

READING COMPREHENSION – Sample Test 3

Time allowed: 30 minutes

PASSAGE I

Dear Sir/Madam,

I understand your computer store sells custom-made computers, designed for your customer's needs. Would you be able to e-mail a price for the following computer system, or one similar to it, to j.smith@ugrad.unimelb.edu.au? I was hoping that I might be able to get this package for about \$2,200, or less.

Base System	2.8 or 3.0 GHz Intel Pentium 4 Processor
Monitor	17" or 15" Flat Panel LCD screen
Hard Drive	120 GB
Memory	512 MB +

Thank you for your time,
Jo Smith.

Questions 1 – 5 relate to the passage above.

- 1) Jo Smith is hoping to:
 - A) buy a computer for less than \$2,200.
 - B) find out about the kinds of computers sold by the store.
 - C) find out the price of a particular computer system.
 - D) both A and C.
 - E) none of the above.

- 2) Which of these statements is **not** true?
 - A) Jo wants 120 GB of hard drive.
 - B) Jo does not want an LCD screen.
 - C) The shop can custom make computers.
 - D) Both B and C.
 - E) None of the above: they are all true.

- 3) Which of these statements is true?
 - A) Jo is an expert on computers.
 - B) The store has many different types of computers to choose from.
 - C) Jo expects a response very quickly.
 - D) Jo does not necessarily want the exact system she has outlined.
 - E) None of the above.

- 4) The tone of the letter is
 - A) Colloquial.
 - B) Friendly.
 - C) Rude.
 - D) Formal.
 - E) None of the above.

- 5) The “base system” that Jo wants is
- A) The computer itself.
 - B) A 2.8 GHz Intel Pentium 4 Processor.
 - C) What Jo wants to buy.
 - D) A 3.0 GHz Intel Pentium 4 Processor.
 - E) Either B or D.

PASSAGE II

The Bundle of Sticks

An old man on the point of death summoned his sons around him to give them some parting advice. He ordered his servants to bring in a bundle of sticks, and said to his eldest son: "Break it." The son strained and strained, but with all his efforts was unable to break the bundle. The other sons also tried, but none of them was successful. "Untie the sticks," said the father, "and each of you take one." When they had done so, he called out to them: "Now, break," and each stick was easily broken. "You see my meaning," said their father.

Questions 6 – 10 relate to the passage above.

- 6) The moral of this fable is best expressed as:
- A) “People are like sticks”
 - B) “We are weaker tied together”
 - C) “Union gives strength”
 - D) “When we get old, family is important”
 - E) “None of the above”
- 7) The old man summoned his sons to
- A) Teach them a lesson because they were behaving badly.
 - B) Tell them his will because he was dying.
 - C) Give them advice on how to live.
 - D) Say a final goodbye.
 - E) Both A and D.
- 8) The first son could not break the bundle because
- A) The sticks were tied together in a bundle.
 - B) He was the weakest of all the children.
 - C) His father wouldn’t let him.
 - D) He didn’t want to.
 - E) Both A and B.
- 9) The sons could easily break the sticks at the end of the fable because
- A) They had learned their lesson.
 - B) They had grown stronger.
 - C) A single stick is easily broken.
 - D) Both A and C.
 - E) The father had shown them how.
- 10) The words “strained and strained” tell us
- A) That the eldest son tried really hard to break the sticks
 - B) That the author uses lots of description
 - C) That the sticks were easy to break
 - D) That the son was only pretending that he couldn’t break the bundle
 - E) None of the above

PASSAGE III

Dear Mr. Smith,

Over the past few years, I have participated in many activities such as:

- 1996 – 2000 FOSH (Friends of Sovereign Hill): Weekend activities in period costumes as a ‘young lady’: teaching stitching and other crafts.
- 1996 – 2000 40-Hour Famine co-organiser at Ballarat High School.
- 1998-2001 Member of Ballarat High School Senior Concert Band, Senior Clarinet Ensemble and Debating Teams.

I believe that organizing and participating in these activities has given me lots of experience which would make me a great employee in your company.

Questions 11-15 relate to the passage above.

