

Reading - Practice 1**The Beatles**

In the 1960s, The Beatles were probably the most famous pop group in the whole world. Since then, there have been a great many groups that have achieved enormous fame, so it is perhaps difficult now to imagine how sensational the Beatles were at that time. They were four boys from north of England and none of them had any train of music. They started by performing and recording songs by black Americans and they had some success with these songs. Then they started writing their own songs and that was when they became popular. The Beatles changed pop music. They were the first pop group to achieve great success from songs they had written themselves. After that it became common for groups and singers to write their own songs. The Beatles did not have a long career. Their first hit record was in 1963 and they split up in 1970. They stopped doing live performances in 1966 because it had come too dangerous for them- their fans were so excited that they surrounded them and tried to take their clothes as souvenirs! However, today some of their songs remain as famous as they were when they first came out. Throughout the world many people can sing part of a Beatles song if you ask them.

1. The passage is mainly about...

- A. How the Beatles became more successful than other groups
- B. Why the Beatles split up after 7 years
- C. Many people's ability to sing a Beatles song
- D. The Beatles' fame and success.

2. The four boys of the Beatles...

- A. came from the same family
- B. were at the same age
- C. came from a town in the north of England
- D. received good training in music

3. The word "sensational" is closet in meaning to...

- A. notorious
 - B. bad
 - C. shocking
 - D. popular
4. The first song of the Beatles were...
- A. written by themselves
 - B. broadcast on the radio
 - C. paid a lot of money
 - D. written by black Americans
5. What is NOT true about the Beatles?
- A. They became famous when they wrote their own songs.
 - B. They had a long stable career.
 - C. The members had no training in music.
 - D. They were afraid of being hurt by fans.
6. The Beatles stopped their live performance because...
- A. they spent more time writing their won songs
 - B. they had earned enough money
 - C. they did not want to work together
 - D. They were afraid of being hurt by fans
7. The year 1970 was the time when...
- A. they started their career
 - B. they changed pop music
 - C. they split up
 - D. they stopped doing live performances
8. What the fans of the Beatles often did was...
- A. ask them to write more songs
 - B. take their clothes as souvenirs
 - C. sing together with them

- D. ask them why they should separate
9. Some songs of the Beatles now...
- A. are still famous as they used to be
 - B. became too old to sing
 - C. are sung by crazy fans
 - D. are the most famous
10. The tone of the passage is that of...
- A. admiration
 - B. neutral
 - C. sarcasm
 - D. criticism

Reading - Practice 2

Birds that feed in flocks commonly retire together into roosts. The reasons for roosting communally are not always obvious, but there are some likely benefits. In winter especially, it is important for birds to keep warm at night and **conserve** precious food reserves. One way to do this is to find a sheltered roost. Solitary roosters shelter in dense vegetation or enter a cavity – horned larks dig holes in the ground and ptarmigan burrow into snow banks – but the effect of sheltering is **magnified** by several birds huddling together in the roosts, as wrens, swifts, brown creepers, bluebirds, and anis do. Body contact reduces the surface area exposed to the cold air, so the birds keep each other warm. Two kinglets huddling together were found to reduce their heat losses by a quarter and three together saved a third of their heat.

The second possible benefit of communal roosts is that they act as “information centers.” During the day, parties of birds will have spread out to **forage** over a very large area. When they return in the evening some will have fed well, but others may have found little to eat. Some investigators have observed that when the birds set out again next morning, those birds that did not feed well on the previous day appear to follow those that did. The behavior of common and lesser kestrels may illustrate different feeding behaviors of similar birds with different roosting habits.

The common kestrel hunts vertebrate animals in a small, familiar hunting ground, whereas the very similar lesser kestrel feeds on insects over a large area. The common kestrel roosts and hunts alone, but the lesser kestrel roosts and hunts in flocks, possibly so one bird can learn from others where to find insect swarms.

