

## Section 3

# Reading Comprehension

---

25 Questions

Time: 25 minutes

This section contains six short reading passages. Each passage is followed by six questions based on its content. Answer the questions following each passage on the basis of what is stated or implied in that passage. You may write in your test booklet.

STOP. Do not go on  
until told to do so.



Questions 1-5

1 The Voyager spacecraft, launched from  
2 Earth in 1977, recently left the solar system  
3 and headed into interstellar space. As it did,  
4 the ship carried an unusual calling card,  
5 designed to introduce Earth to any alien being  
6 that the Voyager might pass. Traveling now  
7 billions of kilometers out in space are the  
8 voices and sounds of life on Earth. They are  
9 bolted to the side of Voyager 1 in the form of a  
10 gold-plated phonograph record.

11 Shortly after American astronauts  
12 returned from space in 1968, NASA released a  
13 photograph of the Earth rising from behind the  
14 Moon. According to Margaret Weitekamp, a  
15 curator at the Smithsonian National Air and  
16 Space Museum, that photo deeply touched the  
17 creators of the gold record project. She said,  
18 "Knowing that that picture was taken by a  
19 human being profoundly changed the thoughts  
20 of these people and really made them start  
21 thinking about 'If we are this pale blue dot in

22 this ocean of vastness, then how do we  
23 communicate something about who we are?"

24 It made them think carefully about how  
25 they might convey the greetings, the art and  
26 the talent of all humanity – not just the nation  
27 that sent the spacecraft up. "There is music on  
28 the record from Europe and the United States,"  
29 said Tim Ferris, who mixed the audio that went  
30 on the record. "But also from Africa, the South  
31 Pacific, South America, Georgia, Russia, China,  
32 and India."

33 The record contains greetings in 59  
34 human languages. It has 118 pictures of life on  
35 earth, and 27 pieces of music exemplifying the  
36 diversity of human creation. According to  
37 Ferris, "The Voyager record represents a step  
38 along a long process of humans realizing that  
39 we are not at the center of the universe and  
40 that our story is probably far from being the  
41 only story."

1. The main purpose of this passage is to
  - (A) detail how a gold-plated phonograph record is manufactured.
  - (B) inform the reader about the gold record carried by the Voyager and examine why the creators included it onboard.
  - (C) analyze the pieces of music on the Voyager gold record and explain why they were included.
  - (D) compare life on Earth in 1977 to contemporary times.
2. In line 19, the word “profoundly” most nearly means
  - (A) jealously
  - (B) ignorantly
  - (C) partially
  - (D) deeply
3. The gold-plated record is intended to be
  - (A) the theme music of the Voyager launch when it is broadcast on television.
  - (B) a sentimental memento for the designers of the Voyager.
  - (C) a representation of life on Earth for any extraterrestrials who might find it.
  - (D) a part of the museum display that commemorates the Voyager spacecraft.
4. The passage provides enough information to answer which question?
  - (A) Who mixed the audio on the record?
  - (B) How long did it take to make the record?
  - (C) What forms of extraterrestrial life do the creators think the Voyager will confront?
  - (D) Which languages are not included on the gold-plated record?
5. The quote by Tim Ferris that concludes the passage suggests that
  - (A) technology has allowed us to represent the diversity of human life and creation.
  - (B) the record is important because it captures the spirit of America, and it will demonstrate to extraterrestrials America’s achievements.
  - (C) the story of the Earth is extremely important, so it is crucial that we have a means of communicating it to other life forms in the universe.
  - (D) human civilization is probably not the only civilization in the universe.

Go on to the next page ➔

Questions 6–10

1 Wind tunnel testing of a feathered  
2 dinosaur model has added evidence to the  
3 theory that modern day birds evolved from  
4 ancient reptiles. Scientists at the University of  
5 Southampton in England built a full-scale,  
6 anatomically correct model of a Microraptor, a  
7 five-winged creature that lived in the early  
8 Cretaceous period about 130 million years ago.  
9 The dinosaur is believed to be a precursor to  
10 birds and the first two-footed dinosaur to have  
11 feathers on its body, which could have  
12 provided lift during brief gliding or flight.  
13 The wind tunnel tests revealed that the  
14 Microraptor was a good glider, but likely spent  
15 most of its time foraging on the ground. Still,

16 the creature was probably able to climb high  
17 enough to glide around 100 meters, the  
18 scientists say.

19 Some scientists had wondered if the  
20 position and orientation of the Microraptor's  
21 legs and wing shape could have impeded  
22 possible flight, but the testing revealed it not to  
23 be a factor. According to the paper, published  
24 in *Nature Communications*, "Microraptor did  
25 not require a sophisticated, 'modern' wing  
26 shape to undertake effective glides. Symmetric  
27 feathers first evolved in dinosaurs for non-  
28 aerodynamic functions, later being adapted to  
29 form lifting surfaces."

