

Practice Reading Passage- Do only 1 passage at a time. Spend only 15-20 minutes a night on ACT Prep, 4-5 times a week.

You have 8 minutes and 45 seconds for this passage. You must complete each passage in this time.

Remember to read the stem of the questions first before reading the passage. As you read the passage mark the important parts- circle topics you remember from the stems and square in the major topics.

Record your answers.

Check your answers and read the reasoning. Convert your scores to ACT scores.

Passage I Reading				
1)	2)	3)	4)	5)
6)	7)	8)	9)	10)
Score-		ACT Score-		
Passage II Reading				
11)	12)	13)	14)	15)
16)	17)	18)	19)	20)
Score-		ACT Score-		
Passage III Reading				
21)	22)	23)	24)	25)
26)	27)	28)	29)	30)
Score-		ACT Score-		
Passage IV Reading				
31)	32)	33)	34)	35)
36)	37)	38)	39)	40)
Score-		ACT Score-		

# READING PASSAGE I

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## READING TEST

35 Minutes—40 Questions

**DIRECTIONS:** This test includes four passages, each followed by ten questions. Read the passages and choose the best answer to each question. After you have selected your answer, fill in the corresponding bubble on your answer sheet. You should refer to the passages as often as necessary when answering the questions.

## PASSAGE I

**PROSE FICTION:** This passage is adapted from Joseph Conrad's *The Heart of Darkness* © 1899.

The *Nellie*, a cruising ship, swung to her anchor without a flutter of the sails, and was at rest. The tide had come in, the wind was nearly calm, and being bound down the river, the only thing for the ship was to come to and wait for the turn of the tide.

The Director of Companies was our captain and our host. We four affectionately watched his back as he stood in the bow looking toward the sea. On the whole river there was nothing that looked half so nautical. He resembled a pilot, which to a seaman is trustworthiness personified. It was difficult to realize his work was not out there in the luminous estuary, but behind him, within the brooding gloom.

Between us there was, as I have already said somewhere, the bond of the sea. Besides holding our hearts together through long periods of separation, it had the effect of making us tolerant of each other's stories—and even convictions. The Lawyer—the best of old fellows—had, because of his many years and many virtues, the only cushion on deck, and was lying on the only rug. The Accountant had brought out already a box of dominoes, and was toying architecturally with the pieces. Marlow sat cross-legged, leaning against the mast. He had sunken cheeks, a yellow complexion, a straight back, and, with his arms dropped, the palms of his hands outwards, resembled an idol. The Director, satisfied the anchor had good hold, made his way forward and sat down amongst us. We exchanged a few words lazily. Afterwards there was silence on board the yacht. For some reason or another we did not begin that game of dominoes. We felt meditative, and fit for nothing but placid staring.

"And this also," said Marlow suddenly, "has been one of the dark places of the earth." He was the only man of us who still "followed the sea." The worst that could be said of him was that he did not represent his class—always the same. In their unchanging surroundings, the foreign shores, the foreign faces glide past, veiled not by a sense of mystery but by a slightly disdainful ignorance; for there is nothing mysterious

to a seaman unless it be the sea itself, which is the mistress of his existence and as inscrutable as destiny. For the rest, after his hours of work, a casual stroll or a casual spree on shore suffices to unfold for him the secret of a whole continent, and generally he finds the secret not worth knowing. The stories of seamen have a direct simplicity, the whole meaning of which lies within the shell of a cracked nut. But Marlow was not typical, and to him the meaning of an episode was not inside like a kernel but outside, enveloping the tale, which brought it out only as a glow brings out a haze, in the likeness of one of these misty halos that sometimes are made visible by the spectral illumination of moonshine.

His remark did not seem at all surprising. It was just like Marlow. It was accepted in silence. No one took the trouble to grunt even; and presently he said, very slow—"I was thinking of very old times, when the Romans first came here, nineteen hundred years ago." And at last, in its curved and imperceptible fall, the sun sank low, and from glowing white changed to a dull red without rays and without heat, as if about to go out suddenly, stricken to death by the touch of that gloom brooding over a crowd of men.

Marlow broke off. Flames glided in the river, small green flames, red flames, white flames, pursuing, overtaking, joining, crossing each other—then separating slowly or hastily. The traffic of the great city went on in the deepening night upon the sleepless river. We looked on, waiting patiently—there was nothing else to do; but it was only after a long silence, when he said, in a hesitating voice, "I suppose you fellows remember I did once turn fresh-water sailor for a bit," that we knew we were fated, before the ebb began to run, to hear about one of Marlow's inconclusive experiences.

1. The narrator's point of view is that of:
  - A. an omniscient observer.
  - B. a member of the ship's crew.
  - C. another ship's captain.
  - D. a person watching from shore.

GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE.

