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BASIC QUESTIONS

Use these questions to practice the most basic difficulty level you might see on the Lower, Middle, and Upper Level ISEE. The Lower Level exam will include more basic questions than the Middle and Upper Levels. Phrase responses will only occur on the Lower Level.

1. After negotiating the price with the car salesman, David and Pete ------- a yellow convertible.
   (A) purchased
   (B) salvaged
   (C) debated
   (D) approximated

2. While millions of people around the world have heard of the Taj Mahal, -------.
   (A) Shah Jahan used new techniques to build it.
   (B) it was built as a tribute to Shah Jahan’s wife.
   (C) only a small percentage of people have actually seen it.
   (D) many scholars have tried to explain why the monument is so popular.

3. Jane and Monica made a pact to stay friends forever, and they fulfilled this ------- by remaining friends until the ends of their lives.
   (A) vow
   (B) parody
   (C) devotion
   (D) incision

4. It is important to discuss the ------- of an experiment so that other researchers can know what steps to follow when repeating it.
   (A) methods
   (B) defenses
   (C) specks
   (D) communications

5. After she saw her dog chew through her pillows, Hannah realized that only training would stop the animal's ------- behavior.
   (A) weary
   (B) unruly
   (C) stationary
   (D) comical

6. Because the reservoir contained the town's drinking water, -------.
   (A) no one was allowed to swim in it.
   (B) people thought it seemed spooky at night.
   (C) different reservoirs serve different purposes.
   (D) Lucy spent long hours reading in the park near it.
7. For her submission to an architecture design contest, the architect ------- a plan for a new kind of skyscraper.
   (A) developed
   (B) inspired
   (C) competed
   (D) pressured

8. Katie ------- her older sister by pulling her hair and calling her names.
   (A) pacified
   (B) tormented
   (C) detested
   (D) entrusted

9. Although Helen Keller was both deaf and blind, -------.
   (A) Anne Sullivan was her teacher.
   (B) she learned to communicate with others.
   (C) it was challenging for her to learn sign language.
   (D) she had scarlet fever at the age of two.

10. Ted was so cheerful and good-spirited that he laughed ------- at everyone’s jokes, even the bad ones.
    (A) blandly
    (B) identically
    (C) aggressively
    (D) heartily

11. Because the king had ------- that his neighbors were weak, he was surprised to discover that they actually had strong armies.
    (A) inquired
    (B) assumed
    (C) overthrew
    (D) revealed

12. Although the rest of her family was not particularly musical, Annette had a ------- for playing the piano.
    (A) talent
    (B) dialect
    (C) tact
    (D) distress

13. The trade of ------- pets such as tigers, lions, and wolf-hybrids is illegal, yet people still import these animals from foreign countries.
    (A) domestic
    (B) exotic
    (C) aquatic
    (D) alarmed

14. Clara's passion for exploring in the wild led her to -------.
    (A) venture deep into the forest.
    (B) attempt to read difficult books.
    (C) boast of never having traveled outside her town.
    (D) contest those who said they knew less about animals than she did.
15. Because Anna Pavlova was such an -------- dancer, she became one of the most famous ballerinas in the world.
   (A) endangered  
   (B) obvious  
   (C) accomplished  
   (D) exasperated

16. As a responsible pet owner, Anna never -------- to feed her hamster.
   (A) suffocated  
   (B) neglected  
   (C) prevented  
   (D) desired

17. Although many of Jules Verne's books discuss his characters' --------, Verne himself traveled very little in his life.
   (A) myths  
   (B) voyages  
   (C) illustrations  
   (D) strategies

18. Using clever deception, the -------- fox was able to outwit the hunter.
   (A) highbrow  
   (B) somber  
   (C) cunning  
   (D) superb

19. While many think that Watson and Crick were the first to identify DNA's double helix, --------.
   (A) they worked together on this discovery.  
   (B) Maurice Wilkins was their research assistant at the time.  
   (C) some argue that Rosalind Franklin made this discovery before them.  
   (D) they were honored for their findings with a Nobel Prize in 1962.

20. For Madeline, completing the entire marathon was an -------- on its own; she was proud to have finished, and it did not matter how long she had taken.
   (A) achievement  
   (B) ideal  
   (C) obstacle  
   (D) enhancement

21. While some celebrities are --------, others frequently boast about their talents.
   (A) eager  
   (B) peculiar  
   (C) bitter  
   (D) humble
22. Henry David Thoreau wanted a life away from civilization, so he --------.
   (A) wrote the book *Walden*.
   (B) went to live in the woods on his own.
   (C) worked as an elementary school teacher before moving to Concord.
   (D) influenced many prominent thinkers, including Martin Luther King.

