

# READING COMPREHENSION

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# Skill 1:

## ANSWER MAIN IDEA QUESTIONS CORRECTLY



### Example I

#### The passage:

*Line* In the philosophy of John Dewey, a sharp distinction is made  
(5) between “intelligence” and “reasoning.” According to Dewey, intelligence is the only absolute way to achieve a balance between realism and idealism, between practicality and wisdom of life. Intelligence involves “interacting with other things and knowing them,” while reasoning is merely the act of an observer, “: . . a mind that beholds or grasps objects outside the world of things. . . .” With reasoning, a level of mental certainty can be achieved, but it  
(10) is through intelligence that control is taken of events that shape one’s life.

#### The question:

What is the topic of this passage?

- (A) The intelligence of John Dewey
- (B) Distinctions made by John Dewey
- (C) Dewey’s ideas on the ability to reason
- (D) How intelligence differs from reasoning in Dewey’s works.

## Example II

### The passage:

Line Nitrogen fixation is a process by which nitrogen is  
(5) continuously fed into biological circulation. In this process, certain  
algae and bacteria convert nitrogen into ammonia ( $\text{NH}_3$ ). This  
newly created ammonia is then for the most part absorbed by  
plants.

(10) The opposite process of denitrification returns nitrogen to  
the air. During the process of denitrification, bacteria cause some  
of the nitrates from the soil to convert into gaseous nitrogen or  
nitrous oxide ( $\text{N}_2\text{O}$ ). In this gaseous form the nitrogen returns to the  
atmosphere.

### The question:

Which of the following would be the best title for this passage?

- (A) The Process of Nitrogen Fixation
- (B) Two Nitrogen Processes
- (C) The Return of Nitrogen to the Air
- (D) The Effect of Nitrogen on Plant Life

## MAIN IDEA QUESTIONS

<b>HOW TO IDENTIFY THE QUESTION</b>	What the <b>topic</b> of the passage? What is the <b>subject</b> of the passage? What is the <b>main idea</b> of the passage? What is the author's <b>main point</b> in the passage? With what is the author <b>primarily concerned</b> ? Which of the following would be the best <b>title</b> ?
<b>WHERE TO FIND THE ANSWER</b>	The answer to this type of question can generally be determined by looking at the first sentence of each paragraph.
<b>HOW TO ANSWER THE QUESTION</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Read the first of each paragraph.</li><li>2. Look for a common theme or idea in the first lines.</li><li>3. Pass your eyes quickly over the rest of the passage to check that you really have found the topic sentence(s).</li><li>4. Eliminate any definitely wrong answers and choose the best answer from the remaining choices.</li></ol>



PASSAGE ONE (Questions 1–2)

Line Fort Knox, Kentucky, is the site of a U.S. army post, but it is even more renowned for the Fort  
(5) Knox Bullion Depository, the massive vault that contains the bulk of the U.S. government's gold deposits. Completed in 1936, the vault is housed in a two-story building constructed of granite, steel, and concrete; the vault itself is made of steel and concrete and has a door that weighs more than twenty tons. Naturally, the most up-to-date security devices available are in place at Fort Knox, and the army post nearby provides further protection.

1. Which of the following best describes the topic of the passage?

- (A) The city of Fort Knox, Kentucky
- (B) The federal gold depository
- (C) The U.S. army post at Fort Knox
- (D) Gold bullion

2. Which of the following would be the best title for this passage?

- (A) The Massive Concrete Vault
- (B) Fort Knox Security
- (C) Where the U.S. Keeps Its Gold
- (D) A Visit to Kentucky

PASSAGE TWO (Questions 3–4)

Line One identifying characteristic of minerals is their relative hardness, which can be determined by  
(5) scratching one mineral with another. In this type of test, a harder mineral can scratch a softer one, but a softer mineral is unable to scratch the harder one. The Mohs' hardness scale is used to rank minerals according to hardness. Ten minerals are listed in this scale, ranging from talc with a hardness of 1 to diamond with a hardness of 10. On this scale, quartz (number 7) is harder than feldspar (number 6) and is therefore able to scratch it; however, feldspar is unable to make a mark on quartz.

3. Which of the following best states the subject of this passage?

- (A) The hardness of diamonds
- (B) Identifying minerals by means of a scratch test
- (C) Feldspar on the Mohs' scale
- (D) Recognizing minerals in their natural state

4. The main idea of this passage is that

- (A) the hardness of a mineral can be determined by its ability to make a mark on other minerals
- (B) diamonds, with a hardness of 10 on the Mohs' scale, can scratch all other minerals
- (C) a softer mineral cannot be scratched by a harder mineral
- (D) talc is the first mineral listed on the Mohs' scale



# Skill 2:

## RECOGNIZE THE ORGANIZATION OF IDEAS



### Example

#### The passage:

*Line* If asked who invented the game of baseball, most Americans  
*(5)* would probably reply that it was Abner Doubleday. At the  
beginning of this century, there was some disagreement over how  
the game of baseball had actually originated, so sporting-goods  
manufacturer Spaulding inaugurated a commission to research the  
question. In 1908 a report was published by the commission in  
which Abner Doubleday, a U.S. Army officer from Cooperstown,  
New York, was given credit for the invention of the game. The  
*(10)* National Baseball Hall of Fame was established in Cooperstown in  
honor of Doubleday.

