, Missouri. Here, the party was increased by additional members, and the train comprised about one hundred persons.

Independence was on the frontier in those days, and every care was taken to have ample provisions laid in and all necessary preparations made for the long journey. It was a long journey for many in the party! Great was the enthusiasm and eagerness with which these noble-hearted pioneers caught up the cry of the times, "Ho! for California!" It is doubtful if presentiments of the fate to be encountered were not occasionally entertained. The road was difficult, and in places almost unbroken; warlike Indians guarded the way, and death, in a thousand forms, hovered about their march through the great wilderness.

In the party were aged fathers with their trusting families about them, mothers whose very lives were wrapped up in their children, men in the prime and vigor of manhood, maidens in all the sweetness and freshness of budding womanhood, children full of glee and mirthfulness, and babes nestling on maternal breasts. Lovers there were, to whom the journey was tinged with rainbow hues of joy and happiness, and

strong, manly hearts whose constant support and encouragement was the memory of dear ones left behind in homeland. The cloud of doom, which finally settled down in a death-pall over their heads, was not yet perceptible; though, as we shall soon see, its mists began to collect almost at the outset, in the delays that marked the journey.

The wonderment that all experience in viewing the scenery along the line of the old emigrant road was peculiarly vivid to these people. Few descriptions had been given of the route, and all was novel and unexpected. In later years the road was broadly and deeply marked, and good camping grounds were distinctly indicated. The bleaching bones of cattle that had perished, or the broken fragments of wagons or cast-away articles, were thickly strewn on either side of the highway. But in 1846 the way was through almost trackless valleys waving with grass, along rivers where few paths were visible, save those made by the feet of buffaloes and antelope, and over mountains and plains where little more than the westward course of the sun guided the travelers. Trading posts were stationed at only a few widely distant points, and rarely did the party meet with any human beings, save wandering bands of Indians. Yet these first days are written about by survivors as being crowned with peaceful enjoyment and pleasant anticipations. There were beautiful flowers by the roadside, an abundance of game in the meadows and mountains, and at night there were singing, dancing, and innocent plays. Several musical instruments, and many excellent voices, were in the party, and the kindest feeling and good fellowship prevailed among the members.

11. It can be reasonably inferred that the conclusions made about the courage of the Donner Party are based on:
  - A. journal entries discovered decades later.
  - B. historical fact that referred to the country's development in the 1840s.
  - C. firsthand accounts by ancestors of the Donner Party.
  - D. anecdotal evidence of the group's trip to California.
12. The focus of the passage can best be summarized as a study of both the:
  - F. Donner Party and the characteristics of the United States in 1846.
  - G. history of the California Gold Rush and the Donner Party.
  - H. Donner Party and the discovery of gold.
  - J. wealth and innocence of the Donner Party.

**GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE.**

3

3

13. According to information presented in the passage, which of the following best describes the relationship between the Donner Party and other American pioneers?
- A. Other American pioneers also traveled west in search of opportunity.
  - B. The Donner Party was one of the first pioneer groups to cross the country to California.
  - C. The Donner Party ignored the advice of earlier pioneers.
  - D. The Donner Party successfully reached their destination while other pioneers did not.
14. According to the passage, the motivation for the Donner Party's journey was to:
- F. gain independence.
  - G. explore the Mississippi.
  - H. flee religious tyranny.
  - J. reach California.
15. As it is used in the third paragraph, the word *unbroken* most nearly means:
- A. intact.
  - B. easy to follow.
  - C. not constructed.
  - D. well-built.
16. As it is depicted in the passage, the initial mood of the Donner Party can best be described as:
- F. eagerly determined.
  - G. hopelessly discouraged.
  - H. predominantly cautious.
  - J. wildly happy.
17. It can be inferred that the word *train* as it is used in line 39 refers to:
- A. the land bordering the Pacific.
  - B. an early steam engine.
  - C. America's first passenger train.
  - D. a line of wagons.
18. According to the passage, which of the following were dangers likely faced by the Donner Party?
- F. Lack of food and water
  - G. Savage attacks
  - H. Wagons breaking down
  - J. Boredom and bad weather
19. As it relates to the passage, all of the following were members of the Donner Party EXCEPT:
- A. aged fathers.
  - B. Californians.
  - C. young children.
  - D. musicians.
20. According to the passage, in the early part of their journey, the Donner Party enjoyed all of the following EXCEPT the:
- F. beautiful scenery.
  - G. road conditions.
  - H. camaraderie.
  - J. night-time stops.

GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE.

3

3

**PASSAGE III****HUMANITIES: *The Passion of Perugino***

I remember feeling slightly disconcerted as I looked up at the unsmiling saints, the Virgin Mary, and even Jesus as I wandered through the hushed halls of the museum. The unworldly experience continues to haunt my memory as I recall the unflinching gazes of Pietro Perugino's subjects staring blankly at me as I admired the power and beauty of the great Italian Renaissance master's most famous works of art. For years, I had studied great artists of the past and present, but not even the breathtaking landscapes of Monet could prepare me for the moment that I was confronted with the genius of one of the least well known artists of the Italian Renaissance. In that moment, my admiration for artists like Renoir and Manet of the French Impressionist Movement, was eclipsed by the austere exquisiteness of these fifteenth-century paintings.

Since that day in the museum, I have gained more knowledge and expertise about the Italian Renaissance movement, and I recognize that Pietro Perugino's work is not beyond critique. His paintings have been described as monotonous and unimaginative because the people portrayed often look alike without any distinguishing features. His paintings lack the ingenuity and fluidity of Sandro Botticelli. Perugino's own pupil, Raphael, could surpass his teacher in creating emotion on the canvas. The genius Michelangelo could evoke dreaminess in his work that creates a feast for the imagination, while keeping minuscule details in perfect perspective. And yet, Pietro Perugino's paintings are still the ones that I see in my mind when I hear the words *Italian Renaissance*.

I remember being awestruck as I viewed his fresco *The Delivery of the Keys* (1482) and noticing the elegant simplicity of the painting, which portrayed St. Peter accepting the keys to heaven. The painting should have paled next to the other more dramatic work in the Sistine Chapel, but *The Delivery of the Keys* held its own with its voluminous clouds and elegant gothic buildings in the background. In this piece, Pietro Perugino showed how far art had come since the medieval times. Instead of flat and cardboard-like characters, the subjects in *The Delivery of the Keys* display awe, disbelief, and amazement while engrossed in conversation with each other. Perugino also experimented with depth, and he rivaled Leonardo da Vinci in his ability to create a definite background and foreground. *The Delivery of the Keys* boasts a gorgeous mountain landscape that truly appears to be miles away from St. Peter as he accepts the key to eternity.

During our tour of the Sistine Chapel, the guide had shared with us the story of Perugino's life. Perugino would almost starve to death because he forgot to eat or sleep while painting. Rest was never an option for this driven artist. His dedication shined through in his meticulous, yet passionate work. The love that Perugino had for painting shows

in the careful detail of works like *The Delivery of the Keys*. In my mind, Perugino's passion for art gives his pieces their distinction and this passion more than makes up for any deficiencies that his critics might find.

I have seen the works of several painters from the Italian Renaissance that are considered far greater than anything created by Perugino. Paintings by Michelangelo, Leonardo da Vinci, and Botticelli are certainly more in demand and enjoy mainstream popularity and acceptance. All of these three artists seemed capable of creating more dramatic and majestic pieces than did Perugino. The work of da Vinci and Michelangelo is seen on postcards and reprinted on cheap posters everywhere because of its universal appeal. Although the brilliance of all of the Italian Renaissance masters is undeniable, the awe-inspiring beauty of Michelangelo's work or the subtle detail of da Vinci's *Mona Lisa* cannot match the simple passion evident in Perugino's paintings. In spite of being more simple and less appealing to the masses, Perugino's paintings reveal raw talent and skill that I have never seen equaled by another artist anywhere in the world.