23. When the employers realized that their employee had swindled them, they were so -------- that they could not think clearly.
   (A) cautious
   (B) serious
   (C) furious
   (D) nervous

24. After the captain lost her compass, she found it very difficult to -------- her ship.
   (A) terminate
   (B) innovate
   (C) inundate
   (D) navigate

25. All of the author’s works revolve around a main character and her trusted --------, who accompanies her on her adventures.
   (A) antagonist
   (B) pedestrian
   (C) companion
   (D) duplicate

26. Alice’s life was so busy as an adult that she often thought back to her carefree childhood, when --------.
   (A) she had no worries.
   (B) she never had time to relax.
   (C) her mother gave her many chores.
   (D) her school life had been very problematic.

27. After an apple fell onto Sir Isaac Newton’s head, he had the -------- that gravity is what causes objects to fall.
   (A) jubilation
   (B) frustration
   (C) hesitation
   (D) realization

28. After being cooped up in a classroom for hours, it can be quite -------- for students to go play outside.
   (A) liberating
   (B) abolishing
   (C) challenging
   (D) reassuring

29. It is only after a hypothesis is tested many times that --------.
   (A) it can be considered proven.
   (B) it should not be tested on animals.
   (C) it will be doubted by the scientific community.
   (D) researchers will test it in an experiment.
The ISEE Reading Comprehension section tests your ability to understand short passages from a variety of different sources. If you are taking the ISEE Lower Level, you will answer 25 total questions based on 5 passages (5 questions per passage). If you are taking the ISEE Middle or Upper Levels, you will answer 36 total questions based on 6 passages (6 questions per passage). Genres may include informative passages, persuasive passages, and narrative passages. You will be asked answer questions about the author's main idea, supporting information, argument organization, and writing style. You may also be asked to infer conclusions not explicitly stated in the passage by expanding logically on the author's argument. However, you will never need to rely on any of your own prior knowledge about the material; all of the information needed to answer these questions will be given directly in the passage.

APPROACHING THE READING SECTION

TIME MANAGEMENT

Pace yourself carefully. You are only given points for answering the questions, not reading the passages, so don't spend too long reading any one passage. Focus on the shorter passages first and save the longer passages for last. If you are unsure about a question, make your best guess and move on—you can always come back to the question if you have time at the end. If you are close to running out of time, see if there are any questions you can answer quickly by reading just a few lines in the passage, and make your best guess on any other questions you have left.

Read quickly, trying to understand the main points of the passage rather than the small details. Don't waste time trying to understand every piece of information in the passage. If something doesn't make sense to you, try to get an overall sense of what the author is saying and move on.
ANSWER QUESTIONS OUT OF ORDER

Answer questions about the main idea or the main purpose first, and then turn to questions that ask about specific details in the passage. If a question looks like it will take a long time to answer, make your best guess, circle it, and come back to it if you have time at the end of the section.

PROCESS OF ELIMINATION

Use the Process of Elimination to narrow down your answer choices, eliminating answers that are obviously wrong or have nothing to do with what is being asked. Then decide among the remaining answer choices which one best answers the question. Remember that you are being asked to find the best answer, not the one that immediately seems correct. Check all of the possible answer choices before making your selection.

VOCABULARY BUILDING

Use your practice reading passages to help develop your vocabulary. Circle words you don’t understand, look them up, and add them to your vocabulary flashcards or journal.
The Reading Comprehension section on the ISEE doesn’t only test whether you are able to understand a passage. The section also tests whether you are able to read critically, which means examining and interpreting what the passage means as a whole. This means that you should look not only for the facts of the passage, but also what the author is saying about those facts and how the author is saying it.

For every passage you read, ask yourself:

1. What are the author’s topics, or the key details being discussed in this passage?
2. What is the author saying about these topics, or what is the main point of the passage?
3. What is the author’s purpose in this passage?

In this section, we’ll discuss how to go about answering these questions. We’ll take a look at several strategies that will build your critical reading skills and help you become a more active reader for the ISEE. Because you have a unique learning style, some of these strategies might work better for you than others. Identify the strategies that help you the most, and practice using these for each new passage you read.

