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*Line (5)*

**Section 3**

**Reading Comprehension**

### Time: 55 minutes

### Now set your clock for 55 minutes. You have 5 minutes to read the directions.

**Directions:** In the Reading Comprehension section, you will read several passages. Each one is followed by a number of questions about it. For questions 1–50, you are to choose the one best answer—(A), (B), (C), or (D)—to each question. Then, on your answer sheet, find the number of the question and fill in the space that corresponds to the letter of the answer you have chosen.

Answer all questions about the information in a passage on the basis of what is stated or implied in that passage.

Read the following passage:

The railroad was not the first institution to impose regularity on society or to draw attention to the importance of precise timekeeping. For as long as merchants have set out their wares at daybreak and communal festivities have been celebrated, people have been in rough agreement with their neighbors as to the time of day. The value of this tradition is today more apparent than ever. Were it not for public acceptance of a single yardstick of time, social life would be unbearably chaotic; the massive daily transfers of goods, services, and information would proceed in fits and starts; the very fabric of modern society would begin to unravel.

### Example I

What is the main idea of the passage?

1. In modern society we must make more time for our neighbors.
2. The traditions of society are timeless.
3. An accepted way of measuring time is essential for the smooth functioning of society.
4. Society judges people by the times at which they conduct certain activities.

The main idea of the passage is that societies need to agree about how time is to be measured in order to function smoothly. Therefore, you should choose (C).

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### Example II

In line 5, the phrase “this tradition” refers to

* 1. the practice of starting the business day at dawn
	2. friendly relations between neighbors
	3. the railroad’s reliance on time schedules
	4. people’s agreement on the measurement of time

The phrase “this tradition” refers to the preceding clause, “people have been in rough agreement with their neighbors as to the time of day.” Therefore, you should choose (D).

**NOW BEGIN WORK ON THE QUESTIONS.**

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Questions 1–10

In past centuries, Native Americans living in the arid areas of what is now the southwestern United States relied on a variety of strategies to ensure the success of

their agriculture. First and foremost, water was the critical factor. The soil was rich because there was little rain to leach out the minerals, but the low precipitation caused its own problems. Long periods of drought could have made agriculture impossible; on the other hand, a sudden flood could just as easily have destroyed a crop.

Several techniques were developed to solve the water problem. The simplest was to plant crops in the floodplains and wait for the annual floods to water the young crops.

A less dangerous technique was to build dikes or dams to control the flooding. These dikes both protected the plants against excessive flooding and prevented the water from escaping too quickly once it had arrived. The Hopi people designed their fields in a checkerboard pattern, with many small dikes, each enclosing only one or two stalks of maize (corn), while other groups built a series of dams to control the floods. A third technique was to dig irrigation ditches to bring water from the rivers. Water was sometimes carried to the fields in jars, particularly if the season was dry. Some crops

were planted where they could be watered directly by the runoff from cliff walls.

Another strategy Native Americans used to ensure a continuous food supply was to plant their crops in more than one place, hoping that if one crop failed, another would survive. However, since the soil was rich and not easily exhausted, the same patch of ground could be cultivated year after year, whereas in the woodlands of the eastern

United States it was necessary to abandon a plot of ground after a few years of farming. In the Southwest, often two successive crops were planted each year.

It was a common southwestern practice to grow enough food so that some could be dried and stored for emergencies. If emergency supplies ran low, the people turned to

the local wild plants. If these failed, they moved up into the mountains to gather the wild plants that might have survived in the cooler atmosphere.