Finally, there is safety in numbers at communal roosts since there will always be a few birds awake at any given moment to give the alarm. But this increased protection is partially **counteracted** by the fact that mass roosts attract predators and are especially vulnerable if they are on the ground. Even those in trees can be attacked by birds of prey. The birds on the edge are at greatest risk since predators find it easier to catch small birds perching at the margins of the roost.

1. What does the passage mainly discuss?

- A. How birds find and store food
- B. How birds maintain body heat in the winter
- C. Why birds need to establish territory
- D. Why some species of birds nest together

2. The word "conserve" in line 3 is closest in meaning to

- A. retain
- B. watch
- C. locate
- D. share

3. Ptarmigan keep warm in the winter by

- A. huddling together on the ground with other birds
- B. building nests in trees
- C. burrowing into dense patches of vegetation
- D. digging tunnels into the snow

4. The word "magnified" in line 7 is closest in meaning to

- A. caused
- B. modified
- C. intensified
- D. combined

5. The author mentions kinglets in line 9 as an example of birds that

- A. protect themselves by nesting in holes
- B. nest with other species of birds

- C. nest together for warmth
- D. usually feed and nest in pairs

6. **The word "forage" in line 13 is closest in meaning to**

- A. fly
- B. assemble
- C. feed
- D. rest

7. **Which of the following statements about lesser and common kestrels is true?**

- A. The lesser kestrel and the common kestrel have similar diets.
- B. The lesser kestrel feeds sociably but the common kestrel does not.
- C. The common kestrel nests in larger flocks than does the lesser kestrel.
- D. The common kestrel nests in trees; the lesser kestrel nests on the ground.

8. **The word "counteracted" in line 25 is closest in meaning to**

- A. suggested
- B. negated
- C. measured
- D. shielded

9. **Which of the following is NOT mentioned in the passage as an advantage derived by birds that huddle together while sleeping?**

- A. Some members of the flock warn others of impending dangers.
- B. Staying together provides a greater amount of heat for the whole flock.
- C. Some birds in the flock function as information centers for others who are looking for food.
- D. Several members of the flock care for the young.

10. **Which of the following is a disadvantage of communal roosts that is mentioned in the passage?**

- A. Diseases easily spread among the birds.
- B. Groups are more attractive to predators than individual birds.
- C. Food supplies are quickly depleted.
- D. Some birds in the group will attack the others.

Reading - Practice 3

The Winterthur Museum is a collection and a house. There are many museums **devoted to** the decorative arts and many house museums, but rarely in the United States is a great collection displayed in a great country house. Passing through successive generations of a single family, Winterthur has been a private estate for more than a century. Even after the extensive renovations made to it between 1929 and 1931, the house remained a family residence. This fact is of importance to the atmosphere and effect of the museum. The impression of a lived-in house is apparent to the visitor: the rooms look as if they were vacated only a short while ago whether by the original owners of the furniture or the most recent residents of the house can be a matter of personal interpretation. Winterthur remains, then, a house in which a collection of furniture and architectural elements has been **assembled**. Like an English country house, it is an organic structure; the house, as well as the collection and manner of displaying **it** to the visitor, has changed over the years. The changes have coincided with **developing** concepts of the American arts, increased knowledge on the part of collectors and students, and a progression toward the achievement of a historical effect in period-room displays. The rooms at Winterthur have followed this current, yet still retained the character of a private house.

The concept of a period room as a display technique has developed gradually over the years in an effort to present works of art in a context that would show them to greater effect and would give them more meaning for the viewer. Comparable to the habitat group in a natural history museum, the period room represents the decorative arts in a lively and interesting manner and provides an opportunity to assemble objects related by style, date, or place of manufacture.

