

Critical Reading Test 2

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
- (A) (B) (C) (D) (E)

1. The neighborhood group's rendering of the proposed office complex ---- the ---- of the project: as they appeared on the drawing, the proposed office buildings appeared to dwarf the rest of the downtown area.
 - (A) minimized . . grandiosity
 - (B) accentuated . . beauty
 - (C) underscored . . vastness
 - (D) trivialized . . enormity
 - (E) revealed . . immensity
2. Twentieth-century Japan faced the question of how to ---- the best of modern civilization without losing the benefits of Japan's ---- way of life.
 - (A) reject . . ancient
 - (B) adopt . . outmoded
 - (C) assimilate . . traditional
 - (D) incorporate . . contemporary
 - (E) reshape . . historic
3. The proposal to forbid the use of indoor furniture on front porches has divided the town along ---- lines: the affluent feel the old couches are eyesores, while those who cannot afford new outdoor furniture are ---- about what they feel is an attempt to restrict their lifestyle.
 - (A) political . . nonplussed
 - (B) aesthetic . . dismayed
 - (C) class . . pleased
 - (D) racial . . angry
 - (E) socioeconomic . . incensed
4. In his politics, Aristotle characterizes Plato's support of collectivism as ---- and ---- the unity of the city; not only would it be difficult to institute and enforce, but the absence of private property would lead to bickering among the citizens.
 - (A) commendable . . deleterious to
 - (B) controversial . . essential to
 - (C) impractical . . detrimental to
 - (D) divisive . . indifferent toward
 - (E) unattainable . . supportive of

5. The bright coloration of American coot chicks is an anomaly: although colorful plumage is usually ---- to newborn birds because it may attract predators, among this species it appears to be ----, because parents are more likely to notice and care for brightly-colored offspring.
- (A) pernicious . . fatal
(B) dangerous . . unnecessary
(C) deleterious . . favorable
(D) beneficial . . advantageous
(E) detrimental . . helpful
6. Unlike the American worker, who expects to work for several different firms during his or her career, until recently the Japanese worker regarded employment as --- commitment.
- (A) a lifetime
(B) a significant
(C) a bilateral
(D) an economic
(E) a moral
7. Andre's gift for music seemed to be ----; both his mother and grandfather before him had been famed concert pianists.
- (A) simulated
(B) innate
(C) accidental
(D) inexplicable
(E) prodigious
8. The many obvious lapses in the author's research make it ---- to accept the ---- of his conclusions.
- (A) easy . . accuracy
(B) impossible . . meaning
(C) attractive . . logic
(D) questionable . . structure
(E) difficult . . validity
9. Her wildlife movies unflinchingly capture the ---- of the animal kingdom: predators stalking their prey, singling out the weak, young, and very old as easy kills, and the cold-blooded killing which is a necessity of life in the wild.
- (A) brutality
(B) romance
(C) color
(D) mystery
(E) grandeur
10. Although the Internet was originally created to facilitate scientific research and emergency communication, today most people consider it ---- enterprise, offering services marketed as sources of information and entertainment.
- (A) a commercial
(B) a private
(C) an obsolete
(D) an insidious
(E) an institutional

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.

- (5) Farmlands, wetlands, forests, and deserts that composed the American landscape in the early twentieth century have frequently been transformed during the past thirty years into mushrooming metropolitan areas as urbanization spreads across the country. Many metropolitan areas in the United States are growing at extraordinary rates. “Urban growth is a vital issue that requires our careful attention from local to global scales,” said Barbara Ryan, USGS Associate Director of Geography. “It is not until we begin to take a broad census of the land itself—tracking landscapes from a spatial perspective in a time scale of decades—that we can grasp the scale of the changes that have already occurred and predict the impact of changes to come.”
- (10) On average, between 1984 and 2004, Atlanta, Boston, Chicago, Denver, Houston, Las Vegas, Memphis, Minneapolis-St. Paul, Orlando, Phoenix, Pittsburgh, Raleigh-Durham, Reno-Sparks, Sacramento, Seattle-Tacoma, and Tampa-St. Petersburg averaged 173 square miles of additional urban land over the two decades, with Houston, Orlando, and Atlanta as the top three regions by area. The growth leaders by percentage change were Las Vegas (193 percent), Orlando (157 percent), and Phoenix (103 percent).

11. The tone of this passage is best described as
- (A) restrained ardor
 - (B) dour
 - (C) neutral
 - (D) fanatical
 - (E) biased
12. You can infer from this article that
- (A) the author believes that further study on the issue of urban growth is needed
 - (B) the author heartily endorses urban growth
 - (C) the author is very much against urban sprawl and is actively working to limit it
 - (D) Seattle-Tacoma is getting overcrowded
 - (E) the author is inflating the change in land use to further his or her own agenda

Questions 13 and 14 are based on the following passage.

(5) The small hive beetle, *Aethina tumida* (Order Coleoptera; Family Nitidulidae), was first discovered in Florida in June of 1998 and has now been found in six other states, Georgia, South Carolina, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Ohio, and Minnesota. To date, the beetle has not been found in Virginia, but the movement of migratory beekeepers from Florida may

(10) have transported the beetle to other states. Recent findings also indicate transport of the beetles in packages.