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1. What does the passage mainly discuss?
	1. Agricultural methods of Native Americans
	2. Irrigation techniques used by the Hopi
	3. Soil quality in the American Southwest
	4. Native American methods of storing emergency food supplies
2. The word “solve” in line 7 is closest in meaning to
	1. advance toward
	2. protect from
	3. keep in
	4. deal with
3. Planting in the floodplains was not ideal because
	1. the amount of water could not be controlled
	2. the crops could be eaten by wild animals
	3. the floodplains were too remote to be cultivated frequently
	4. corn grows better at high elevations
4. The word “enclosing” in line 12 is closest in meaning to
	1. defending
	2. measuring
	3. surrounding
	4. extending
5. The word “they” in line 16 refers to
	1. fields
	2. jars
	3. crops
	4. walls
6. Why did farmers in the Southwest plant crops in several places at the same time?
	1. They moved frequently from one place to another.
	2. They feared that one of the crops might fail.
	3. The size of each field was quite limited.
	4. They wanted to avoid overusing the soil.
7. The word “patch” in line 19 is closest in meaning to
	1. type
	2. level
	3. group
	4. piece
8. Why did farmers in the eastern woodlands periodically abandon their fields?
	1. Seasonal flooding made agriculture impossible.
	2. They experienced water shortages.
	3. They wanted a longer growing season.
	4. The minerals in the soil were exhausted.
9. What did farmers in the Southwest do when a crop failed?
	1. They planted in the eastern woodlands.
	2. They gathered food from wild plants.
	3. They moved away from the mountains.
	4. They redesigned their fields for the next season.
10. Farmers in the Southwest would have benefited most from which of the following?
	1. Steeper cliff walls
	2. More sunshine
	3. Regular rain
	4. Smaller dikes

Sample Test Sections 83

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Questions 11–20

Marianne Moore (1887–1972) once said that her writing could be called poetry only because there was no other name for it. Indeed her poems appear to be extremely compressed essays that happen to be printed in jagged lines on the page. Her subjects were varied: animals, laborers, artists, and the craft of poetry. From her general reading came quotations that she found striking or insightful. She included these in her poems, scrupulously enclosed in quotation marks, and sometimes identified in footnotes. Of this practice, she wrote, “‘Why the many quotation marks?’ l am asked . . .When a thing has been said so well that it could not be said better, why paraphrase it? Hence my writing is, if not a cabinet of fossils, a kind of collection

of flies in amber.” Close observation and concentration on detail are the methods of her poetry.

Marianne Moore grew up in Kirkwood, Missouri, near St. Louis. After graduation from Bryn Mawr College in 1909, she taught commercial subjects at the Indian School in Carlisle,

Pennsylvania. Later she became a librarian in New York City. During the 1920s she was editor of *The Dial*, an important literary magazine of the period. She lived quietly all her life, mostly in Brooklyn, New York. She spent a lot of time at the Bronx Zoo, fascinated by animals.

Her admiration of the Brooklyn Dodgers baseball team—before the team moved to Los Angeles— was widely known.

Her first book of poems was published in London in 1921 by a group of friends associated with the Imagist movement. From that time on her poetry has been read with interest by succeeding generations of poets and readers. In 1952 she was awarded the Pulitzer Prize for her *Collected Poems*. She wrote that she did not write poetry “for money or fame. To earn a living is needful, but it can be done in routine ways. One writes because one has a burning desire to objectify what it is indispensable to one’s happiness to express.”

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1. What is the passage mainly about?
	1. The influence of the Imagists on Marianne Moore
	2. Essayists and poets of the 1920s
	3. The use of quotations in poetry
	4. Marianne Moore’s life and work
2. Which of the following can be inferred about Moore’s poems?
	1. They are better known in Europe than the United States.
	2. They do not use traditional verse forms.
	3. They were all published in

*The Dial*.