1. **What does the passage mainly discuss?**

- A. The reason that Winterthur was redesigned
- B. Elements that make Winterthur an unusual museum
- C. How Winterthur compares to English country houses
- D. Historical furniture contained in Winterthur

2. **The phrase “devoted to” in paragraph 1 is closest in meaning to**

- A. surrounded by
- B. specializing in

C. successful with

D. sentimental about

3. What happened at Winterthur between 1929 and 1931?

A. The owners moved out.

B. The house was repaired.

C. The old furniture was replaced.

D. The estate became a museum.

4. What does the author mean by stating "The impression of a lived-in house is apparent to the visitor" in line 6?

A. Winterthur is very old.

B. Few people visit Winterthur.

C. Winterthur does not look like a typical museum.

D. The furniture at Winterthur looks comfortable

5. The word "assembled" in paragraph 1 is closest in meaning to

A. summoned

B. appreciated

C. brought together

D. fundamentally changed

6. The word "it" in paragraph 1 refers to

A. Winterthur

B. collection

C. English country house

D. visitor

7. The word "developing" in paragraph 1 is closest in meaning to

A. traditional

B. exhibiting

C. informative

D. evolving

8. According to the passage, objects in a period room are related by all of the following EXCEPT

A. date

B. style

- C. place of manufacture
- D. past ownership

9. What is the relationship between the two paragraphs in the passage?

- A. The second paragraph explains a term that was mentioned in the first paragraph.
- B. Each paragraph describes a different approach to the display of objects in a museum.
- C. The second paragraph of explains a philosophy art appreciation that contrasts with the philosophy explained in the first paragraph.
- D. Each paragraph describes a different historical period.

10. Where is the passage does the author explain why displays at Winterthur have changed?

- A. Lines 1-3
- B. Lines 4-5
- C. Lines 6-9
- D. Lines 12-15

Reading - Practice 4

Wild pigs

Throughout history, pigs have been useful to humans. Their bodies work much like **ours**. Doctors have used chemicals from pigs' bodies to help treat diseases in people. We also use pigs for food. We even make objects from their skin, such as bags and balls. Domestic pigs live on farms. These kinds are useful for people. Wild pigs live in the mountains and forests. They are causing big problems in the United States.

In the early 1900s, wild pigs – called boars – were brought from Europe to North Carolina. Boars have two sharp horns, or tusks, on each side of their mouth. They are aggressive and mean. At first, people kept the boars together in a forest. Hunters enjoyed trying to shoot them. But by the 1920s, some boars had **escaped**. Boars have lived in the mountains of North Carolina ever since. Problems began when the boars entered a national park. They dug holes in the soil and destroyed plants that other animals need for food.

California has the same problem. Wild pigs in that state are not just hurting national parks. They are destroying the grass on golf courses and eating plants in people's gardens. Some more of these pigs came from North Carolina in 1925. Some hunters brought them. They built a fence around the boars. However, several pigs escaped. Later, some, of the wild pigs mated with escaped domestic pigs. Today, the number of wild pigs keeps growing. They are ruining lots of land. A scientist found 2,000 **rare** flowers in the stomach of one dead boar.

How can people stop these hungry pigs? There are no easy answers. One national park in Hawaii built a 15-meter fence around its **entire** 28,000 acres. Other states encourage hunters to kill the animals. However, pigs are intelligent, stubborn, and tough. We domesticated them for use on the farm. Now, our challenge is to control **them** when they leave the barnyard.

1. All of the following are mentioned in the passage EXCEPT

- A. How boars came to the US
- B. How boars got to Europe
- C. The types of damage boars cause
- D. The characteristics of boars

2. How long have wild pigs been a problem in the US, according to the passage?

- A. 65 to 75 years
- B. 75 to 85 years
- C. 85 to 95 years
- D. More than 95 years

3. What is the topic of paragraph 3?

- A. Differences between domestic pigs and wild pigs
- B. How Californian pigs are different from other pigs
- C. The problems pigs are making in one state
- D. Why people in California like wild pigs

4. The word "ours" in paragraph 1 refers to

- A. People
- B. Pigs
- C. Bodies
- D. Doctors

5. **What does the word "them" in the last sentence refer to?**

- A. Hunters
- B. National parks
- C. Pigs
- D. States

6. **Which statement best reflects the author's opinion?**

- A. Wild pigs are a necessary part of nature.
- B. All wild boars should be killed.
- C. Domestic pigs are dangerous.
- D. Controlling wild pigs is a difficult challenge.

