

Critical Reading Test 1

20 Questions • 30 Minutes

Directions: Each of the following questions consists of an incomplete sentence followed by five words or pairs of words. Choose that word or pair of words which, when substituted for the blank space or spaces, best completes the meaning of the sentence, and mark the letter of your choice on your answer sheet.

Example:

In view of the extenuating circumstances and the defendant's youth, the judge recommended ----.

- (A) conviction
- (B) a defense
- (C) a mistrial
- (D) leniency
- (E) life imprisonment

Ⓐ Ⓑ Ⓒ ● Ⓔ

1. Friends of the theater have long decried the ---- of the New York drama critics, whose reviews can determine the fate of a play in a single night.
 - (A) insensitivity
 - (B) provinciality
 - (C) intelligence
 - (D) power
 - (E) inaccuracy
2. The ---- manner in which the teacher candidate addressed the school board was a key factor in his rejection; the school board members agreed that enthusiasm is an essential quality in a teacher.
 - (A) pretentious
 - (B) solicitous
 - (C) superficial
 - (D) perfunctory
 - (E) combative
3. Her ---- writing style made it difficult to follow her thought processes—no surprise to her colleagues, who were familiar with her ---- manner of speech.
 - (A) precise . . . arcane
 - (B) laborious . . . tedious
 - (C) trite . . . flippant
 - (D) convoluted . . . circumlocutory
 - (E) ambiguous . . . affected
4. The giant squid is still ---- marine biologists, as it has never been seen alive, making it impossible to study in its natural habitat.
 - (A) fascinating to
 - (B) enigmatic to
 - (C) dangerous to
 - (D) exploited by
 - (E) famous among
5. Advertising can increase sales of a ---- product, but it cannot create demand for a bad one; consumers may buy a ---- item because of advertising—but only once.
 - (A) good . . . new
 - (B) reliable . . . costly
 - (C) useful . . . valuable
 - (D) needless . . . single
 - (E) well-made . . . badly made

6. Like Truman, who was never considered a major national figure until Roosevelt's death made him president, Ford attained national prominence only after ---- thrust him into the presidency.
- (A) personal ambition
 - (B) outside circumstances
 - (C) popular acclaim
 - (D) political intrigue
 - (E) public demand
7. Thus far, predictions that global ---- would lead to mass starvation have proven false; however, in the years to come, population - --- may yet prove to be one of the world's greatest problems.
- (A) pollution . . expansion
 - (B) overcrowding . . growth
 - (C) poverty . . density
 - (D) deforestation . . control
 - (E) warfare . . stabilization
8. Amelia Earhart's hope of being the first woman to fly around the globe was ---- when she disappeared in the middle of her ---- journey.
- (A) thwarted . . ill-fated
 - (B) realized . . triumphant
 - (C) fulfilled . . historic
 - (D) controversial . . hazardous
 - (E) postponed . . famous
9. The idea of "children's literature" ---- in the late eighteenth century, when educators first decided that children needed special -- -- of their own.
- (A) emerged . . books
 - (B) changed . . reading
 - (C) grew . . treatment
 - (D) developed . . training
 - (E) receded . . teaching
10. In some of the poorest neighborhoods of New York City, community gardens are springing up as ---- the filth and desolation of their urban surroundings.
- (A) an affirmation of
 - (B) a validation of
 - (C) a reaction to
 - (D) an amplification of
 - (E) a celebration of

Directions: Each reading passage below is followed by a set of questions. Read the passage and answer the accompanying questions, basing your answers on what is stated or implied in the passage. Mark the letter of your choice on your answer sheet.

Questions 11 and 12 are based on the following passage.

- Richard III was without any doubt whatsoever the most evil man to have worn the crown of England. Attached to his name are so many crimes, and crimes so heinous and unnatural, that it is scarcely credible that such a monster could exist. He not only committed murder on a number of occasions, but many of those he murdered he had either sworn to protect or should have been expected to defend with his last ounce of strength if he had anything approaching human feelings. First on the list of crimes was the death of his sovereign, Henry VI. Granted that Henry had been deposed by Richard's brother, and hence could not easily claim Richard's loyalty.

11. The word *heinous* in line 4 means
- (A) awful
 - (B) secretive
 - (C) bloody
 - (D) deceitful
 - (E) dishonest
12. The author calls Richard a "monster" because
- (A) Richard murdered people
 - (B) Richard did not allow honor or family feeling to hold him back
 - (C) Richard was overly ambitious
 - (D) all early English kings were ruthless
 - (E) Richard supported Henry VI against his own brother

Questions 13–16 are based on the following passage.