* 1. They tend to be abstract.
1. According to the passage, Moore wrote about all of the following EXCEPT
	1. artists
	2. animals
	3. fossils
	4. workers
2. What does Moore refer to as “flies in amber” (line 9) ?
	1. A common image in her poetry
	2. Poetry in the twentieth century
	3. Concentration on detail
	4. Quotations within her poetry
3. The author mentions all of the following as jobs held by Moore EXCEPT
	1. commercial artist
	2. teacher
	3. magazine editor
	4. librarian
4. The word “period” in line 13 is closest in meaning to
	1. movement
	2. school
	3. region
	4. time
5. Where did Moore spend most of her adult life?
	1. In Kirkwood
	2. In Brooklyn
	3. In Los Angeles
	4. In Carlisle
6. The word “succeeding” in line 19 is closest in meaning to
	1. inheriting
	2. prospering
	3. diverse
	4. later
7. The word “it” in line 21 refers to
	1. writing poetry
	2. becoming famous
	3. earning a living
	4. attracting readers
8. It can be inferred from the passage that Moore wrote because she
	1. wanted to win awards
	2. was dissatisfied with what others
	3. felt a need to express herself
	4. wanted to raise money for the Bronx Zoo

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Questions 21–30

Different fish species swim in different ways. Beginning in the 1920s, careful efforts have been made to classify and measure these various means of locomotion. Although the nomenclature and mathematics used to describe fish locomotion have become quite complex, the basic classification system is still largely the same as it was first outlined.

The simplest type of swim is “eel-form” (technically, “anguilliform,” after the common eel *Anguilla*). As the name suggests, this swimming motion involves undulations, or wavelike motions, of the whole length of the fish’s body, the amplitude of the undulation increasing toward the tail. These undulating motions generate a backward thrust of the body against the water, thereby driving it forward. Eel-form swimming is effective but not particularly efficient because the undulations increase the drag, or resistance in the water. It is employed, therefore, mostly by bottom dwellers that do not move quickly or efficiently. Not only eels but also blennies swim this way, as do flounders, which undulate vertically, top to bottom, rather than horizontally, and certain slow-moving sharks, such as the nurse and wobbegong shark.

Most roaming predators display “jack-form” swimming (technically, “carangiform,” after the Carangidae family, which includes jacks, scads, and pompanos). Although

there is some variation, in general they have certain features in common: a head like the nose of an aircraft, often sloping down on the top, and a tapered posterior that ends in a forked tail. That portion of the body that connects with the forked tail is narrowed. A jack, like other carangiform swimmers, is adapted for acceleration. It thrusts its rather stiff body from side to side, creating propulsion without much waving of the body, encountering less resistance than eel-form undulations produce. The forked pattern of the tail reduces drag; the narrowed portion of the body connected to the tail minimizes recoil, and thus helps keep the body still. Jack-form fish are efficient swimmers, as they must be to catch their prey.

The least efficient swimmers are those that move trunkfish style (technically, “ostraciform,” after the family Ostraciidae, which includes trunkfishes and cowfishes).

Like the jacks, they use their tails for propulsion, but in so inept and clumsy a manner

as to make it clear that speed is not their objective. Puffer fish and porcupine fish swim in trunkfish style. Lacking speed, they must depend on body armor or the secretion of

toxic substances for protection.

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1. The word “suggests” in line 7 is closest in meaning to
	1. implies
	2. demands
	3. describes
	4. compares
2. The word “it” in line 10 refers to
	1. tail
	2. thrust
	3. body
	4. water
3. Which of the following does the author mention as the cause of the eel’s inefficient swimming style?
	1. The increased drag produced by the movement of the body
	2. The eel’s habit of usually swimming near the bottom of the water
	3. The simple structure of the eel’s body
	4. The weakness of the backward thrust of the eel’s tail
4. The word “employed” in line 12 is closest in meaning to
	1. used
	2. occupied
	3. developed
	4. provided
5. It can be inferred from the passage that blennies (line 13) are
	1. bottom dwellers
	2. sharks
	3. predators
	4. a type of eel
6. The word “minimizes” in line 25 is closest in meaning to
	1. prevents
	2. reduces
	3. determines
	4. repeats
7. What does the author mention about fish that are “jack-form” swimmers?
	1. They usually prey on bottom- dwelling fish.
	2. Their swimming style lets them catch prey effectively.
	3. They have tails similar to those of eels.
	4. Their highly flexible skeletal structure allows them to swim efficiently.
8. The word “objective” in line 30 is closest in meaning to
	1. ability
	2. preference
	3. purpose
	4. method
9. Which of the following fish would most likely emit a poisonous substance?
	1. A nurse shark
	2. A jack
	3. A pompano
	4. A puffer fish
10. Which of the following statements does the passage support?
	1. A scientist today would use a system of classification for fish locomotion similar to that used in the 1920s.
	2. Scientists today still do not understand the mechanics of fish locomotion.
	3. Mathematical analysis of fish locomotion has remained largely unaltered since the 1920s.
	4. The classification of fish locomotion has been simplified since it was devised in the 1920s.