UNDERSTANDING THE PASSAGE

Your first step to understand the passage is to identify the basic facts that the author is discussing. As you read, stop yourself after each paragraph and take the time to mentally summarize the basic facts that you have read. Summarizing these basic facts in your own words is important because it allows you to prove to yourself that you have really understood what the passage is saying. The questions on the ISEE might also ask you to recognize concepts from the passage in slightly different words, so you can’t be tied down to the exact words that the author uses.
THE 5 W’S

What is the best way to quickly summarize the passage? You may have heard about the 5 w’s: “who,” “what,” “where,” “when,” and “why.” As you read, ask yourself these five questions:

1. **Who** is involved in this passage? Look for any people being discussed and think about who might be writing this passage.
2. **What** is being discussed in this passage? Look for the major concepts in each section of the passage.
3. **Where** are the events in this passage taking place? Look for any important places that are being discussed.
4. **When** are the events in the passage taking place? Look for any clues that might tell you the dates of the events taking place. Also see if you can guess when the author might have written the passage.
5. **Why** is the information in this passage important? In other words, how are the ideas in the passage connected, and what purpose or main point is the author illustrating with all of these details? We’ll discuss this in greater detail in the next section.

KEY WORDS

As you read, underline the **key words** that answer these questions in the passage. Be an active reader and read with your pencil! Underlining as you read will improve your concentration and keep you focused on the most important information in the passage. Identify whether the words you underline answer the questions “who,” “what,” “where,” “when,” or “why.”

As you read, also pay close attention to how the author connects information within the passage. Underline any **transitional words** or phrases that the author uses to move from one idea to another. The author might use words like “additionally,” “furthermore,” or “consequently” to show how one idea follows from or supports another. She might use words like “but,” “yet,” or “however” to show how one idea contrasts with another.

Take a look at the example passage below. What key words would you underline to answer the questions “who,” “what,” “where,” “when,” and “why”? What other transitional words would you underline? You might try something like this:
The duck-billed platypus is a small animal, native to Australia, with many unusual characteristics. It is a very odd-looking animal; in fact, when Europeans first heard about the platypus, many thought such an odd-looking animal must be a fraud. Its head and feet are like a duck's, its body is like a weasel's, and its tail is like a beaver's. Its webbed feet help it swim, its odd-shaped tail helps it store fat, and its duck-like beak helps it find food in rivers.

A platypus is a mammal, but is remarkably unlike almost every other mammal. The platypus lays eggs; it doesn't give birth like other mammals. Also, although all mammals give their young milk, the platypus has an unusual way of doing this: it actually sweats milk all over its body. But despite these differences, the platypus has fur, like other mammals. Finally, the platypus has some amazing abilities. The platypus can see electricity; it senses electricity coming from other animals in the water and uses this ability to catch food and avoid predators. The platypus also has venomous spurs on its feet that allow it to defend itself. An animal that gets too close to the platypus's feet will be stung with a poison.

Let's see how these key words helped us answer the 5 w's for this passage:

1. **Who** is being discussed in this passage? This passage is about the duck-billed platypus, which is the first word we underlined.

2. **What** is being discussed in this passage? This passage focuses on several unusual characteristics of the duck-billed platypus: its odd looks, difference from other mammals, and amazing abilities. We underlined these characteristics in the passage.

3. **Where** are the events in this passage taking place? The passage says that the duck-billed platypus lives in Australia, so we underlined that place in the passage.

4. **When** are the events in this passage taking place? This passage doesn't specifically tell us this information. But because the passage is written in the present tense, we can assume that it is talking about a type of animal that is alive today.

5. **Why** is the information in this passage important? We underlined the transitional words “but,” “despite,” and “finally” in order to keep track of how the ideas in this passage support or contrast with each other. We’ll talk about the author’s main idea and purpose in the next section, but all of the information included in this passage seems to be describing why the platypus is unusual.

You might have decided that other concepts are also important, and might have underlined some additional words. However, don’t underline too many words in any paragraph! Only focus on the key words, those that are the most important and those that answer the 5 w's for the passage.
Exercise #1: Read the following passages and underline the key words that answer the questions “who,” “what,” “where,” “when”, and “why,” as well as any transitional words or phrases. Then, use these key words to answer the 5 w’s in your own words. Have a trusted reader check your work.

