Reading Comprehension: choose the best answer

Part A: Questions 1-10 (20%)

In Kansas at the turn of the century, Edwin and Amy Earhart doted on their daughters, Amelia and Muriel. Edwin gave the girls footballs and rifles, while Amy shocked the community by dressing them gym suits instead of skirts. Edwin’s job caused the family to move from town to town, and the girls’ interest in rough sports and shooting rats raised eyebrows whenever they went.

Amelia’s parents did not pressure her to reform as she grew older, even when she dabbled in the donains fo science and automobile mechanics. But in 1920, when she went aloft at an air show and returned home determined to learn how to fly, even her liberal parents hesitated. They soon gave in, however, and within months Amelia was flying a Kinner Airstar her mother helped her buy.

1. According to the passage, Edwin gave the girls which of the following items?
   1) An airplane  2) An automobile  3) Footballs  4) Gym suits

2. The world “them” in line 3 refers to
   1) Amelia and Muriel  2) Edwin and Amy  3) footballs and rifles  4) gym suits and skirts

3. It may be infeffed from the passage that, at the turn of the century, it was LEST common for girls to
   1) wear skirts  2) have doing nothing parents  3) move from town to town  4) play with rifles

4. In what way did Amelia’s mother help Amelia in her career?
   1) By taking her to an air show  2) By helping her to buy a plane  3) By pressuring her to become a pilot.  4) By giving her flying lessons

5. The paragraph following the passage most probably discuss
   1) Amy’s childhood  2) Amelia’s early flying experiences  3) The Eararts’ new home  4) Edwin’s love of athletic activities

   Can trees talk? Yes- but not in words. Scientists have reason to believe that trees do communicate with each other. Not long ago, researchers learned some surprising things. First, a willow tree attacked in the woods by caterpillars changed the chemistry of its leaves and made them taste so awful that the caterpillars got disgusted and stopped eating them. Then, even more astonishing, the tree sent out special vapors-an
alarm signal stimulating its neighbors to change the chemistry of their own leaves and makes them less tasty.

Communication, of course, does not need to be in words. We can talk to each other by smile, a frown, a shrug, shoulders, a gesture with our hands. We know that birds and animals use a whole vocabulary of songs, sounds, and movements. Bees dance their signals, flying in certain patterns that tell other bees where to find nectar for honey. So why shouldn’t trees have ways of sending messages?

6. It can be inferred from the passage that caterpillars do not feed on leaves that
   1) have an offensive taste  2) are lying on the ground
   3) have an unfamiliar shape  4) are located near beehives

7. According to the passage, the willow tree was able to communicate with other trees by
   1) weaving its branches  2) dropping its leaves
   3) giving off a special vapor  4) changing the color of its bark

8. According to this passage, bees communicate by
   1) touching each other  2) making unusual sounds
   3) smelling one another  4) making special movements

9. The author states that bees are able to tell each other about the location of
   1) honey  2) nectar  3) people  4) beehives

10. The author believes that the incident described in the passage
    1) cannot be taken seriously  2) should no longer be permitted
        3) seems perfectly reasonable  4) must be investigated more thoroughly

Part B: Questions 11-20 (30%)

For many years, sociologists and historians have referred to the United States as __11__ (1. social  2. historical  3. cultural  4. economic) “melting pot,” in order to suggest the successful __12__ (1. conservative  2. immigrating  3. segregation  4. integration) into American society of the massive waves of immigration which have marked American history. This term has been primarily a __13__ (1. invariably  2. forcefully  3. compulsorily  4. unconsciously) embrace not only American ideals, but a pervasive “American” culture. Also the term suggests that American immigrants successfully __15__ (1. fight against  2. keep in mind  3. hold back  4. leave behind) the turmoil of their home countries which has caused them to come to the United States, thus “melting” into American society.

However, in recent years, this term __16__ (1. has gained  2. has lost  3. has increased  4. has changed) much of its popularity, primarily because of an increasing emphasis on __17__ (1. consistency  2. dignity  3. diversity  4. personality) among ethnic groups. Ironically, this emphasis springs from another American ideal, strong individuality. Instead, many prefer to refer to the U.S. as a “salad bowl,” viewing each of many ethnic groups in America as a component of a salad, thus preserving its own identity in the salad but, at the same time, interacting with the other vegetables to create a delightful mix and variety. Certainly, the term makes __18__ (1. a great deal of  2. little  3. no  4. some) sense with regard to geography, as ethnic distribution in the U.S. is hardly uniform. New York, with its Chinatown and Little Italy, is an excellent example of __19__ (1. separation  2. congregation  3. mixture  4. versatility). However, the term is primarily used __20__ (1. in the name of  2. in memory of  3. regardless of  4. with reference to) the various cultures and sensibilities of ethnic groups in the U.S.

Part C: Question 21-24 (20%)

21. Therapists find that treatment of those people who seek help because they are unable to stop smoking or overeating is rarely successful. From these experiences, therapists have concluded that such habits are
intractable and success in breaking them is rare.

As surveys show, millions of people have dropped the habit of smoking, and many people have successfully managed a substantial weight loss.

If all the statements above are correct, an explanation of their apparent contradiction is provided by the hypothesis that

a) there have been some success in therapy, and those successes were counted in the surveys
b) it is easier to stop smoking than it is to stop overeating

c) the group of people selected for the survey did not include those who failed to break their habits even after therapy

d) those who succeed in curing themselves do not go for treatment and so are not included in the therapists’ data

22. The sense of delayed gratification, of working now for later pleasure, has helped shape the economic behavior of our society. However, that sense is no longer nurtured as consistently in our children as it once was. For example, it used to take a bit of patience to put together the toys that children got in cereal boxes; now the toys come from the boxes whole.

Which of the following is an assumption of the passage above?

a) The toys in cereal boxes have changed partly because the economic conditions of our society have improved.

b) Today’s children do not expect a single toy to provide pleasure for a long period of time.

c) The toys that used to come in cereal boxes were put together by the same children who played with them.

d) Part of the pleasure of any toy lies in putting the toy together before playing with it.

23. Offshore blasting in oil exploration does not hurt fishing; blasting started this year, and this year’s salmon catch has been the largest in a long time.

All of the following statements, if true, are valid objections to the argument above EXCEPT:

a) Vibrations from the blasts destroy fish eggs.

b) The rapid change of water pressure caused by blasts make salmon mate more frequently.

c) The noise of the blasts interferes with the food chain salmon depend on.

d) The salmon is only one of many species of fish that might be affected by the blasts.

24. If Ruth was born in New York State, then she is a citizen of the United States.

The statement above can be deduced logically from which of the following statements?

a) Everyone born in New York State is a citizen of the United States.

b) Every citizen of the United States is a resident either of one of the states or one of the territories.

c) Some people born in New York State are citizens of the United States.

d) Ruth is a citizen of the United States.

II. Essay: 30% (請在答案本上作答)
Write a short essay on ONE of the following topics:
A) My experience of surfing the internet
B) If I were the President of the Republic of China
C) The importance of being honest
D) My favorite teacher

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