21. Which of the following descriptions most accurately and completely represents this passage?
  - A. A reminiscent and passionate recollection of the narrator's introduction to Perugino's art
  - B. An independent critical analysis of Monet, Renoir, and Manet in relation to Perugino
  - C. An impartial evaluation of the paintings of Perugino
  - D. A thorough biographical outline of Perugino's life
22. All of the following were unmistakably identified as painters in this passage EXCEPT:
  - F. Leonardo da Vinci.
  - G. Michelangelo.
  - H. Botticelli.
  - J. Donatello.
23. Which of the following quotations best expresses the main point of the passage?
  - A. "Since that day in the museum, I have gained more knowledge and expertise about the Italian Renaissance movement, and I recognize that Pietro Perugino's work is not beyond critique."
  - B. "I have seen the works of several painters from the Italian Renaissance that are considered far greater than anything created by Perugino."
  - C. "In this piece, Pietro Perugino showed how far art had come since the medieval times."
  - D. "In my mind, Perugino's passion for art gives his pieces their distinction and this passion more than makes up for any deficiencies that the critics might find."

**GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE.**



3

3

24. As it is used in the passage (line 26), the word *ingenuity* most nearly means:
- F. resourcefulness.
  - G. inventiveness.
  - H. quality.
  - J. versatility.
25. It can be inferred from the passage that the narrator most highly values which of the following in an artist?
- A. Fluidity and volatility
  - B. Unique appearance of subjects
  - C. Devotion and passion for art
  - D. Classical training from the masters
26. It can be most reasonably concluded from the writer's quote, "In that moment, my admiration for artists like Renoir and Manet of the French Impressionist Movement, was eclipsed by the austere exquisiteness of these fifteenth-century paintings," (lines 14–18) that:
- F. few of the painters of the French Impressionist Movement were as impressive as the artists of the Italian Renaissance.
  - G. the masters of the Italian Renaissance are more universally accepted than Renoir and Manet.
  - H. the narrator believes that the technical skill and creativity of Perugino surpasses that of Renoir and Manet.
  - J. the narrator's admiration of Perugino is so great, he or she believes that Perugino's work outshines that of more well-known painters.
27. According to the passage, what are characteristics of Perugino's work?
- I. austerity
  - II. showing the passion of the artist
  - III. ability to display depth
  - IV. abstraction
- A. I, II, III only
  - B. I, II only
  - C. I, IV only
  - D. I, II, IV only
28. Which of the following best describes the narrator's instant reaction upon seeing Perugino's paintings for the first time?
- F. Disbelief in the quality of the work
  - G. Unsettled by some of the features of the paintings
  - H. Envious of Perugino's genius and artistic ability
  - J. Intent on comparing Perugino's work to French Impressionist artists
29. All of the following are a criticism of Perugino's paintings mentioned in the passage EXCEPT:
- A. Perugino's paintings show a lack of imagination.
  - B. Perugino's technique in creating depth was not as advanced as Leonardo Da Vinci's.
  - C. the subjects or people of Perugino's paintings often look alike.
  - D. Raphael could create more emotion in his paintings than Perugino.
30. The narrator states his or her opinion about famous artists and their work throughout the passage. All of the following opinions are clearly stated in the passage EXCEPT:
- F. Manet's work is reprinted on postcards and cheap posters because of its popularity.
  - G. Leonardo da Vinci and Perugino could both display depth well.
  - H. Botticelli's work shows fluidity and ingenuity.
  - J. the painting *Mona Lisa* by Leonardo da Vinci shows subtle detail.

3

3

**PASSAGE IV****NATURAL SCIENCE:** *The Prickly Porcupine*

As we timidly watched the lumbering escape efforts of this oversized rodent, we were struck by its own apparent lack of fear and panic. Then it dawned on us that, unlike most other animals in the wild, the porcupine's mere outward appearance provides more than adequate reason for it rarely to become alarmed or excited. Even knowing that the "shooting-quills" forest legend really is just that, stumbling upon this threatening creature is sure to cause fear and panic only from the human's point of view and not vice versa.