Today, most sports historians are in agreement that  
Doubleday really did not have much to do with the development of  
baseball. Instead, baseball seems to be a close relation to the  
English game of rounders and probably has English rather than  
*(15)* American roots.

#### The question:

The second paragraph

- (A) provides examples to support the ideas in the first paragraph
- (B) precedes the ideas in the first paragraph
- (C) outlines the effect of the idea in the first paragraph
- (D) refutes the idea in the first paragraph

## ORGANIZATION OF IDEAS

<b>HOW TO IDENTIFY THE QUESTION</b>	<p>How is the information in the passage <b>organized</b>?</p> <p>How is information in the second paragraph <b>related</b> to the information in the first paragraph?</p>
<b>WHERE TO FIND THE ANSWER</b>	<p>The answer to this type of question can generally be determined by looking at the first sentence of the appropriate paragraphs.</p>
<b>HOW TO ANSWER THE QUESTION</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Read the first line of each paragraph.</li> <li>2. Look for words that show the relationship between the paragraphs.</li> <li>3. Choose the answer that best expresses the relationship.</li> </ol>

### PASSAGE ONE (Questions 1–2)

Conflict within an organization is not always viewed as undesirable. In fact, various managers have widely divergent ideas on the value that conflict can have.

Line According to the traditional view of conflict, conflict is harmful to an organization. Managers  
(5) with this traditional view of conflict see it as their role in an organization to rid the organization of any possible sources of conflict.

The interactionist view of conflict, on the other hand, holds that conflict can serve an important function in an organization by reducing complacency among workers and causing positive changes to occur. Managers who hold an interactionist view of conflict may actually take steps to stimulate conflict within the organization.

1. How is the information in the passage organized?

- (A) The origin of ideas about conflict is presented.
- (B) Contrasting views of conflict are presented.
- (C) Two theorists discuss the strengths and weaknesses of their views on conflict.
- (D) Examples of conflict within organizations are presented.

2. What type of information is included in the third paragraph?

- (A) A comparison of the interactionist and traditional views of conflict
- (B) A discussion of the weaknesses of the interactionist view of conflict
- (C) An outline of the type of manager who prefers the interactionist view of conflict
- (D) A description of one of the opposing views of conflict



PASSAGE TWO (Questions 3-4)

IQ, or Intelligence Quotient, is defined as the ratio of a person's mental age to chronological age, with the ratio multiplied by 100 to remove the decimal. Chronological age is easily determined; mental age is generally measured by some kind of standard test and is not so simple to define.

Line In theory, a standardized IQ test is set up to measure an individual's ability to perform  
(5) intellectual operations such as reasoning and problem solving. These intellectual operations are considered to represent intelligence.

In practice, it has been impossible to arrive at consensus as to which types of intellectual operations demonstrate intelligence. Furthermore, it has been impossible to devise a test without cultural bias, which is to say that any IQ tests so far proposed have been shown to reflect the culture  
(10) of the test makers. Test takers from that culture would, it follows, score higher on such a test than test takers from a different culture with equal intelligence.

3. What type of information is included in the first paragraph?

- (A) An argument
- (B) A definition
- (C) An opinion
- (D) A theory

4. How does the information in the third paragraph differ from that in the second paragraph?

- (A) It presents a contrasting point of view.
- (B) It follows chronologically from the ideas in the second paragraph.
- (C) It presents real information rather than a premise.
- (D) It presents an example of the ideas in the second paragraph.

PASSAGE ONE (Questions 1–2)

Common types of calendars can be based on the Sun or on the Moon. The solar calendar is based on the solar year. Since the solar year is 365.2422 days long, solar calendars consist of regular years of 365 days and have an extra day every fourth year, or leap year, to make up for the additional fractional amount. In a solar calendar, the waxing and waning of the moon can take place at various stages of each month.

The lunar calendar is synchronized to the lunar month rather than the solar year. Since the lunar month is twenty-nine and a half days long, most lunar calendars have alternating months of twenty-nine and thirty days. A twelve-month lunar year thus has 354 days, 11 days shorter than a solar year.

1. What is the main idea of the passage?

- (A) All calendars are the same.
- (B) The solar calendar is based on the Sun.
- (C) Different calendars have dissimilar bases.
- (D) The lunar month is twenty-nine and a half days long.

2. How is the information in the passage organized?

- (A) Characteristics of the solar calendar are outlined.
- (B) Two types of calendars are described.
- (C) The strengths and weakness of the lunar calendar are described.
- (D) The length of each existing calendar is contrasted.



# Skill 3:

## ANSWER STATED DETAIL QUESTIONS CORRECTLY



### Example

#### The passage:

*Line*  
*(5)* Williamsburg is a historic city in Virginia situated on a peninsula between two rivers, the York and the James. It was settled by English colonists in 1633, twenty-six years after the first permanent English colony in America was settled at Jamestown. In the beginning the colony at Williamsburg was named Middle Plantation because of its location in the middle of the peninsula. The site for Williamsburg had been selected by the colonists because the soil drainage was better there than at the Jamestown location, and there were fewer mosquitoes.