|   | A banana split is an ice cream-based dessert. In its classic form, it is served in a long dish called a boat. A banana is cut in half lengthwise and laid in the dish. There are many variations, but the classic banana split is made with scoops of vanilla, chocolate and strawberry ice cream served in a row between the split banana. Pineapple topping is spooned over the strawberry ice cream, chocolate syrup over the vanilla, and strawberry topping over the chocolate. It is garnished with crushed nuts, whipped cream, and maraschino cherries. David Evans Strickler, a 23-year-old apprentice pharmacist at Tassel Pharmacy in Latrobe, Pennsylvania, invented the banana-based triple ice cream sundae in 1904. The sundae originally cost 10 cents, twice the price of other sundaes. It quickly caught on with students of nearby Saint Vincent College, who spread news of the sundae by word-of-mouth. Walgreens is credited with spreading the popularity of the banana split. The early drug stores operated by Charles Rudolph Walgreen in the Chicago area adopted the banana split as a signature dessert. Fountains in the stores attracted customers who might otherwise have been just as satisfied having their prescriptions filled at some other drug store in the neighborhood. But Walgreens offered them something special – the banana split. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
|   | 1. **Who** is being discussed in this passage?  
2. **What** is being discussed in this passage?  
3. **Where** are the events in this passage taking place?  
4. **When** are the events in this passage taking place?  
5. **Why** is the information in this passage important? |
Sunscreen is a lotion, spray, or gel applied to the skin to help protect against sunburn. The chemicals in sunscreen absorb or reflect some of the sun's ultraviolet radiation. The effectiveness of sunscreen is called its Sun Protection Factor, or SPF. Sunscreens with a higher SPF provide more protection against UV-B rays, the ultraviolet radiation that causes sunburn. However, many medical organizations such as the American Cancer Society recommend the use of sunscreen because it can help prevent certain skin cancers associated with sun exposure. However, many sunscreens do not offer the full protection needed to reduce the risk of skin cancer. This is because many sunscreens do not block UV-A rays, another form of ultraviolet radiation that does not cause sunburn but can still increase the risk of skin cancer. Broad-spectrum sunscreens have been designed to address this concern by protecting against both UV-A and UV-B radiation.

6. **Who** is being discussed in this passage?

7. **What** is being discussed in this passage?

8. **Where** are the events in this passage taking place?

9. **When** are the events in this passage taking place?

10. **Why** is the information in this passage important?
ANALYZING THE PASSAGE

Understanding the 5 w's of the passage will help you with your basic comprehension. The next step to becoming a critical reader is to understand how these basic facts are organized.

PARAGRAPH TOPICS

Within each paragraph of a passage, some facts will be more important than others. The topic of a paragraph is its main focus. As you read, think about how the key words you underlined might support the main topic of each paragraph.

Let’s walk through the duck-billed platypus passage again. Here, we’ll use the key words we underlined to identify the topic of each paragraph:

- The topic of the first paragraph is the unusual way the duck-billed platypus looks. We can tell this by the first couple of sentences, where we underlined the key words “unusual characteristics” and “odd-looking.” The rest of the paragraph gives us more details about this idea. The platypus’s odd looks include its beak, its tail, its feet, and its body. As the paragraph goes on, we are told that some of its odd-looking features have purposes, which we also underlined.
- The second paragraph is about why the platypus is different from other mammals, which was one of our key words. The paragraph goes on to tell some key ways that the platypus is different: it lays eggs and sweats milk. It also tells us one way that the platypus is like other mammals: it has fur.
- The third paragraph is about some special abilities of the platypus: its ability to see electricity and to inject poison from its feet. Our key words included the phrases “see electricity” and “venomous spurs.”

MAIN POINT

After you have discovered the author’s topics in a passage, your next step is to identify the author’s main point, or what the author is saying about these topics. The main point helps answer one of the “why” questions of your 5 w’s: why is the information in this passage important? All of the information in the passage serves to prove or illustrate one central idea, and this idea is the author’s main point. The main point connects all of the paragraphs in the passage and shows how they are working together.

For example, in the duck-billed platypus passage above, we identified the topics of each of the three paragraphs. How would you write a sentence that describes what the author is saying about these topics, connecting all three paragraphs? Each paragraph discusses some way that the platypus is an unusual animal. Therefore, you might write:
The duck-billed platypus is an unusual animal because it looks strange, is different from other mammals, and has some special abilities.

Notice how this main point includes the topics of all three paragraphs: they all work together to show how the platypus is unusual!

**PURPOSE**

Connected to the main point is the passage's purpose. This is answers another one of the “why” questions of your 5 w’s: why might the author have written this passage? What is he or she trying to do? In order to answer this question, think about what type of passage you are reading. Would this passage most likely occur in an encyclopedia? If so, the author’s purpose might be to explain or describe something. Would the passage occur in a newspaper? If so, the author might be trying to report an event, or to convince you of something. Would the passage occur in a memoir or an autobiography? If so, the author is probably telling you a story.