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2. It can reasonably be inferred from the passage that the crew most likely did not play dominoes because:
- F. they lacked the energy and desire.
  - G. they did not get along well enough to play a game together.
  - H. the Director would not have approved of game-playing.
  - J. the sea was too rough.
3. Which of the following are explanations given by the narrator as to why the Lawyer used the ship's only cushion?
- I. He was very old.
  - II. He would not allow anyone else to use it.
  - III. He was greatly respected by the ship's crew.
- A. I and II only
  - B. I only
  - C. I and III only
  - D. II only
4. As it is used in line 32 of the passage, the word *placid* most nearly means:
- F. calm.
  - G. straightforward.
  - H. nervous.
  - J. playful.
5. According to the passage, how was Marlow unlike typical seamen?
- A. Marlow was content to stay in one place, while most men of the sea prefer to roam and explore.
  - B. Marlow believed his home was the ship, while most sailors believed their home was the sea.
  - C. Marlow found the sea inexplicable and full of secrets, while a typical sailor understands the mysteries of the water.
  - D. Marlow wove complicated and ambiguous tales, while most seamen prefer to tell simple and clear tales.
6. It can be reasonably inferred from the passage that Marlow is about to tell a story:
- F. that explains why he is now a freshwater sailor.
  - G. that is short and funny, like most of the stories he tells.
  - H. that is not clear and self-contained but is instead rather nebulous.
  - J. about a man that he saved from drowning in a river.
7. According to the passage, how did the men aboard the *Nellie* feel about the Director?
- A. They respected and trusted him.
  - B. They felt that he was lazy.
  - C. They despised and rejected him.
  - D. They thought that he was gloomy.
8. The reaction of the narrator to Marlow's story can be most accurately described as:
- F. malicious annoyance.
  - G. resigned tolerance.
  - H. genuine interest.
  - J. sincere appreciation.
9. According to the passage, which of the following was NOT an effect of the "bond of the sea" (line 15)?
- A. It allowed the men to look past each other's criminal backgrounds.
  - B. The men did not mind listening to each other's meandering tales.
  - C. It eased the loneliness of extended periods of time away from each other.
  - D. The men were able to be more tolerant of each other's beliefs.
10. What is the main point of the second paragraph?
- F. The ship's captain is better suited to be an aviator than a sailor.
  - G. The captain is unaware of the great amount of hard work that lies ahead of him.
  - H. An unqualified and inexperienced businessman is serving as the captain of the *Nellie*.
  - J. The narrator and other crew members greatly respect their ship's captain.

# ANSWERS

## Reading Test Explanations

## PASSAGE I

1. **The best answer is B.** The passage takes place on a ship, the *Nellie*, and the narrator is one of the crew members. He uses words like “we” and “us” when referring to the crew, implying his membership in this group. The other answer choices are not supported by the passage.
2. **The best answer is F.** Although the passage states, “for some reason or another we did not begin that game of dominoes,” it is reasonable to assume from the use of the words “lazily” and “meditative” that the crew had neither the energy nor the desire to play. The other answer choices are not supported by the passage.
3. **The best answer is C.** The passage states that “the Lawyer . . . had, because of his many years and many virtues, the only cushion on deck,” indicating that, since he was the eldest crew member and had the other crew members’ respect, he was afforded the comfort of the cushion. The other answer choices are not supported by the passage.
4. **The best answer is F.** The definition of “placid” is “not easily excited or upset; calm.” Since the men on the ship were feeling “meditative” and seemed not to have an abundance of energy, it makes sense that they simply wanted to sit calmly. The other answer choices are not supported by the context of the passage.
5. **The best answer is D.** In the fifth paragraph the narrator describes how Marlow is unlike most sailors: “The stories of seamen have a direct simplicity, the whole meaning of which lies within the shell of a cracked nut. But Marlow was not typical . . . and to him the meaning of an episode was not inside like a kernel but outside . . .” This is to say that typical sailors tell simple, uncomplicated tales, while Marlow tends to tell stories that are layered and complex. This best supports answer choice D.
6. **The best answer is H.** According to the passage, “Marlow was not typical, and to him the meaning of an episode was not inside like a kernel but outside . . .” This suggests that Marlow’s story will be unlike the usual straightforward tales told by seamen and will instead be vague and nebulous.
7. **The best answer is A.** The passage states that, “The Director of Companies was our captain and our host. We four affectionately watched his back as he stood in the bow looking toward the sea. On the whole river there was nothing that looked half so nautical. He resembled a pilot, which to a seaman is trustworthiness personified.” This best supports answer choice A.
8. **The best answer is G.** There are clues in the passage to indicate that the narrator, as well as the other crew members, were not thrilled when Marlow began to speak. Marlow’s very first comment was “accepted in silence” and “no one took the trouble to grunt even.” In the next paragraph the narrator begins to realize that the crew was “fated, before the ebb began to run, to hear about one of Marlow’s inconclusive experiences.” The word “resigned” means “accepting that something can not be avoided” and tolerance means “patience,” making G the best answer.
9. **The best answer is A.** In the third paragraph the passage states that the men’s mutual interest in the sea created a bond between them capable of “holding (their) hearts together through long periods of separation,” “making (them) tolerant of each other’s yarns,” and making them accepting of each other’s “convictions.” Answer choice A is not mentioned in the passage.
10. **The best answer is J.** The passage states that the crewmen watched him “affectionately,” meaning “showing fondness or liking.” The captain is also described as “trustworthiness personified,” indicating that the other crew members have the utmost faith and trust in him. This best supports answer choice J.