#### The questions:

1. According to the passage, Williamsburg is located
  - (A) on an island
  - (B) in the middle of a river
  - (C) where the York and the James meet
  - (D) on a piece of land with rivers on two sides
2. The passage indicates that Jamestown
  - (A) was settled in 1633
  - (B) was settled twenty-six years after Williamsburg
  - (C) was the first permanent English colony in America
  - (D) was originally named Middle Plantation
3. The passage states that the name Middle Plantation
  - (A) is a more recent name than Williamsburg
  - (B) derived from the location of the colony on the peninsula
  - (C) refers to the middle part of England that was home to the colonists
  - (D) was given to the new colony because it was located in the middle of several plantations

## STATED DETAIL QUESTIONS

<b>HOW TO IDENTIFY THE QUESTION</b>	<b>According</b> to the passage, ... It is <b>stated</b> in the passage ... The passage <b>indicates</b> that ... The author <b>mentions</b> that ... Which of the following is <b>true</b> ...?
<b>WHERE TO FIND THE ANSWER</b>	The answers to these questions are found in order in the passage.
<b>HOW TO ANSWER THE QUESTION</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Choose a key word in the question.</li> <li>2. Skim in the appropriate part of the passage for the key word or idea.</li> <li>3. Read the sentence that contains the key word or idea carefully.</li> <li>4. Look for the answer that restates an idea in the passage.</li> <li>5. Eliminate the definitely wrong answers and choose the best answer from the remaining choices.</li> </ol>

### PASSAGE ONE (Questions 1–3)

Line Ice ages, those periods when ice covered extensive areas of the Earth, are known to have  
(5) occurred at least six times. Past ice ages can be recognized from rock strata that show evidence of foreign materials deposited by moving walls of ice or melting glaciers. Ice ages can also be recognized from land formations that have been produced from moving walls of ice, such as U-shaped valleys, sculptured landscapes, and polished rock faces.

1. According to the passage, what happens during an ice age?
  - (A) Rock strata are recognized by geologists.
  - (B) Evidence of foreign materials is found.
  - (C) Ice covers a large portion of the Earth's surface.
  - (D) Ice melts six times.
2. The passage covers how many different methods of recognizing past ice ages?
  - (A) One
  - (B) Two
  - (C) Three
  - (D) Four
3. According to the passage, what in the rock strata is a clue to geologists of a past ice age?
  - (A) Ice
  - (B) Melting glaciers
  - (C) U-shaped valleys
  - (D) Substances from other areas



# Skill 4:

## FIND “UNSTATED” DETAILS



### Example

#### The passage:

Line In English there are many different kinds of expressions that  
(5) people use to give a name to anything whose name is unknown or  
momentarily forgotten. The word *gadget* is one such word. It was  
first used by British sailors in the 1850s and probably came from  
the French word *gachette*, which was a small hook. In everyday use,  
the word has a more general meaning. Other words are also used to  
give a name to something unnamed or unknown, and these words  
tend to be somewhat imaginative. Some of the more commonly  
used expressions are a *what-d'ye-call-it*, a *whatsis*, a *thingamabob*, a  
(10) *thingamajig*, a *doodad*, or a *doohickey*.

#### The questions:

1. Which of the following is NOT true about the word “gadget”?
  - (A) It is used to name something when the name is not known.
  - (B) It was used at the beginning of the nineteenth century.
  - (C) It most likely came from a word in the French language.
  - (D) Its first known use was by British sailors.
2. Which of the following is NOT mentioned in the passage as an expression for something that is not known?
  - (A) A *thingamabob*
  - (B) A *gadget*
  - (C) A *doohickey*
  - (D) A *what-is-it*

## “UNSTATED” DETAIL QUESTIONS

<p><b>HOW TO IDENTIFY THE QUESTION</b></p>	<p>Which of the following is <b>not stated</b> ...?</p> <p>Which of the following is <b>not mentioned</b> ...?</p> <p>Which of the following is <b>not discussed</b> ...?</p> <p>All of the following are true <b>except</b> ...</p>
<p><b>WHERE TO FIND THE ANSWER</b></p>	<p>The answers to these questions are found in order in the passage.</p>
<p><b>HOW TO ANSWER THE QUESTION</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Choose a key word in the question.</li> <li>2. Scan in the appropriate place in the passage for the key word (or related idea).</li> <li>3. Read the sentence that contains the key word or idea carefully.</li> <li>4. Look for answers that are definitely true according to the passage. Eliminate those answers.</li> <li>5. Choose the answer that is not true or not discussed in the passage.</li> </ol>

### PASSAGE TWO (Questions 3–4)

Elizabeth Cochrane Seaman was an American journalist at the turn of the century who wrote for the newspaper *New York World* under the pen name Nellie Bly, a name which was taken from the Stephen Foster song *Nelly Bly*. She achieved fame for her exposés and in particular for the bold and adventuresome way that she obtained her stories.

Line  
(5)

She felt that the best way to get the real story was from the inside rather than as an outside observer who could be treated to a prettified version of reality. On one occasion she pretended to be a thief so that she would get arrested and see for herself how female prisoners were really treated. On another occasion she faked mental illness in order to be admitted to a mental hospital to get the real picture on the treatment of mental patients.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <p>3. Which of the following is NOT true about Nellie Bly?</p> <p>(A) Nellie Bly's real name was Elizabeth Cochrane Seaman.</p> <p>(B) Nellie Bly was mentally ill.</p> <p>(C) The name Nellie Bly came from a song.</p> <p>(D) The name Nellie Bly was used on articles that Seaman wrote.</p> | <p>4. Which of the following is NOT mentioned as something that Nellie Bly did to get a good story?</p> <p>(A) She acted like a thief.</p> <p>(B) She got arrested by the police.</p> <p>(C) She pretended to be ill.</p> <p>(D) She worked as a doctor in a mental hospital.</p> |
|---|---|



# Skill 5:

## FIND PRONOUN REFERENCES



### Example

#### The passage:

*Line*  
*(5)* Carnivorous plants, such as the sundew and the Venus flytrap, are generally found in humid areas where there is an inadequate supply of nitrogen in the soil. In order to survive, these plants have developed mechanisms to trap insects within their foliage. They have digestive fluids to obtain the necessary nitrogen from the insects. These plants trap the insects in a variety of ways. The sundew has sticky hairs on its leaves; when an insect lands on these leaves, it gets caught up in the sticky hairs, and the leaf wraps itself around the insect. The leaves of the Venus flytrap function  
*(10)* more like a trap, snapping suddenly and forcefully shut around an insect.