6. The passage is primarily concerned with
- (A) scientific testing that supports the evolutionary link between dinosaurs and birds.
  - (B) the lifespan and extinction of a dinosaur known as the Microraptor.
  - (C) the importance of wind tunnel testing in modern day science.
  - (D) a new museum exhibit that demonstrates how dinosaurs were able to fly.
7. In line 21, the word “impeded” most nearly means
- (A) supported
  - (B) confused
  - (C) revealed
  - (D) disrupted
8. Wind tunnel tests show that the Microraptor
- (A) could fly for hours at a time at extremely high altitudes.
  - (B) survived on a diet similar to modern-day birds.
  - (C) probably could glide for about 100 meters.
  - (D) had wings identical to those of modern-day birds.
9. The quotation in the last paragraph supports the claim that
- (A) the Microraptor’s wing shape did not prevent it from gliding successfully.
  - (B) the Microraptor’s wings – unlike the modern-day bird – were completely featherless.
  - (C) designers of contemporary aircraft should imitate the wing shape of the Microraptor because it is very effective for flight.
  - (D) the feathers on the Microraptor’s wings served no purpose other than decoration.
10. According to the passage, wind tunnel testing utilized
- (A) a full-scale model of the Microraptor.
  - (B) samples of DNA from the Microraptor.
  - (C) the entire biology department at the University of Southampton.
  - (D) an accurate anatomical sketch of the Microraptor drawn by a team of scientists.

Questions 11–15

1           When I was ten years old, my family and  
2 I drove to the New Jersey shore on an  
3 exceptionally hot and sunny day during the  
4 peak of summer. My father packed a huge  
5 suitcase filled with towels, goggles, sunscreen,  
6 extra bathing suits, and a mountain of beach  
7 toys. From the size of the suitcase, one might  
8 have surmised that we were making a  
9 permanent move to the shore, but in fact, we  
10 were only going for the afternoon.

11           Despite the hour of bickering that filled  
12 the car ride, we were really all very excited to  
13 spend the day on the beach. The instant my  
14 father parked the car and shut off the engine,  
15 my brother, sister, and I scrambled out of the  
16 car towards the ocean. I inhaled the crisp and  
17 salty ocean air, and I immediately set my eyes  
18 on the sand. My parents yelled at my siblings  
19 and me, demanding that we slow down, but we  
20 were too busy fighting over the beach toys and

21 racing to the beach to even notice. My father  
22 eventually caught up to us and halted our  
23 frenzied rush to the ocean.

24           Finally, order was restored, and after we  
25 had laid down the towels on the warm, soft  
26 sand and my mother had finished carefully  
27 applying our sunscreen, we were free to jump  
28 in the ocean. I ran to the deep blue waves,  
29 which danced along the shoreline, with  
30 boundless enthusiasm and vigor, until my  
31 father hollered to me in a deep baritone,  
32 “Sandra, what are you doing? You don’t know  
33 how to swim! You’ll drown!” Suddenly, the  
34 graceful twirls and ripples of the dancing  
35 waves transformed into monstrous tidal  
36 waves, thunderous crashes, and vicious roars.  
37 Without saying a word, I turned around and  
38 immediately ran back to the safety of the dry  
39 sand and into the arms of my mother.

*Go on to the next page* ➔

11. The primary purpose of the passage is to
- (A) recount of the author's memory of a day at the beach with her family when she was younger.
  - (B) warn the reader about safety precautions that should be taken when visiting the shore.
  - (C) advertise the New Jersey shore and describe the many attractions of this tourist destination.
  - (D) discuss the importance of family bonding through shared experiences, such as traveling together.
12. What can be inferred from the last three sentences?
- (A) The narrator wanted to swim in the water, but she was afraid that her father would punish her if she did.
  - (B) The narrator decided that it would be more fun to make a sandcastle because the ocean water was too cold.
  - (C) The narrator's father was teasing her, because he knew that she is an excellent swimmer.
  - (D) The narrator forgot that she could not swim until her father reminded her.
13. In line 8, "surmised" most nearly means,
- (A) testified
  - (B) inferred
  - (C) complimented
  - (D) scolded
14. Based on the information in the passage, which of the following statements is true?
- (A) The author's sister and brother are excellent swimmers.
  - (B) Her family plans on moving to the shore sometime in the future.
  - (C) This was the first time the author ever went to the beach.
  - (D) The author and her siblings did not behave well on the car ride to the beach.
15. When the author describes the transformation of the waves in lines 33-36, she is suggesting that
- (A) the tide changed drastically in that moment, and the waves suddenly became much harsher.
  - (B) her fear of the waves made them seem much more violent and threatening.
  - (C) she was dreaming, and in her dream, the waves were dancing and twirling.
  - (D) she put on her glasses and noticed that the waves were very strong.

Questions 16–20

1 Whether for escape, enlightenment, or  
2 pure joy, books allow us to connect to other  
3 places and times. Fortunately for the millions  
4 of Americans who have impaired vision or a  
5 physical disability, there are braille and talking  
6 books from NLS.

7 NLS is the National Library Service for  
8 the Blind and Physically Handicapped, part of  
9 the Library of Congress. Established in 1931,  
10 the organization’s mission is to enrich the lives  
11 of its patrons by offering them books,  
12 magazines, music scores, and other materials  
13 in audio and braille at no charge. Unlike  
14 traditional audiobooks that are provided at  
15 public libraries or sold at retail bookstores,  
16 audiobooks offered by NLS are unabridged,  
17 extensive and diverse, and are designed  
18 specifically for people who are unable to read  
19 regular print.