Sample Test Sections 87

*Line (5)*

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Questions 31–40

People appear to be born to compute. The numerical skills of children develop so early and so inexorably that it is easy to imagine an internal clock of mathematical maturity guiding their growth. Not long after learning to walk and talk, they can set the table with impressive accuracy—one plate, one knife, one spoon, one fork, for each of the five chairs. Soon they are capable of noting that they have placed five knives, spoons, and forks on the table and, a bit later, that this amounts to fifteen pieces of silverware. Having thus mastered addition, they move on to subtraction. It seems almost reasonable to expect that if a child were secluded on a desert island at birth and retrieved seven years later, he or she could enter a second-grade mathematics class without any serious problems of intellectual adjustment.

Of course, the truth is not so simple. In the twentieth century, the work of cognitive psychologists illuminated the subtle forms of daily learning on which intellectual progress depends. Children were observed as they slowly grasped—or, as the case might be, bumped into—concepts that adults take for granted, as they refused, for instance, to concede that quantity is unchanged as

water pours from a short stout glass into a tall thin one. Psychologists have since demonstrated that young children, asked to count the pencils in a pile, readily report the number of blue or red pencils but must be coaxed into finding the total. Such studies have suggested that the rudiments of mathematics are mastered gradually and with effort. They have also suggested that the very concept of abstract numbers—the idea of a oneness, a twoness, a threeness that applies to any class of objects and is a prerequisite for doing anything more mathematically demanding than setting a table—is itself far from innate.

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1. What does the passage mainly discuss?
	1. Trends in teaching mathematics to children
	2. The use of mathematics in child psychology
	3. The development of mathematical ability in children
	4. The fundamental concepts of mathematics that children must learn
2. It can be inferred from the passage that children normally learn simple counting
	1. soon after they learn to talk
	2. by looking at the clock
	3. when they begin to be mathematically mature
	4. after they reach second grade in school
3. The word “illuminated” in line 11 is closest in meaning to
	1. illustrated
	2. accepted
	3. clarified
	4. lighted
4. The author implies that most small children believe that the quantity of water changes when it is transferred to a container of a different
	1. color
	2. quality
	3. weight
	4. shape
5. According to the passage, when small children were asked to count a pile of red and blue pencils they
	1. counted the number of pencils of each color
	2. guessed at the total number of pencils
	3. counted only the pencils of their favorite color
	4. subtracted the number of red pencils from the number of blue pencils
6. The word “They” in line 17 refers to
	1. mathematicians
	2. children
	3. pencils
	4. studies
7. The word “prerequisite” in line 19 is closest in meaning to
	1. reason
	2. theory
	3. requirement
	4. technique
8. The word “itself” in line 20 refers to
	1. the total
	2. the concept of abstract numbers
	3. any class of objects
	4. setting a table
9. With which of the following statements would the author be LEAST likely to agree?
	1. Children naturally and easily learn mathematics.
	2. Children learn to add before they learn to subtract.
	3. Most people follow the same pattern of mathematical development.
	4. Mathematical development is subtle and gradual.
10. Where in the passage does the author give an example of a hypothetical experiment?
	1. Lines 3–6
	2. Lines 7–9
	3. Lines 11–14
	4. Lines 17–20

Sample Test Sections 89

*Line (5)*

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Questions 41–50

Botany, the study of plants, occupies a peculiar position in the history of human knowledge.