Here are the main purposes of most passages you will encounter:

- to explain or describe
- to convince or persuade
- to narrate or tell a story

The duck-billed platypus passage would most likely fall under the first category: you could say that the author’s purpose is to describe some features of the platypus.

*Exercise #2*: Re-read the following passages and answer the questions that follow, referring back to your 5 w’s in Exercise #1. Have a trusted reader check your work.
A banana split is an ice cream-based dessert. In its classic form, it is served in a long dish called a boat. A banana is cut in half lengthwise and laid in the dish. There are many variations, but the classic banana split is made with scoops of vanilla, chocolate and strawberry ice cream served in a row between the split banana. Pineapple topping is spooned over the strawberry ice cream, chocolate syrup over the vanilla, and strawberry topping over the chocolate. It is garnished with crushed nuts, whipped cream, and maraschino cherries.

David Evans Strickler, a 23-year-old apprentice pharmacist at Tassel Pharmacy in Latrobe, Pennsylvania, invented the banana-based triple ice cream sundae in 1904. The sundae originally cost 10 cents, twice the price of other sundaes. It quickly caught on with students of nearby Saint Vincent College, who spread news of the sundae by word-of-mouth.

Walgreens is credited with spreading the popularity of the banana split. The early drug stores operated by Charles Rudolph Walgreen in the Chicago area adopted the banana split as a signature dessert. Fountains in the stores attracted customers who might otherwise have been just as satisfied having their prescriptions filled at some other drug store in the neighborhood. But Walgreens offered them something special – the banana split.

1. What are the topics of each paragraph?

   Paragraph 1:

   Paragraph 2:

2. How would you state the main point of this entire passage? Write your answer as a full sentence.

3. How would you describe the purpose of this passage?
Sunscreen is a lotion, spray, or gel applied to the skin to help protect against sunburn. The chemicals in sunscreen absorb or reflect some of the sun's ultraviolet radiation. The effectiveness of sunscreen is called its Sun Protection Factor, or SPF. Sunscreens with a higher SPF provide more protection against UV-B rays, the ultraviolet radiation that causes sunburn. Medical organizations such as the American Cancer Society recommend the use of sunscreen because it can help prevent certain skin cancers associated with sun exposure. However, many sunscreens do not offer the full protection needed to reduce the risk of skin cancer. This is because many sunscreens do not block UV-A rays, another form of ultraviolet radiation that does not cause sunburn but can still increase the risk of skin cancer. Broad-spectrum sunscreens have been designed to address this concern by protecting against both UV-A and UV-B radiation.

4. What are the topics of each paragraph?

Paragraph 1:

Paragraph 2:

5. How would you state the main point of this entire passage? Write your answer as a full sentence.

6. How would you describe the purpose of this passage?
READING COMPREHENSION PRACTICE

QUESTIONS

SECTION 5

In this section, you will find 157 questions to prepare you for the types of reading passages you might find on the ISEE. There are 5 sets of questions, grouped by difficulty. Pay attention to the difficulty of each set to determine which questions are appropriate for your level. Read each passage carefully, and answer the questions following each passage on the basis of what is stated or implied in that passage.

BASIC PASSAGES

Use these questions to practice the most basic difficulty level you might see on the Lower, Middle, and Upper Level ISEE. The Lower Level exam will include more basic questions than the Middle and Upper Levels.

1. Every time you turn on a light, you have Thomas Alva Edison to thank.
2. Born in 1847, Thomas Edison was an American inventor and businessman.
3. In 1866, at the age of 19, Edison moved to Kentucky, where he worked at the Associated Press news wire.
4. Edison requested the night shift, which allowed him plenty of time during the day to spend on his two favorite pastimes: reading and experimenting.
5. In Menlo Park, Edison founded the first industrial research lab, where he and an army of experimenters, scientists, and craftsmen invented hundreds of patentable processes and devices—earning him the nickname “The Wizard of Menlo Park.” Edison’s lab produced numerous inventions that contributed to mass communication, such as a stock ticker, a mechanical vote recorder, a new microphone that improved telephone call quality, and devices for recording and playing music and motion pictures. These devices helped to shape the way that people communicate today.
1. What is the main idea of this passage?
   (A) Thomas Edison had a laboratory in Menlo Park.
   (B) Thomas Edison was a highly influential inventor.
   (C) Thomas Edison loved to read.
   (D) Thomas Edison was a child prodigy.