#### The questions:

1. The pronoun "they" in line 5 refers to
  - (A) humid areas
  - (B) these plants
  - (C) insects
  - (D) digestive fluids
2. The pronoun "it" in line 8 refers to
  - (A) a variety
  - (B) the sundew
  - (C) an insect
  - (D) the leaf

## PRONOUN REFERENCES

<b>HOW TO IDENTIFY THE QUESTION</b>	The <b>pronoun</b> “...” in line X refers to which of the following?
<b>WHERE TO FIND THE ANSWER</b>	The line where the pronoun is located is generally given in the question. The noun that the pronoun refers to is generally found before the pronoun.
<b>HOW TO ANSWER THE QUESTION</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Find the pronoun in the passage. (The line where the pronoun can be found is generally stated in the question.)</li> <li>2. Look for nouns that come before the pronoun.</li> <li>3. Read the part of the passage before the pronoun carefully.</li> <li>4. Eliminate any definitely wrong answers and choose the best answer from the remaining choices.</li> </ol>

### PASSAGE ONE (Questions 1–2)

Line (5) The full moon that occurs nearest the equinox of the Sun has become known as the harvest moon. It is a bright moon which allows farmers to work late into the night for several nights; they can work when the moon is at its brightest to bring in the fall harvest. The harvest moon of course occurs at different times of the year in the northern and southern hemispheres. In the northern hemisphere, the harvest moon occurs in September at the time of the autumnal equinox. In the southern hemisphere, the harvest moon occurs in March at the time of the vernal equinox.

1. The pronoun “It” in line 2 refers to
  - (A) the equinox
  - (B) the Sun
  - (C) the harvest moon
  - (D) the night
2. The pronoun “they” in line 2 refers to
  - (A) farmers
  - (B) nights
  - (C) times of the year
  - (D) northern and southern hemispheres

### PASSAGE TWO (Questions 3–4)

Line (5) Mardi Gras, which means “Fat Tuesday” in French, was introduced to America by French colonists in the early eighteenth century. From that time it has grown in popularity, particularly in New Orleans, and today it is actually a legal holiday in several southern states. The Mardi Gras celebration in New Orleans begins well before the actual Mardi Gras Day. Parades, parties, balls, and numerous festivities take place throughout the week before Mardi Gras Day; tourists from various countries throughout the world flock to New Orleans for the celebration, where they take part in a week of nonstop activities before returning home for some much-needed rest.

3. The pronoun “it” in line 2 refers to
  - (A) Mardi Gras
  - (B) French
  - (C) that time
  - (D) New Orleans
4. The pronoun “they” in line 6 refers to
  - (A) numerous festivities
  - (B) tourists
  - (C) various countries
  - (D) nonstop activities



# Skill 6:

## ANSWER IMPLIED DETAIL QUESTIONS CORRECTLY



### Example

#### The passage:

Line  
(5) The Hawaiian language is a melodious language in which all words are derived from an alphabet of only twelve letters, the five vowels *a, e, i, o, u* and the seven consonants *h, k, l, m, n, p, w*. Each syllable in the language ends in a vowel, and two consonants never appear together, so vowels have a much higher frequency in the Hawaiian language than they do in English.

(10) This musical-sounding language can be heard regularly by visitors to the islands. Most Hawaiians speak English, but it is quite common to hear English that is liberally spiced with words and expressions from the traditional language of the culture. A visitor may be greeted with the expression *aloha* and may be referred to as a *malihini* because he is a newcomer to the island. This visitor may attend an outside *luau* where everyone eats too much and may be invited afterwards to dance the *hula*.

#### The questions:

1. Which of the following is probably NOT a Hawaiian word?
  - (A) *mahalo*
  - (B) *mahimahi*
  - (C) *meklea*
  - (D) *moana*
2. It is implied that a *luau* is
  - (A) a dance
  - (B) a feast
  - (C) a concert
  - (D) a language

## IMPLIED DETAIL QUESTIONS

<b>HOW TO IDENTIFY THE QUESTION</b>	<p>It is <b>implied</b> in the passage that ...</p> <p>It can be <b>inferred</b> from the passage that ...</p> <p>It is most <b>likely</b> that ...</p> <p>What <b>probably</b> happened ...?</p>
<b>WHERE TO FIND THE ANSWER</b>	The answers to these questions are found in order in the passage.
<b>HOW TO ANSWER THE QUESTION</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Choose a key word in the question.</li> <li>2. Scan the passage for the key word (or a related idea).</li> <li>3. Carefully read the sentence that contains the key word.</li> <li>4. Look for an answer that could be true, according to that sentence.</li> </ol>

### PASSAGE ONE (Questions 1–2)

Eskimos need efficient and adequate means to travel across water in that the areas where they live are surrounded by oceans, bays, and inlets and dotted with lakes and seas. Two different types of boats have been developed by the Eskimos, each constructed to meet specific needs.