For many thousands of years, it was the one field of awareness about which humans had anything more than the vaguest of insights. It is impossible to know today just what our Stone Age ancestors knew about plants, but from what we can observe of preindustrial societies that still exist, a detailed learning of plants and their properties must be extremely ancient. This is logical. Plants are the basis of the food pyramid for all living things, even for other plants. They have always been enormously important to the welfare of people, not only for food, but also

for clothing, weapons, tools, dyes, medicines, shelter, and a great many other purposes. Tribes living today in the jungles of the Amazon recognize literally hundreds of plants and know many properties of each. To them botany, as such, has no name and is probably not even recognized as a special branch of knowledge at all.

Unfortunately, the more industrialized we become the farther away we move from direct contact with plants, and the less distinct our knowledge of botany grows. Yet everyone comes unconsciously on an amazing amount of botanical knowledge, and few people will fail to recognize a rose, an apple, or an orchid. When our Neolithic ancestors, living in the Middle East about 10,000 years ago, discovered that certain grasses could be harvested and their seeds planted for richer yields the next season, the first great step in a new association of plants and humans was taken. Grains were discovered and from them flowed the marvel of agriculture: cultivated crops. From then on, humans would increasingly take their living from the controlled production of a few plants rather than getting a little here and a little there from many varieties that grew wild—and the accumulated knowledge of tens of thousands of years of experience and intimacy with plants in the wild would begin to fade away.

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1. Which of the following assumptions about early humans is expressed in the passage?
	1. They probably had extensive knowledge of plants.
	2. They divided knowledge into well-defined fields.
	3. They did not enjoy the study of botany.
	4. They placed great importance on ownership of property.
2. The word “peculiar” in line 1 is closest in meaning to
	1. clear
	2. large
	3. unusual
	4. important
3. What does the comment “This is logical” in lines 5–6 mean?
	1. There is no clear way to determine the extent of our ancestors’ knowledge of plants.
	2. It is not surprising that early humans had a detailed knowledge of plants.
	3. It is reasonable to assume that our ancestors behaved very much like people in preindustrial societies.
	4. Human knowledge of plants is well organized and very detailed.
4. The phrase “properties of each” in line 10 refers to each
	1. tribe
	2. hundred
	3. plant
	4. purpose
5. According to the passage, why has general knowledge of botany declined?
	1. People no longer value plants as a useful resource.
	2. Botany is not recognized as a special branch of science.
	3. Research is unable to keep up with the increasing number of plants.
	4. Direct contact with a variety of plants has decreased.
6. In line 15, what is the author’s purpose in mentioning “a rose, an apple, or an orchid”?
	1. To make the passage more poetic
	2. To cite examples of plants that are attractive
	3. To give botanical examples that most readers will recognize
	4. To illustrate the diversity of botanical life
7. According to the passage, what was the first great step toward the practice of agriculture?
	1. The invention of agricultural implements and machinery
	2. The development of a system of names for plants
	3. The discovery of grasses that could be harvested and replanted
	4. The changing diets of early humans
8. The word “controlled” in line 19 is closest in meaning to
	1. abundant
	2. managed
	3. required
	4. advanced

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1. Which of the following can be inferred from the passage about the transition to agriculture?
	1. It forced humans to study plants more carefully so that they would know how to collect and plant seeds.
	2. It led to a more narrow understanding of plants as a source of food, but not for other purposes.
	3. It had a drawback in that humans lost much of their knowledge of wild plants as a result.
	4. It led to a diet that consisted of a greater variety of plants.
2. Where in the passage does the author describe the benefits people derive from plants?
	1. Line 1
	2. Lines 6–8
	3. Lines 10–11
	4. Lines 13–15

**THIS IS THE END OF THE QUESTIONS FOR PRACTICE SECTION 3.**