2. Which phrase most nearly means the same thing as “an army of experimenters, scientists, and craftsmen” (lines 16-18)?
   (A) a well-armed group of experimenters, scientists, and craftsmen
   (B) a small group of experimenters, scientists, and craftsmen
   (C) mostly experimenters, but also scientists and craftsmen
   (D) a large team of experimenters, scientists, and craftsmen

3. Edison requested the night shift at the Associated Press news wire because
   (A) he was too tired to work during the day.
   (B) he wanted to work on his reading and experiments during the day.
   (C) he wanted to work under the cover of darkness.
   (D) he wanted to work alone.

4. According to the third paragraph, Edison was most likely called “The Wizard of Menlo Park” because
   (A) he used magic to invent new devices.
   (B) he and his employees looked like wizards while they were working.
   (C) he convinced the residents of Menlo Park that he had supernatural powers.
   (D) he produced so many inventions in Menlo Park that it seemed like magic.

5. As it is used in line 12, “prolific” most nearly means
   (A) productive.
   (B) scarce.
   (C) friendly.
   (D) nervous.
The 1910 Cuba hurricane – known as the Cyclone of Five Days – was said to be one of the worst tropical cyclones that has ever hit Cuba. The storm formed in the southern Caribbean Sea on October 9, 1910. It grew stronger as it moved northwest. It then made landfall on the western end of Cuba. The storm made a loop over open water, and then began moving towards the United States. After crossing Florida, the storm continued moving close to the southeastern United States and passed out to sea. The storm caused some damage in Florida, but in the island country of Cuba the storm was one of the worst disasters on record, bringing significant destruction across the island. Strong winds and rain caused flooding in streets, ruined crops, and damaged farms. Thousands of homes were destroyed, many other buildings were damaged, and ships carrying valuable goods were sunk by the storm. It is not known exactly how much damage the storm caused. However, losses in Havana, Cuba’s capital city, were over $1 million, and the total amount of damage was probably in the millions. At least 100 people died in Cuba, mostly in lethal mudslides caused by the storm.
6. The primary purpose of the passage is
   (A) to describe the climate of the Caribbean Sea.
   (B) to compare and contrast the economies of Cuba and Florida.
   (C) to give a complete history of hurricanes in the southeastern United States.
   (D) to describe one tropical storm's effects on a particular region.

7. All of the following questions can be answered by the passage EXCEPT
   (A) Where did the hurricane go after hitting Cuba?
   (B) Did anybody die in Florida as a result of the hurricane?
   (C) Where did the hurricane first make landfall?
   (D) What is Cuba's capital?

8. The author's tone in this passage can best be described as
   (A) informative.
   (B) pessimistic.
   (C) enthusiastic.
   (D) humorous.

9. Which of the following statements is true, according to the passage?
   (A) The hurricane traveled primarily in a northeastern direction.
   (B) The worst damage caused by the hurricane was the sinking of ships.
   (C) The majority of hurricane-related deaths in Cuba were caused by mudslides.
   (D) The hurricane caused more damage in Florida than in Cuba.

10. With which of the following statements would the author most likely agree?
    (A) There are still many questions to be answered about the 1910 Cuban Hurricane.
    (B) Cuba will probably never recover from the damage caused by the 1910 Hurricane.
    (C) The Cuban Hurricane could likely have been prevented with better planning.
    (D) Hurricanes can have a devastating impact on island nations like Cuba.
Composed of mostly rock and ice, Pluto is the second-most-massive known dwarf planet in the Solar System. The dwarf planet has five moons: Charon, Nix, Hydra, Kerberos, and Styx, and its mass is $1.31 \times 10^{22}$ kg, less than 0.24 percent of Earth's mass. The origin of Pluto has been shrouded in uncertainty. Pluto was once believed to be an escaped moon of Neptune, but this hypothesis has been debunked. From its discovery in 1930 until 2006, Pluto was classified as the ninth planet from the Sun. In the late 1970s, following the discovery of minor planet 2060 Chiron in the outer Solar System and the recognition of Pluto's relatively low mass, Pluto's status as a major planet began to be questioned. In the early 21st century, many objects similar to Pluto were discovered in the outer Solar System, notably the scattered disc object Eris in 2005, which is 27% more massive than Pluto. In 2006, the International Astronomical Union (IAU) defined what it means to be a “planet” within the Solar System. This definition excluded Pluto as a planet and added it as a member of the new category "dwarf planet" along with Eris. Numerous scientists hold that Pluto should continue to be classified as a planet. Researchers on both sides of the debate gathered in 2008 for a conference called "The Great Planet Debate." The conference published a post-conference press release indicating that scientists could not come to a consensus about the definition of a planet. Some members of the public have also rejected the new IAU classification, citing the disagreement within the scientific community on the issue or their own sentimental reasons: they maintain that they have always known Pluto as a planet and will continue to do so regardless of the IAU decision.
13. With which of the following statements would the author most likely agree?