20 NLS provides its services to any U.S.  
21 resident or U.S. citizen living abroad who is  
22 blind, has low vision, or has a physical

23 disability that makes it difficult to hold a book.  
24 Thousands of bestsellers, classics, biographies,  
25 nonfiction works, and more can be  
26 downloaded from the Internet or ordered for  
27 home delivery through a nationwide network  
28 of cooperating libraries.

29 Those with cerebral palsy, multiple  
30 sclerosis, loss of the use of their arms or hands,  
31 or prolonged weakness can access the NLS  
32 collection. So, too, can people with temporary  
33 limitations resulting from strokes or accidents.  
34 Now avid readers like San Francisco resident  
35 Ivana Kirola, 38, who suffers from cerebral  
36 palsy, can continue to satisfy their interests,  
37 which for Kirola range from politics, to travel,  
38 to music. “I really appreciate the services from  
39 NLS,” Kirola says. “They help me in my daily  
40 life, in understanding people and keeping up to  
41 date with the news. My favorite part of NLS is  
42 the widened horizons that reading audiobooks  
43 gives to me.”

*Go on to the next page* ➔



16. The main purpose of the passage is to
- (A) inform the reader about a service that offers braille and talking books to the blind and physically handicapped.
  - (B) explain why reading should be a part of every person's life, regardless of disabilities.
  - (C) argue that the rise of television has caused people to read less than they should.
  - (D) compare traditional audiobooks with the audiobooks provided by NLS.
17. Which of the following questions can be answered with information from the passage?
- (A) What is Ivana Kirola's favorite book?
  - (B) What type of book offered by NLS is most popular?
  - (C) When was the NLS established?
  - (D) Who was the founder of NLS?
18. The quotation by Ivana Kirola suggests that she finds the NLS audiobooks
- (A) frustrating
  - (B) worthless
  - (C) hilarious
  - (D) enriching
19. According to the information in the passage, what is the alternative to audiobooks for those who have impaired vision or are physically disabled?
- (A) They can find someone to read to them.
  - (B) They can listen to the radio.
  - (C) They can have braille books delivered to their homes.
  - (D) There is no alternative.
20. In line 11, "patrons" most nearly means
- (A) users
  - (B) enemies
  - (C) strangers
  - (D) sponsors

Questions 21–25

1 Benjamin Franklin – a renowned  
2 inventor, politician, and publisher and one of  
3 the Founding Fathers of the United States –  
4 was also known as the publisher of *Poor*  
5 *Richard's Almanac*. He published the almanac  
6 annually from 1732 to 1758 under the  
7 pseudonym “Poor Richard” or “Richard  
8 Saunders.” Franklin’s almanac was very  
9 popular in the American colonies, and its sales  
10 reached 10,000 per year, which was an  
11 impressive amount at the time. The almanac  
12 contained diverse content, including weather  
13 forecasts, puzzles, and proverbs. It offered  
14 both practical insight and entertainment.  
15 Most of the content in *Poor Richard's*  
16 *Almanac* was not original, and its material  
17 came from a wide range of sources. In the

18 1746 publication of *Poor Richard*, Franklin  
19 wrote, “I know as well as thee, that I am no  
20 poet born; and it is a trade I never learnt, nor  
21 indeed could learn. Why then should I give my  
22 readers bad lines of my own, when good ones  
23 of other people’s are so plenty?”  
24 Franklin’s proverbs generally promoted  
25 hard work, frugality, and virtue, and some of  
26 these proverbs are still famous today. For  
27 example, you might have heard the saying,  
28 “Early to bed and early to rise makes a man  
29 healthy, wealthy and wise.” Centuries later, his  
30 advice remains relevant and useful. While the  
31 popularity of most almanacs from that era was  
32 transient, the legacy of *Poor Richard's Almanac*  
33 is enduring.

Go on to the next page ➔

21. The main purpose of this passage is to
- (A) compare *Poor Richard's Almanac* to other almanacs popular in the American colonies.
  - (B) analyze the greatest accomplishments of Benjamin Franklin's life.
  - (C) inform the reader about *Poor Richard's Almanac*.
  - (D) prove that Benjamin Franklin is the most important Founding Father of the United States.
22. As it is used in line 32, "transient" most nearly means
- (A) short-lived
  - (B) permanent
  - (C) intense
  - (D) unusual
23. According to the information in the passage, Benjamin Franklin
- (A) considered himself to be an excellent poet.
  - (B) stole the content from his childhood friend named Richard.
  - (C) did not write most of the content in his almanac.
  - (D) advised his readers to procrastinate and to live extravagantly.
24. Benjamin Franklin published his almanac under the name
- (A) George Washington
  - (B) Founding Father
  - (C) King Franklin
  - (D) Richard Saunders
25. According to the passage, which of the following was NOT contained in the almanac?
- (A) Proverbs
  - (B) Weather forecasts
  - (C) Puzzles
  - (D) Political speeches

STOP. Do not go on  
until told to do so.