- 11) The person writing this letter is probably:
 - A) Writing to a friend.
 - B) Writing in a diary.
 - C) Doing a school project.
 - D) Applying for a job.
 - E) None of the above.

- 12) The person writing the letter can probably:
 - A) Play the clarinet.
 - B) Make old-fashioned costumes.
 - C) Teach sewing.
 - D) Both A and C.
 - E) None of the above.

- 13) In 1997, the writer of the letter was:
 - A) A member of FOSH
 - B) In the Ballarat High School Senior Concert Band
 - C) Both a member of FOSH and co-organizing the 40 Hour Famine
 - D) In the debating team and in the clarinet ensemble
 - E) In the debating team and a member of FOSH

- 14) Which of these statements is NOT true:
 - A) In 1998, the writer was a “Friend of Sovereign Hill”.
 - B) The writer has experience teaching.
 - C) The writer thinks she’d make a great employee.
 - D) In 2001, the writer was in a Clarinet ensemble.
 - E) None of the above: they are all true.

- 15) Which of these is true:
 - A) The writer can play the clarinet really, really well
 - B) The writer was not the only organizer of the 40 hour famine
 - C) The writer didn’t like working at Sovereign Hill
 - D) The writer only went to Ballarat High School for three years
 - E) None of the above

PASSAGE IV

THE SCIENTIST

I give you now Professor Twist
A conscientious scientist.
Trustees exclaimed “He never bungles!”
And sent him off to distant jungles.
Camped by a tropic riverside
One day he missed his living bride.
She had, the guide informed him later,
Been eaten by an alligator.
Professor Twist could not but smile.
“You mean,” he said, “a crocodile.”

by Ogden Nash

Questions 16-20 relate to the passage above.

- 16) The poem above could be described as
A) Humorous B) Serious C) Very formal D) Strange E) African
- 17) The Professor has been sent to “distant jungles” because
A) He never bungles
B) He is a conscientious scientist
C) He is married
D) He likes the jungle
E) He always makes mistakes
- 18) The joke in the poem is that
A) The professor is a funny man who only cares about the jungle.
B) When told that his wife has been eaten, instead of being shocked, he corrects the guide’s knowledge of animal names.
C) The professor only cares about his work and doesn’t care that his wife is dead.
D) Alligators are easily confused with crocodiles as everybody knows.
E) None of the above.
- 19) According to the poem, the Professor camps
A) In a tent.
B) Beside a river.
C) With his wife.
D) Both B and C.
E) Both A and B.
- 20) The poem was written by
A) Professor Smith
B) The guide
C) Professor Smith’s wife
D) Ogden Nash
E) None of the above

PASSAGE V

The Persian sun, hot at the height of a long summer, began its slow and reluctant slide into evening. An orange blush tinged the early afternoon shadows which crept from the walls of the sandstone buildings. But the heat lingered in the courtyards, and throbbed through the windows of each rented room. In one particularly decrepit room, the heat seemed especially oppressive. The space within was cramped and breathless; a rolled-up mattress leaned on sagging bags of rice; chairs and cushions crowded against an old table which sweated and writhed in the centre.

Questions 21 – 25 relate to the passage above.

- 21) A good title for this fragment of a story would be:
- A) A Persian Summer's Day
 - B) The Hottest Day of the Year
 - C) The Old Room
 - D) My Favourite City
 - E) A Room in the Heat of a Persian Summer
- 22) The fragment is
- A) Descriptive.
 - B) Sad.
 - C) Strange.
 - D) Beautiful.
 - F) None of the above.
- 23) The people who live in the house are probably
- A) Rich
 - B) Poor
 - C) Workers
 - D) Renting the room
 - E) Both B and D
- 24) The author is trying to
- A) Tell us that the city is not a good place to live
 - B) Explain how hot it is in Persia
 - C) Write in an old-fashioned way
 - D) Both A and C
 - E) Accurately describe a scene
- 25) When the story is written, it is
- A) Midday
 - B) Evening
 - C) Early Afternoon
 - D) Late Afternoon
 - E) Morning