(15) The small hive beetle can be a destructive pest of honey bee colonies, causing damage to combs, stored honey, and pollen. If a beetle infestation is sufficiently heavy, they may cause bees to abandon their hive. The beetles can also be a pest of stored combs and honey (in the comb)

(20) awaiting extraction. Beetle larvae may tunnel through combs of honey, causing discoloration and fermentation of honey.

13. The small hive beetle is undesirable for all of the following reasons except

- (A) the harm it can cause to the honeycomb
- (B) potential deleterious effects to stored honey and pollen
- (C) the possibility that bees may flee the hive
- (D) the probability of the beetle attacking people and animals
- (E) the way it can stain and spoil honey

14. This passage was most likely written to

- (A) help customers understand how difficult it is to raise commercial honey
- (B) inform beekeepers about a menace that may be contaminating their hives
- (C) warn consumers that the price of honey is likely to raise
- (D) spark a federal bailout of the industry
- (E) convince the Pure Food and Drug Administration to take the problem more seriously

Question 15–20 are based on the following passage.

(5) Although often confused with each other, global warming and ozone depletion are two separate problems threatening Earth's ecosystem today. Global warming is

(10) caused by the build-up of heat-trapping gases in the atmosphere. It was dubbed the "greenhouse effect" because it is similar to a greenhouse in that the sun's rays are allowed into the greenhouse but the heat from these rays is unable to escape.

(15) Ozone depletion, however, is the destruction of the ozone layer. Chemicals such as chlorofluorocarbons and methyl bromide react with ozone, leaving a "hole"

(20) in the ozone layer that lets dangerous UV rays through. Both are serious threats to life on Earth. While the greenhouse effect maintains the appropriate temperature for life on Earth, problems are exacerbated

(25) when the quantity of greenhouse gases in the Earth's atmosphere increases drastically. When this occurs, the amount of heat energy that is insulated within the Earth's atmosphere increases correspondingly and results in a rise in global temperature.

(30) An increase of a mere few degrees Celsius does not appear very threatening. However, numbers can be deceiving. When you consider that the Ice Age resulted from temperatures only slightly cooler than those today, it is obvious that

(35) even very subtle temperature changes can significantly impact global climate. Global warming threatens to desecrate the natural habitats of organisms on Earth and disturb the stability of our ecosystem. The climate changes that would result from

(40) global warming could trigger droughts, heat waves, floods, and other extreme weather events.

(45) Like most other environmental problems, humans are the cause of global warming. The burning of fossil fuels is largely responsible for the increase in the concentration of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. Every time someone drives a

- (50) car or powers their home with energy derived from power plants that use coal, carbon dioxide is released into the atmosphere. The atmospheric concentrations of carbon dioxide and methane have risen meteorically since preindustrial times, mainly due to the contributions of factories, cars, and large-scale agriculture.
- (55) Even if we immediately stopped emitting greenhouse gases, we would continue to see the effects of global warming for decades because of the damage we have already inflicted.
- (60) Despite the pessimistic outlook, there are things that can be done to reduce global warming. Although the problem may seem overwhelming, individuals can make a positive difference in combating global warming. Simple things like driving less, using public transportation, and conserving electricity generated by combustion of fossil fuels can help reduce the emissions of greenhouse gases. It is important to realize that it is not too late to make a difference. If everyone does what they can to reduce their contributions of greenhouse gases to the atmosphere, the efforts of people around the world will act in concert to thwart the progression of global warming. If the effort is not made immediately, the delicate global ecosystem could be thrown irreversibly out of balance, and the future of life on Earth may be jeopardized.
- (80)
15. The “greenhouse effect” is
- (A) global warming
 - (B) another term for the Ice Age
 - (C) ozone depletion
 - (D) a chemical that is harming Earth
 - (E) a type of gas
16. The greenhouse effect is so serious because
- (A) no one really understands it
 - (B) it has been going on for a very long time
 - (C) it cannot be reversed
 - (D) it interferes with the ecosystem and changes weather patterns
 - (E) it leads to the destruction of the world’s woodlands
17. As used in this passage, *exacerbated* (line 19) means
- (A) annoyed
 - (B) improved
 - (C) worsened
 - (D) embittered
 - (E) exasperated
18. The author of this selection is most likely
- (A) a scientist looking for alternate fuel sources, especially solar and wind power
 - (B) an industrialist determined to corner the market on fossil fuels
 - (C) a public advocate trying to improve the ecosystem
 - (D) a Web site for vegetarians
 - (E) an animal-rights activist

19. The word *thwart* (line 75) is used to mean
- (A) baffle
 - (B) hinder
 - (C) facilitate
 - (D) countenance
 - (E) increase
20. In the last paragraph, it becomes apparent that the author believes
- (A) individuals can help reverse global warming even by taking small steps
 - (B) there is nothing we can do to prevent further global warming
 - (C) the problem of global warming has been overstated
 - (D) global warming and ozone depletion really are the same thing
 - (E) now it is up to the government to step in and stop deforestation and global warming

STOP

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