Line      The kayak is something like a canoe that has been covered by a deck. A kayak is generally  
(5) constructed with one opening in the deck for one rider; however, some kayaks are made for two. Because the deck of a kayak is covered over except for the hole (or holes) for its rider (or riders), a kayak can tip over in the water and roll back up without filling with water and sinking. One of the primary uses of the kayak is for hunting.

(10) The umiak is not closed over, as is the kayak. Instead, it is an open boat that is built to hold ten to twelve passengers. Eskimos have numerous uses for the umiak which reflect the size of the boat; e.g., the umiak is used to haul belongings from campsite to campsite, and it is used for hunting larger animals that are too big to be hunted in a kayak.

1. It is implied in the passage that if a kayak has two holes, then
  - (A) it accommodates two riders
  - (B) it is less stable than a kayak with one hole
  - (C) it is as large as an umiak
  - (D) it cannot be used on the ocean

2. It can be inferred from the passage that an example of the animal mentioned in lines 11–12 might be
  - (A) a kangaroo
  - (B) a snake
  - (C) a whale
  - (D) a salmon



PASSAGE TWO (Questions 3-5)

Two types of trees from the same family of trees share honors in certain respects as the most impressive of trees. Both evergreen conifers, the California redwood (*Sequoia sempervirens*) and the giant sequoia (*Sequoiadendron giganteum*) are found growing natively only in the state of California.

Line The California redwood is found along the northern coast of the state, while the giant sequoia is  
(5) found inland and at higher elevations, along the western slopes of the Sierra Nevadas.

The California redwood is the tallest living tree and is in fact the tallest living thing on the face of the Earth; the height of the tallest redwood on record is 385 feet (120 meters). Though not quite as tall as the California redwood, with a height of 320 feet (100 meters), the giant sequoia is nonetheless the largest and most massive of living things; giant sequoias have been measured at more than 100  
(10) feet (30 meters) around the base, with weights of more than 6,000 tons.

3. It is implied in the passage that

- (A) the leaves of only the California redwood turn brown in the autumn
- (B) the leaves of only the giant sequoia turn brown in the winter
- (C) the leaves of both types of trees in the passage turn brown in the winter
- (D) the leaves of neither type of tree in the passage turn brown in the winter

4. It can be inferred from the passage that the Sierra Nevadas are

- (A) a type of giant redwood
- (B) a coastal community
- (C) a group of lakes
- (D) a mountain range

5. Which of the following is implied in the passage?

- (A) The giant sequoia is taller than the California redwood.
- (B) The California redwood is not as big around as the giant sequoia.
- (C) The California redwood weighs more than the giant sequoia.
- (D) Other living things are larger than the giant sequoia.



# Skill 7:

## ANSWER TRANSITION QUESTIONS CORRECTLY



### Example

#### The passage:

Line (5) Another myth of the oceans concerns Davy Jones, who in folklore is the mean-spirited sovereign of the ocean's depths. The name "Jones" is thought by some etymologists to have been derived from the name "Jonah," the Hebrew prophet who spent three days in a whale's belly.

(10) According to tradition, any object that goes overboard and sinks to the bottom of the ocean is said to have gone to Davy Jones's locker, the ocean-sized, mythical receptacle for anything that falls into the water. Needless to say, any sailor on the seas is not so eager to take a tour of Davy Jones's locker, although it might be a rather interesting trip considering all the treasures located there.

#### The questions:

1. The paragraph *preceding* this passage most probably discusses
  - (A) the youth of Davy Jones
  - (B) Davy Jones's career as a sailor
  - (C) a different traditional story from the sea
  - (D) preparing to travel on the ocean
2. The topic of the paragraph *following* the passage most likely is
  - (A) valuable items located at the bottom of the ocean
  - (B) where Davy Jones is found today
  - (C) Jonah and the whale
  - (D) preventing objects from falling overboard



## TRANSITION QUESTIONS

<b>HOW TO IDENTIFY THE QUESTION</b>	The paragraph <b>preceding</b> the passage probably ... What is most likely in the paragraph <b>following</b> the passage?
<b>WHERE TO FIND THE ANSWER</b>	The answer can generally be found in the first line of the passage for a preceding question. The answer can generally be found in the last line for a following question.
<b>HOW TO ANSWER THE QUESTION</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Read the first line for a preceding question.</li> <li>2. Read the last line for a following question.</li> <li>3. Choose the answer that is reflected in the first or last line of the passage.</li> </ol>

### PASSAGE ONE (Questions 1–2)

Another program instrumental in the popularization of science was *Cosmos*. This series, broadcast on public television, dealt with topics and issues from varied fields of science. The principal writer and narrator of the program was Carl Sagan, a noted astronomer and Pulitzer Prize-winning author.

1. The paragraph preceding this passage most probably discusses
  - (A) a different scientific television series
  - (B) Carl Sagan's scientific achievements
  - (C) the Pulitzer Prize won by Carl Sagan
  - (D) public television
2. The paragraph following this passage most likely contains information on what?
  - (A) The popularity of science
  - (B) The program *Cosmos*
  - (C) The astronomer Carl Sagan
  - (D) Topics and issues from various fields of science

### PASSAGE TWO (Questions 3–4)

When a strong earthquake occurs on the ocean floor rather than on land, a tremendous force is exerted on the seawater and one or more large, destructive waves called *tsunamis* can be formed. Tsunamis are commonly called tidal waves in the United States, but this is really an inappropriate name in that the cause of the tsunami is an underground earthquake rather than the ocean's tides.