The *Erethizon dorsatum* (Latin for "irritable back") comes equipped with more than 30,000 quills on its back, sides, and tail. Each of these quills contains several barbs, or hook-like structures, that can imbed themselves into the flesh of a predator. Rather than throwing their quills, however, porcupines are able to implant them into their would-be attacker when the animal or human gets too close. Porcupines also swing their tails back and forth, slamming quills into their adversaries. Since these quills are hollow, they fill up with the host's blood once imbedded, making them even more difficult to remove. Many a dog has found itself with a noseful or mouthful of porcupine quills, which need to be tended to right away. Often, clipping an inch or so off the end of the quills before removing them can aid in their extraction and relieve the excruciating pain.

The porcupine ranks second in size to the beaver among the rodent family. A full-grown porcupine can range anywhere from two to three and a half feet in length and generally weighs between eight and fourteen pounds. However, a porcupine with a plentiful food supply can weigh considerably more. Female porcupines generally give birth once a year to a single offspring. The long, seven-month gestation period ensures a well-developed infant that is nearly ready at birth to take care of itself. Born with soft quills, it takes only a few hours after birth for these quills to harden and be ready for an attack. There are some animals, however, that are able to break down the porcupine's powerful defense system by carefully turning the porcupine over onto its back, exposing its soft and vulnerable underbelly. Bobcats, cougars, and coyotes are especially adept at this technique and pose a major threat to the porcupine.

Porcupines are mostly found in northern and cold climates. They are particularly fond of forested areas, as mature trees provide both food and shelter. During the winter months, porcupines chew almost exclusively on tree bark. As nocturnal animals, porcupines generally sleep high up in a tree during the day, though they also use underground

burrows, particularly in the spring while tending their newborns.

According to the Yukon Department of Environment, the porcupine has been useful to and appreciated by many. Quills are often used in jewelry- and basket-making, as well as in decorating clothing and shoes. Porcupine meat is even considered to be a tasty meal and fairly easy to obtain. In British Columbia, however, the porcupine has developed a negative reputation due to its appetite for wood, damaging trees and even wooden buildings.

While porcupines can be a source of worry to some people, they are fascinating animals to observe. Because of their incredible defense systems, they take their time to escape a potential enemy, which allows for a great opportunity to view these animals fairly closely. Just don't get too close!

31. The primary purpose of the passage is to:
  - A. detail the various ways in which the quills of a porcupine are used by humans.
  - B. give a brief overview of the porcupine, its habitat, and the misconceptions associated with it.
  - C. prove false the "shooting-quills" legend associated with the porcupine.
  - D. detail the safest way to remove porcupine quills from animals such as dogs and beavers.
32. The author calls the porcupine a "threatening creature" (line 9) in the first paragraph because:
  - F. it throws its quills at its enemies.
  - G. no one can survive being attacked by a porcupine.
  - H. it becomes alarmed and excited.
  - J. it has a frightening appearance.
33. The passage indicates that, unlike some other wild animals, the porcupine:
  - A. has a descriptive scientific name.
  - B. does not have a defense mechanism.
  - C. is not easily frightened.
  - D. generally finds plenty of food.
34. According to the author, the porcupine most likely moves slowly because:
  - F. its quills add extra weight.
  - G. it has no reason to move quickly.
  - H. it has no predators.
  - J. it has short legs.

**GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE.**

3

3

35. Based on information in the passage, the author feels dogs are especially threatened by porcupines because:  
A. quills can cause great discomfort.  
B. dogs are likely to touch porcupines with their noses and mouths.  
C. porcupines routinely attack dogs.  
D. porcupines often wander into peoples' backyards.
36. The passage indicates that the Yukon government considers porcupines to be both:  
F. scarce and endangered.  
G. appreciated and useful.  
H. dangerous and unthreatening.  
J. feared and disliked.
37. What does the passage state is one of the porcupine's biggest enemies?  
A. Cougars  
B. Humans  
C. Dogs  
D. Rodents
38. The passage indicates that in British Columbia, porcupines cause damage to:  
F. dogs.  
G. forests.  
H. lakes.  
J. baskets.
39. The passage indicates that, if imbedded, a porcupine's quills:  
A. can cause death.  
B. can be very painful.  
C. should be left alone.  
D. will eventually fall out on their own.
40. According to the passage, the scientific name for the porcupine means:  
F. "prickly animal."  
G. "shooting quills."  
H. "threatening creature."  
J. "irritable back."

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