(A) Pluto should keep its new categorization as a dwarf planet.
(B) Pluto should revert to its original categorization as a regular planet.
(C) It is foolish to be sentimentally attached to Pluto’s categorization as a planet.
(D) The debate around Pluto’s categorization remains unresolved.

14. Based on information in the passage, we can conclude that the most massive known dwarf planet in the Solar System is

(A) Pluto.
(B) 2060 Chiron.
(C) Eris.
(D) Earth.

15. What is the central idea of this passage?

(A) Many planets are difficult to categorize with the IAU’s new criteria.
(B) It is crucial that we reach a consensus about Pluto’s categorization.
(C) Many mysteries remain in the field of astronomy.
(D) Pluto is officially a dwarf planet, but not everyone agrees.

16. According to the passage, which event originally cast doubt on Pluto’s status as a planet?

(A) the discovery of another minor planet
(B) the realization that Eris was 27% more massive than Pluto
(C) the IAU’s 2006 redefinition of a planet
(D) the discovery that Pluto is an escaped moon of Neptune

17. How many moons does Pluto have?

(A) one
(B) three
(C) five
(D) zero

18. The final sentence suggests which of the following differences between the International Astronomical Union and the general public?

(A) The International Astronomical Union is unlikely to accept a new definition even if a public consensus is reached.
(B) The International Astronomical Union has less sentimental reasons than much of the public for deciding whether Pluto should be classified as a planet.
(C) Unlike the general public’s opinions, decisions made by the International Astronomical Union have never been controversial.
(D) The general public has known that Pluto was a planet for a longer period of time than the the International Astronomical Union.
Isadora Duncan was a dancer considered by many to be the progenitor of modern dance. To Duncan, classical ballet, with its strict rules of posture and formation, was "ugly and against nature." She rejected traditional ballet steps, preferring to emphasize improvisation, emotion, and the human form. She said, "I spent long days and nights in the studio seeking that dance which might be the divine expression of the human spirit through the medium of the body's movement." By thus establishing connections between human emotion and the movements of dance, Duncan hoped to restore dance to a form of high art rather than mere entertainment.

Breaking with convention, she traced the art of dance back to its roots as a sacred art. She developed free and natural movements inspired by the classical Greek arts, folk dances, social dances, nature, and natural forces. She incorporated the new American athleticism, which included skipping, running, jumping, leaping, and tossing. The athleticism and classical roots of her style are reflected in her innovative costume choice of a Grecian tunic and bare feet, which allowed for a physical freedom that could not be achieved in the traditional corseted ballet costumes and pointe shoes that restrained dancers. With time, she gained a very wide following and set up several schools in Europe and the United States. Duncan's celebrity, however, did not suffice to bring her prosperity. As her performing career waned in the later years of her life, her financial situation degraded, and eventually she had to be maintained in apartments rented by friends and supporters. After one financially unsuccessful tour in the United States, Duncan's creditors nearly prevented her from leaving the country to return to Europe. Duncan also received criticism for her highly controversial political opinions. But while financial problems and public controversy embroiled Duncan in her later years, she is remembered today for her artistic achievements: the creation of modern dance, and the restoration of dance to a high place among the arts. While Duncan's own schools no longer exist, her style of life inspired novels, ballets, and films, and her likeness was included in the bas-relief carved by sculptor Antoine Bourdelle over the entrance of the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées.
19. According to the passage, Isadora Duncan's modern dance was inspired by all of the following EXCEPT

(A) the heroines of romantic ballet.
(B) the natural human form.
(C) American athleticism.
(D) classical Greek art.

20. As it is used in line 3, "progenitor" most closely means

(A) practitioner.
(B) creator.
(C) instructor.
(D) competitor.

21. A "bas-relief" (line 62) is most likely

(A) an ornamental basin.
(B) a type of sculpture or engraving.
(C) a type of large basket.
(D) clothing made of silk or taffeta.

22. It can be inferred from the passage that Isadora Duncan is primarily famous because

(A) she was a skilled historian.
(B) she was an excellent dance teacher and opened several schools.
(C) she inspired thousands of artists to make beautiful jewelry and sculptures.
(D) she invented a new form of dance.