Line  
(5)

Far from land, a tsunami can move through the wide open vastness of the ocean at a speed of 600 miles (900 kilometers) per hour and often can travel tremendous distances without losing height and strength. When a tsunami reaches shallow coastal water, it can reach a height of 100 feet (30 meters) or more and can cause tremendous flooding and damage to coastal areas.

3. The paragraph preceding the passage most probably discusses
  - (A) tsunamis in various parts of the world
  - (B) the negative effects of tsunamis
  - (C) land-based earthquakes
  - (D) the effect of tides on tsunamis
4. Which of the following is most likely the topic of the paragraph following the passage?
  - (A) The causes of tsunamis
  - (B) The destructive effects of tsunamis on the coast
  - (C) The differences between tsunamis and tidal waves
  - (D) The distances covered by tsunamis

# Skill 8:

## FIND DEFINITIONS FROM STRUCTURAL CLUES



### Example

#### The passage:

Line (5) One of the leading schools of psychological thought in the twentieth century was behaviorism—the belief that the role of the psychologist is to study behavior, which is observable, rather than conscious or unconscious thought, which is not. Probably the best-known proponent of behaviorism is B.F. Skinner, who was famous for his research on how rewards and punishments influence behavior. He came to believe that positive reinforcements such as praise, food, or money were more effective in promoting good behavior than negative reinforcement, or punishment.

#### The questions:

1. In “behaviorism” in line 2, a psychologist is concerned with
  - (A) conscious thought patterns
  - (B) unconscious thought patterns
  - (C) observable actions
  - (D) unobservable actions
2. What is “positive reinforcement” in line 7?
  - (A) A gift
  - (B) A reward
  - (C) A bribe
  - (D) A penalty
3. What is “negative reinforcement” in line 9?
  - (A) A promotion
  - (B) A reward
  - (C) A surprise
  - (D) A punishment



## STRUCTURAL CLUES

<b>HOW TO IDENTIFY THE QUESTION</b>	What is ...? What is the <b>meaning</b> of ...? What is true about ...?
<b>TYPES OF CLUES</b>	Punctuation: comma, parentheses, dashes Restatement: or, that is, in other words, i.e. Examples: such as, for example, e.g.
<b>WHERE TO FIND THE ANSWER</b>	Information to help you determine what something means will generally be found after the punctuation clue, the restatement clue, or the example clue.
<b>HOW TO ANSWER THE QUESTION</b>	1. Find the word in the passage. 2. Locate any structural clues. 3. Read the part of the passage after the structural clue carefully. 4. Eliminate any definitely wrong answers and choose the best answer from the remaining choices.

### PASSAGE ONE (Questions 1–4)

The teddy bear is a child's toy, a nice, soft stuffed animal suitable for cuddling. It is, however, a toy with an interesting history behind it.

Line Theodore Roosevelt, or Teddy as he was commonly called, was president of the United States  
 (5) from 1901 to 1909. He was an unusually active man with varied pastimes, one of which was hunting. One day the president was invited to take part in a bear hunt; and inasmuch as Teddy was president, his hosts wanted to ensure that he caught a bear. A bear was captured, clunked over the head to knock it out, and tied to a tree; however, Teddy, who really wanted to actually hunt, refused to shoot the bear and in fact demanded that the bear be extricated from the ropes; that is, he demanded that the bear be set free.

(10) The incident attracted a lot of attention among journalists. First a cartoon—drawn by Clifford K. Berryman to make fun of this situation—appeared in the *Washington Post*, and the cartoon was widely distributed and reprinted throughout the country. Then toy manufacturers began producing a toy bear which they called a “teddy bear.” The teddy bear became the most widely recognized symbol of Roosevelt's presidency.

1. According to line 1 of the passage, what is a “teddy bear”?

- (A) A ferocious animal
- (B) The president of the United States
- (C) A famous hunter
- (D) A plaything

2. In line 4, “pastimes” could best be replaced by

- (A) things that occurred in the past
- (B) previous jobs
- (C) hunting trips
- (D) leisure activities

PASSAGE TWO (Questions 5–8)

Line (5) A supernova occurs when all of the hydrogen in the core of a huge star is transformed to iron and explodes. All stars die after their nuclear fuel has been exhausted. Stars with little mass die gradually, but those with relatively large mass die in a sudden explosion, a supernova. The sudden flash of light can then be followed by several weeks of extremely bright light, perhaps as much light as twenty million stars.

(10) Supernovae are not very common; they occur about once every hundred years in any galaxy, and in 1987 a supernova that could be seen by the naked eye occurred in the Magellan Cloud, a galaxy close to the Milky Way. Scientists periodically detect supernovae in other galaxies; however, no supernovae have occurred in the Milky Way (the galaxy that includes the Earth) since 1604. One very impressive supernova occurred in the Milky Way on July 4, 1054. There was a great explosion followed by three months of lighted skies, and historical chronicles of the time were full of accounts and unusual explanations for the misunderstood phenomenon—many people believed that it meant that the world was coming to an end.