- For the last hour I have been watching President Lincoln and General McClellan as they sat together in earnest conversation on the deck of a steamer closer to us. I am thankful, I am *happy*, that the President has come—has sprung across the dreadful intervening Washington, and come to see and hear and judge for his own wise and noble self. While we were at dinner someone said, "Why, there's the President!" and he proved to be just arriving on the *Ariel*, at the end of the wharf. I stationed myself at once to watch for the coming of McClellan. The President stood on deck with a glass, with which, after a time, he inspected our boat, waving his handkerchief to us. My eyes and soul were in the direction of the general headquarters, over which the great balloon was slowly descending.

13. What does the author mean by "the dreadful intervening Washington" (line 7)?
- (A) Politics are always interfering with the war.
 - (B) Lincoln's office stands in the way of his leadership.
 - (C) Lincoln has crossed Washington to come to the narrator's home.
 - (D) The fame of the previous president keeps Lincoln in the shadows.
 - (E) Washington is mediating between the North and South.

14. How does the author feel toward Lincoln?
- (A) She admires him and trusts his judgment.
 - (B) She dislikes him and suspects his motives.
 - (C) She regrets his arrival.
 - (D) She finds him undistinguished in person.
 - (E) She has no opinion.
15. As used in line 15, the word *glass* means
- (A) a goblet
 - (B) a mirror
 - (C) a window
 - (D) a telescope
 - (E) bifocals
16. The “great balloon slowly descending” (lines 19–20) is apparently
- (A) the sun setting
 - (B) remnants of a firestorm of the Potomac
 - (C) the moon over the river
 - (D) a mirage
 - (E) McClellan’s transport arriving

Questions 17–20 are based on the following passage.

- (5) Big earthquakes are naturally occurring events well outside the powers of humans to create or stop. An earthquake is caused by a sudden slip on a fault. Stresses in the earth’s outer layer push the side of the fault together. The friction across the surface of the fault holds the rocks together so they do not slip immediately when pushed sideways. Eventually enough stress builds up and the rocks slip suddenly, releasing energy in waves that travel through the rock to cause the shaking that we feel during an earthquake. Earthquakes typically originate several tens of miles below the surface of the earth. It takes many years—decades to centuries—to build up enough stress to make a large earthquake, and the fault may be tens to hundreds of miles long. The scale and force necessary to produce earthquakes are well beyond our daily lives. Likewise, people cannot prevent earthquakes from happening or stop them once they’ve started—giant nuclear explosions at shallow depths, like those in some movies, won’t actually stop an earthquake.

- (10)
- (15)
- (20)
- (25)
- (30) The two most important variables affecting earthquake damage are the intensity of ground shaking caused by the quake and the quality of the engineering of structures in the region. The level of shaking, in turn, is controlled by the proximity of the earthquake source to the affected region and the types of rocks that seismic waves pass through en route (particularly those at or near the ground surface). Generally, the bigger and closer the earthquake, the stronger the shaking. But there have been large earthquakes with very little damage either because they caused little shaking or because the buildings were built to withstand that shaking. In other cases, moderate earthquakes have caused significant damage either because the shaking was locally amplified or more likely because the structures were poorly engineered.
- (35)
- (40)
- (45)

17. The word *fault* (line 4) means
- (A) error
 - (B) the place where two rock plates come together
 - (C) criticize
 - (D) responsibility
 - (E) volcanic activity
18. The amount of shaking during an earthquake is determined by
- (A) the amount of damage
 - (B) how soon people take action to stop the earthquake
 - (C) how close the epicenter of the earthquake is to the area
 - (D) how well the offices and homes have been built in the region
 - (E) the duration of the quake
19. This passage was most likely written to
- (A) explain some basic facts about the causes and effects of earthquakes
 - (B) reassure people who are considering moving into regions prone to earthquakes that they will be safe from harm
 - (C) teach people the methods they need to alleviate earthquake damage
 - (D) persuade people to allocate more funding to earthquake research
 - (E) describe the damage that earthquakes can cause and the reason for varying degrees of damage
20. You can conclude from this passage that
- (A) all earthquakes are equally dangerous
 - (B) there are steps that people can take to prevent or at least mitigate earthquakes
 - (C) earthquakes occur all over the world
 - (D) very little is known about earthquakes
 - (E) scientists understand a great deal about the origins of earthquakes but are powerless to stop them

STOP

IF YOU FINISH BEFORE THE TIME IS UP,
GO BACK AND CHECK YOUR WORK.