7. **From paragraph 3, we can infer that**

- A. There are many farms in North Carolina
- B. Wild pigs first came from Europe
- C. North Carolina is not very beautiful
- D. Wild pigs eat flowers

8. **The word "escaped" could best be replaced by which of the following?**

- A. Got away
- B. Become lost
- C. Rebelled
- D. Died

9. **The word "rare" in paragraph 3 is closest in meaning to which of the following?**

- A. Beautiful
- B. Exquisite
- C. Common
- D. Special

10. **The word "entire" in the last paragraph is closest in meaning to**

- A. Very large
- B. Whole
- C. Make sleepy
- D. Hot

Reading - Practice 5

Look at the stars in the night sky. Do some of them seem to form patterns or designs? Can you see animals, people, or objects? These patterns are called constellations.

Constellations are not real animals, people, or objects. We imagine them to help us make a map of the sky. On a dark night, you can see almost 1,500 stars. Trying to distinguish which is **which** can be difficult. Constellations make it easier for us to **identify** stars.

People began seeing patterns in the stars about 6,000 years ago. Three of the first constellations they imagined were a lion, a bull, and a scorpion. In **ancient** times, farmers used constellations to know which month it was. We can see some constellations only one season each year. Farmers knew it was time to plant when they saw a certain constellation. They knew it was time to harvest when they saw a different **one**.

People in different countries can look at the same constellation and imagine different things. Someone in China might think a constellation looks like a dragon. Someone in Australia might think the same pattern is a horse. Each country has its own ideas. Many constellations get their names from the myths of ancient Greece and Rome. A constellation called Aquarius is named after a Greek boy who carried water. A constellation called Taurus is named after a god who came to earth as a bull.

Constellations are not stationary. The stars in them are gradually moving. It is difficult to know the **boundaries** of many constellations. In 1929, international astronomers, scientists who study stars, agreed on official boundaries for the 88 constellations that exist today. However, by the time your children grow up, these boundaries could change. We might also find new constellations. We will always use our imaginations to help understand the world around us.

1. **According to the passage, about how many constellations exist today?**

- A. 90
- B. 100
- C. 1,500
- D. 6,000

2. **All of the following are true EXCEPT that**

- A. Constellations have a long history
- B. Scientists agree on constellation boundaries
- C. Constellations are groups of stars
- D. Constellations never change

3. **This passage mainly discusses**

- A. The names of constellations
- B. The history of constellations
- C. How to see constellations
- D. Greek and Roman myths

4. **What does the word "which" in paragraph 2 refer to?**

- A. Constellations
- B. Maps
- C. People
- D. Stars

5. **In paragraph 3, the word "one" in the last sentence refers to a**

- A. Farmer
- B. Star
- C. Season
- D. Constellation

6. **Based on information in paragraph 2, we can infer that**

- A. There are only 1,500 stars
- B. We can see different numbers of stars depending on how bright the moon is
- C. All constellations are animals
- D. We need a map of the sky to see the stars

7. **Based on the information in paragraph 3, what can we infer about ancient farmers?**

- A. They were not very intelligent.
- B. They did not have calendars.
- C. They worked very hard.
- D. They grew food.