5. A “supernova” in line 1 is which of the following?

- (A) The iron component of a star
- (B) The core of a star
- (C) The hydrogen in a star
- (D) The explosion of a star

7. The “Milky Way” in line 9 is

- (A) part of the Earth
- (B) a galaxy close to the Earth
- (C) the galaxy that is home to the Earth
- (D) a creamy-colored cloud in the sky

6. According to the passage, which of the following best describes the “Magellan Cloud” in line 7?

- (A) A galaxy inside the Milky Way
- (B) A cloud composed of hydrogen
- (C) A galaxy near the Earth’s galaxy
- (D) A cloud in the sky above the Earth

8. Which of the following is closest in meaning to “phenomenon” in line 12?

- (A) Everyday occurrence
- (B) Misunderstood event
- (C) Common belief
- (D) Unusual occurrence



# Skill 9:

## DETERMINE MEANINGS FROM WORD PARTS



### Example

#### The passage:

Line (5) Ring Lardner himself was born into a wealthy, educated, and cultured family. For the bulk of his career, he worked as a reporter for newspapers in South Bend, Boston, St. Louis, and Chicago. However, it is for his short stories of lower middle-class Americans that Ring Lardner is perhaps best known. In these stories, Lardner vividly creates the language and the ambiance of this lower class, often using the misspelled words, grammatical errors, and incorrect diction that typified the language of the lower middle class.

#### The questions:

1. The word “vividly” in line 6 is closest in meaning to
  - (A) in a cultured way
  - (B) in a correct way
  - (C) in a lifelike way
  - (D) in a brief way
2. The word “misspelled” in line 7 is closest in meaning to
  - (A) highly improper
  - (B) vulgar
  - (C) incorrectly written
  - (D) slang
3. The word “diction” in line 8 is closest in meaning to
  - (A) writing
  - (B) sentence structure
  - (C) form
  - (D) speech

## A SHORT LIST of WORD PARTS

PART	MEANING	EXAMPLE	PART	MEANING	EXAMPLE
CONTRA	(against)	<b>contrast</b>	DIC	(say)	<b>dictate</b>
MAL	(bad)	<b>mal</b> content	DOMIN	(master)	<b>dominant</b>
MIS	(error)	<b>mistake</b>	JUD	(judge)	<b>judgment</b>
SUB	(under)	<b>sub</b> way	MOR	(death)	<b>mortal</b>
DEC	(ten)	<b>decade</b>	SPEC	(see)	<b>spectator</b>
MULTI	(many)	<b>multiple</b>	TERR	(earth)	<b>territory</b>
SOL	(one)	<b>solo</b>	VER	(turn)	<b>divert</b>
TRI	(three)	<b>triple</b>	VIV	(live)	<b>revive</b>

### PASSAGE ONE (Questions 1–5)

Line (5) Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo was a Portuguese-born explorer who is credited with the exploration of the coast of what is today the state of California. Sketchy military records from the period show that early in his career he served with the Spanish army from 1520 to 1524 in Spain's quest for subjugation of the people in what are today Cuba, Mexico, and Guatemala. Little is known of his activities over the next decades, but apparently he succeeded in rising up through the ranks of the military; in 1541, he was ordered by Antonio de Mendoza, the Spanish ruler of Mexico, to explore the western coast of North America. Cabrillo set out in June of 1542 in command of two ships, the *San Salvador* and the *Victoria*; he reached San Diego Bay on September 28, 1542, and claimed the terrain for Spain. The peninsula where he landed is today named Cabrillo Point in his honor; the area has been established as a national monument and park, and local residents each year hold a celebration and reenactment of Cabrillo's landing.

(10) From San Diego, Cabrillo continued northward for further exploration of the spectacular California coastline. By November 1542, he had reached as far north as San Francisco Bay, although he missed the entrance of the bay due to a huge storm. Soon after, with the approach of winter, he veered south and headed back to Mexico. He made it as far south as the Channel Islands off the coast of what is today Santa Barbara. Cabrillo, who died on San Miguel Island in the Channel Islands, never made it back to Mexico.

- The word "subjugation" in line 3 is closest in meaning to
  - religion
  - flag
  - control
  - agreement
- In line 5, the word "decades" is closest in meaning to
  - months
  - centuries
  - long epoch
  - ten-year periods
- In line 8, the word "terrain" is closest in meaning to
  - land
  - population
  - minerals
  - prosperity
- The word "spectacular" in line 12 is closest in meaning to which of the following?
  - Ruggedly handsome
  - Visually exciting
  - Completely uneven
  - Unendingly boring
- The word "veered" in line 15 is closest in meaning to
  - arrived
  - ran
  - turned
  - cooled



PASSAGE TWO (Questions 6–10)