23. What was innovative about Duncan's costume choice?

(A) It allowed dancers to move naturally and without restraint, unlike traditional costumes.
(B) It was white, which diverged from traditionally darker costumes.
(C) It included newly designed pointe shoes, which were customized to fit each individual dancer.
(D) It was extremely plain and understated.

24. The main purpose of the second paragraph is to

(A) explore the connection between art and prosperity in the United States and Europe.
(B) contrast Isadora Duncan’s personal and financial life with her artistic achievements.
(C) characterize Isadora Duncan as an unstable person who shouldn't be honored today.
(D) provide evidence for the claim that Duncan was inspired by her personal challenges.
From 1949 to 1990, modern-day Germany was split into two states: the Federal Republic of Germany, or West Germany, and the German Democratic Republic (GDR), or East Germany. Although Berlin was located within East Germany, part of it was designated as belonging to West Germany. The Berlin Wall was a barrier constructed by the government of East Germany in 1961 that completely cut off West Berlin from East Berlin. The barrier included guard towers placed along two large concrete walls, with a wide area between them. The leaders of East Germany claimed that the Wall was erected to protect its population from enemies conspiring to prevent the will of the people in building a socialist state in East Germany. In practice, the Wall served to prevent people from leaving East Germany. In 1989, a radical series of political changes occurred in East Germany. After several weeks of unrest on the streets, the East German government announced on November 9, 1989 that all GDR citizens could visit West Germany and West Berlin. Crowds of East Germans crossed and climbed onto the wall, joined by West Germans on the other side in a celebratory atmosphere. Over the next few weeks, a euphoric public and souvenir hunters chipped away parts of the wall; the governments later used industrial equipment to remove most of the rest. The fall of the Berlin Wall paved the way for German reunification, which was formally concluded on October 3, 1990.
25. According to the passage, the German Democratic Republic was
   (A) located in East Germany.
   (B) located in West Germany.
   (C) located within Berlin.
   (D) conquered by the Federal Republic of Germany in 1949.

26. According to the passage, the East German Government claimed that
   (A) West Germans were planning to launch a military attack on their East German neighbors.
   (B) a socialist state in East Germany is what the East Germans wanted.
   (C) the area between the concrete walls should not be controlled by either government.
   (D) East Germans were free to visit West Germany during the day.

27. It can be inferred from the passage that
   (A) the GDR put limitations on its citizens’ freedom.
   (B) the leaders of West Germany did everything they could to have the wall removed.
   (C) most citizens of East Berlin tried to climb over the wall.
   (D) no one was able to travel between East and West Germany from 1949 to 1990.

28. As it is used in line 34, “euphoric” most nearly means
   (A) joyful.
   (B) timid.
   (C) despairing.
   (D) ambivalent.

29. According to the passage, the fall of the Berlin Wall eventually led to
   (A) the Second World War.
   (B) the Cold War.
   (C) the reunification of East and West Germany.
   (D) the rise of a socialist state in East Germany.

30. All of the following questions are answered in the passage EXCEPT
   (A) What was the German Democratic Republic?
   (B) What material was the Berlin wall made from?
   (C) Why did Berliners long for German reunification?
   (D) How did the governments of East and West Germany take the wall down?
Here is a list of some of the most common roots, prefixes, and suffixes that make up words in the English language. Remember that roots carry a word’s basic meaning, prefixes come before a root and change its meaning, and suffixes come at the end of words and tell you whether they are nouns, verbs, adjectives, or adverbs. Start learning some of these basic word parts to cement your vocabulary knowledge and help decipher new, unfamiliar vocabulary.

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### COMMON PREFIXES

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**COMMON SUFFIXES**

<p>| able, ible          | ADJ: capable of | edible, presentable, legible |
| ac, ic, ical        | ADJ: like, related | cardiac, mythic, dramatic, musical |
|acious, icious       | ADJ: full of | malicious, audacious |
|ant, ent             | ADJ/N: full of | eloquent, verdant |
|ate                  | V: make, become | consecrate, enervate, eradicate |
|en                   | V: make, become | awaken, strengthen, soften |
|er (1)               | ADJ: more | bigger, wiser, happier |
|er (2)               | N: a person who does | teacher, baker, announcer |
|cy, ty, ity          | N: state of being | democracy, accuracy, veracity |
|ful                  | ADJ: full of | respectful, cheerful, wonderful |
|fy                   | V: to make | magnify, petrify, beautify |
|ism                  | N: doctrine, belief | monotheism, fanaticism, egotism |
|ist                  | N: dealer, doer | fascist, realist, artist |</p>
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<th>V: make</th>
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<td>N: state of</td>
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