8. **Which of the following could best replace the word "identify" as used in paragraph 2?**

- A. Recognize
- B. Name
- C. Count
- D. Number

9. **As used in paragraph 3, what is the meaning of the word "ancient"?**

- A. Old
- B. Modern
- C. Prehistoric
- D. Good

10. **The word "boundaries" as used in paragraph 5 is closest in meaning to which of the following?**

- A. Dimensions
- B. Properties
- C. Borders
- D. Shapes

Reading – Practice 6

The advent of the Internet may be one of the most important technological developments in recent years. Never before have so many people had access to so many different sources of information. For all of the Internet's advantages, however, people are currently becoming aware of some of its drawbacks and are looking for creative solutions. Among the current problems, which include a general lack of reliability and numerous security concerns, the most crucial is speed.

First of all, the Internet has grown very quickly. In 1990, only a few academics had ever heard of the Internet. In 1996, over 50 million people used it. Every year, the number of people with access to the Internet doubles. The rapid growth has been a problem. The computer systems which run the Internet have not been able to keep up with the demand. Also, sometimes, a request for information must pass through many routing computers before the information can be **obtained**. A request for information made in Paris might have to go through computers in New York, Los Angeles and Tokyo in order to obtain the required information. Consequently, the

service is often slow and unpredictable. Service also tends to be worse when the Internet is busiest – during the business day of the Western Hemisphere – which is also when companies need its service the most.

Some people are trying to **harness** the power of networked computers in such a way as to avoid this problem. In 1995, a group of American universities banded together to form what has come to be known as Internet II. Internet II is a smaller, more specialized system intended for academic use. Since it is more specialized, fewer users are allowed access. Consequently, the time required to receive information has decreased.

Businesses are beginning to explore a possible **analogue** to the Internet II. Many businesses are creating their own “Intranets”. These are systems that can only be used by the members of the same company. In theory, fewer users should translate into a faster system. Intranets are very useful for large national and international companies whose branches need to share information. Another benefit of an Intranet is an increased amount of security. Since only company employees have access to the information on the Intranet, **their** information is protected from competitors. While there is little doubt that the Internet will eventually be a fast and reliable service, industry and the academic community have taken their own steps toward making more practical global networks.

1. According to the passage, which of the following is not true of the Internet?

- A. It has become increasingly less popular.
- B. It tends to be unreliable.
- C. It has created a sense of financial security.
- D. It is too expensive to access.

2. According to the passage, which of the following statements was true in 1990?

- A. The Internet experienced enormous growth rates.
- B. Internet data proved to be impractical.
- C. Few people were using the Internet.
- D. The Internet was a secure means to gain information.

3. According to the author, what is one reason why the Internet is sometimes slow?

- A. Scientists take up too much time on the Internet, thus slowing it down for everyone else.
- B. Often a request must travel through many computers before it reaches its final destination.
- C. Most people do not have computers that are fast enough to take advantage of the Internet.
- D. Phone lines are often too busy with phone calls and fax transmissions to handle Internet traffic.

4. The word "obtained" in the passage is closest in meaning to...

- A. understood
- B. purchased
- C. distributed
- D. acquired

5. The word "harness" in the passage is closest in meaning to...

- A. block
- B. steal
- C. utilize
- D. disguise

6. According to the passage, what benefits does Internet II have over the Internet I?

- A. Internet II has fewer users and therefore is faster to access.
- B. There is no governmental intervention regulating Internet II.
- C. Internet II contains more information than the Internet.
- D. Small businesses pay higher premiums to access to the Internet.

7. The word "analogue" in the passage most nearly means...

- A. solution
- B. alternative
- C. similarity
- D. use

8. The word "their" in the passage refers to...

- A. competitors
- B. company employees
- C. Intranets
- D. companies

9. **With which of the following conclusions would the author probably agree?**

- A. Fewer academic communities need to create their own Internet systems.
- B. The technology used by Internet creators is too complex for computer owners to understand.
- C. Companies who develop their own Intranets are limiting their information data base.
- D. An Internet system with fewer users would be quicker.

10. **All of the following are advantages of business "Intranets" mentioned in the passage EXCEPT...**

- A. they move data faster
 - B. they provide a higher level of security
 - C. they are cheaper than other alternatives
 - D. they share information with other company branches
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