Line Checks and balances are an important concept in the formation of the U.S. system of  
(5) government as presented in the Constitution of the United States. Under this conception of  
government, each branch of government has built-in checks and limitations placed on it by one or  
more different branches of government in order to ensure that any one branch is not able to usurp  
total dominance over the government. Under the Constitution, the United States has a tripartite  
government, with power divided equally among the branches: the presidency, the legislature, and the  
judiciary. Each branch is given some authority over the other two branches to balance the power  
among the three branches. An example of these checks and balances is seen in the steps needed to  
pass a law. Congress can pass a law with a simple majority, but the president can veto such a law.  
(10) Congress can then counteract the veto with a two-thirds majority. However, even if Congress passes a  
law with a simple majority or overrides a presidential veto, the Supreme Court can still declare the  
law unconstitutional if it finds that the law is contradictory to the guidelines presented in the  
Constitution.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| 6. The expression "dominance over" in line 5 is closest in meaning to | 9. The word "counteract" in line 10 is closest in meaning to                                   |
| (A) understanding of  | (A) vote for   |
| (B) dispute over  | (B) debate   |
| (C) authority over  | (C) surpass  |
| (D) rejection of  | (D) work against   |
| 7. The word "tripartite" in line 5 suggests that something is         | 10. "Contradictory to" in line 12 is closest in meaning to which of the following expressions? |
| (A) divided into three  | (A) In agreement with  |
| (B) totally democratic  | (B) Opposite to  |
| (C) powerfully constructed  | (C) Supported by   |
| (D) evenly matched  | (D) Similar to   |
| 8. The "judiciary" in line 7 is                                       |  |
| (A) the electorate  |  |
| (B) the authority   |  |
| (C) the legal system  |  |
| (D) the government  |  |

# Skill 10:

## USE CONTEXT TO DETERMINE MEANINGS OF DIFFICULT WORDS



### Example

**A line in the passage:**

... The barges headed across the lake ....

**The question:**

A “barge” is probably which of the following?

- (A) A train
- (B) A plane
- (C) A bicycle
- (D) A boat



## VOCABULARY QUESTIONS CONTAINING DIFFICULT WORDS

<b>HOW TO IDENTIFY THE QUESTION</b>	<p>“What is the <b>meaning</b> ...?”</p> <p>“Which of the following is closest <b>meaning</b> to ...?”</p> <p>The word is a difficult word, one that you probably do not know.</p>
<b>WHERE TO FIND THE ANSWER</b>	<p>The question usually tells you in which line of the passage the word can be found.</p>
<b>HOW TO ANSWER THE QUESTION</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Find the word in the passage.</li> <li>2. Read the sentence that contains the word carefully.</li> <li>3. Look for context clues to help you understand the meaning.</li> <li>4. Choose the answer that the context indicates.</li> </ol>

### PASSAGE ONE (Questions 1–4)

The black widow is the most dangerous spider living in the United States. It is most common in the southern parts of the country, but it can be found throughout the country. The black widow got its name because the female has been known to kill the male after mating and, as a result, becomes a widow.

(5) The black widow is rather distinctive in appearance; it has a shiny globular body, the size and shape of a pea, and is marked on its underbelly with a red or yellow spot. The female is considerably more ample than the male, roughly four times larger on the average.

If a human is bitten by a black widow, the spider's poison can cause severe illness and pain. Black widow bites have occasionally resulted in death, but it is certainly not the norm for black widow bites to be mortal.

1. In line 2, the word “widow” means

- (A) a type of poison
- (B) the dead male spider
- (C) the human victim of the spider
- (D) a female whose mate has died

2. Which of the following is closest in meaning to the word “globular” in line 5?

- (A) Earthen
- (B) Luminescent
- (C) Green in color
- (D) Round

3. The word “ample” in line 7 indicates that the spider is

- (A) feminine
- (B) large in size
- (C) dotted with colors
- (D) normal

4. Which of the following has the same meaning as the word “mortal” in line 10?

- (A) Deadly
- (B) Painful
- (C) Poisonous
- (D) Sickening

# Skill 11:

## USE CONTEXT TO DETERMINE MEANINGS OF SIMPLE WORDS



### Example

A line from the passage:

... He put his answer this way. ...

The question:

The word “put” is closest in meaning to which of the following?

- (A) placed
- (B) set
- (C) expressed
- (D) handed



## VOCABULARY QUESTIONS CONTAINING SIMPLE WORDS

<b>HOW TO IDENTIFY THE QUESTION</b>	<p>“What is the <b>meaning</b> ...?”</p> <p>“Which of the following is closest <b>meaning</b> to ...?”</p> <p>The word is a simple word, one that you see often in everyday English.</p>
<b>WHERE TO FIND THE ANSWER</b>	<p>The question usually tells you in which line of the passage the word can be found.</p>
<b>HOW TO ANSWER THE QUESTION</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Find the word in the passage.</li> <li>2. Read the sentence that contains the word carefully.</li> <li>3. Look for context clues to help you understand the meaning.</li> <li>4. Choose the answer that the context indicates.</li> </ol>

### PASSAGE ONE (Questions 1–3)

Line (5) The *piece of eight* was the nickname of the Spanish *peso*, which was the rough equivalent of the American dollar in early America; the peso was accepted coin in much of the Americas, particularly during the period when the stores of Spanish ships were regularly stripped by pirates on the waters off the Americas and “redistributed” throughout coastal towns. The nickname *piece of eight* derived from the fact that the peso was equal to eight *reals* and therefore had the numeral 8 stamped on it. The piece of eight was sometimes actually cut into pieces, or bits, and one popular size was one-quarter of a piece of eight, or two bits. As a consequence, the U.S. quarter of a dollar is sometimes referred to today as two-bits, particularly in the western part of the country. A visitor to that area, if told “It’ll be two-bits,” should take it that the price of an item is being given.

1. The word “rough” in line 1 is closest in meaning to
  - (A) unsmooth
  - (B) mean
  - (C) approximate
  - (D) heavy
2. “Stores” in line 3 are probably
  - (A) departments
  - (B) markets
  - (C) shops
  - (D) supplies
3. The word “take” in line 9 could best be replaced by
  - (A) hold
  - (B) understand
  - (C) possess
  - (D) grab