# READING PASSAGE II

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## PASSAGE II

**SOCIAL SCIENCE:** This passage discusses some social and economic issues regarding liquid natural gas as an energy source.

Although oil and gasoline remain important energy sources, it is natural gas that currently supplies around 25 percent of America's energy needs. A recent study shows that natural gas use was roughly 22 trillion cubic feet (TCF) annually. Natural gas demand is increasing at phenomenal rates because of its ability to create cleaner fuel for electrical power. Experts predict that annual demand is likely to increase to almost 32 TCF in less than a decade. At a consumption rate of 32 TCF per year, the United States would only have about a five-year supply of natural gas. Known natural gas reserves in North America are quickly becoming exhausted. In fact, in the past thirty years, known supplies have dwindled from almost 300 TCF to around 150 TCF.

It is no wonder that natural gas has become a controversial and critical topic of discussion among politicians, business leaders, and consumers. It is apparent that the United States will need to drastically increase imports of natural gas to relieve shortages. One way that economists believe this can be done is by importing liquid natural gas. Experts predict that liquid natural gas imports will increase by almost 500 percent in a few short years. Currently, the country imports very little liquid natural gas. The process of transporting liquid natural gas is complicated and expensive. This is the most obvious reason why America has been reluctant to choose liquid natural gas over other energy sources. Converting natural gas into liquid natural gas involves cooling natural gas as it is collected to  $-260^{\circ}\text{F}$ . This transforms the gas into a liquid, which is then injected into a specially designed vessel for transport. When the liquid natural gas reaches its destination, the liquid is reheated into its original gaseous state and allowed to flow into a pipeline. Even though new technology has considerably decreased transportation costs for liquid natural gas, these costs are often prohibitive. This is especially true for nations with other energy sources.

One of the largest misconceptions about liquid natural gas is that it is an abundant source of natural gas. While liquid natural gas imports continue to increase, the public demand for natural gas increases at an even higher rate. Even though the United States has several facilities that can process liquid natural gas, these facilities are consistently unable to obtain enough liquid natural gas to operate at their fullest capacity. Even when liquid natural gas is obtainable, there is a fear that low natural gas prices in the United States will make liquid natural gas uneconomical. Most business leaders and politicians are reluctant to create new facilities to process liquid natural gas because these facilities are expensive and risky. This limits the capacity to process liquid natural gas even if it becomes more readily available.

The United States also faces competition from Asia in securing liquid natural gas. Competition for liquid natural gas will most likely become even more ferocious as populous countries like Japan and

China become more desperate for fuel sources. Some of the more daring politicians and business leaders believe that building new liquid natural gas facilities will help companies and consumers take advantage of future increased liquid natural gas imports. Currently, Canada is the largest liquid natural gas supplier for the United States. However, liquid natural gas imports from Canada will decrease considerably in the next decade as Canadian consumption increases and supplies of natural gas dwindle. Therefore, consumers and business leaders should not rely on liquid natural gas to solve America's energy needs, and consumers should continue to expect high prices as demand grows and supply declines.

11. According to the passage, current known North American supplies of natural gas are:
  - A. sufficient to provide the United States with natural gas for the next thirty years.
  - B. down approximately 50 percent from 30 years ago.
  - C. decreasing at a rate of 25 percent per year.
  - D. extremely difficult to access.
12. The author of the passage would most likely agree with which of the following statements?
  - F. Liquid natural gas will never be a viable source of energy in the United States.
  - G. America's energy needs will not be met by the use of liquid natural gas alone.
  - H. The populations of Japan and China are growing too rapidly to be served by liquid natural gas.
  - J. Until another reliable energy source is discovered, liquid natural gas is the best solution to the world's energy problems.
13. One of the main ideas of the passage is that:
  - A. energy sources are dwindling around the world.
  - B. natural gas supplies one-quarter of America's energy needs.
  - C. liquid natural gas takes millions of years to form.
  - D. the known supply of liquid natural gas is limited.
14. It can be inferred from the second paragraph (lines 16–38) that America's reluctance to choose liquid natural gas over other energy sources will:
  - F. not prevent America from importing more liquid natural gas from other countries.
  - G. induce Japan and China to build new liquid natural gas processing facilities.
  - H. most likely continue until the cost and problems associated with liquid natural gas can be reduced.
  - J. lead to a decrease in the current demand for liquid natural gas in other countries, such as Canada.

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15. According to the passage, which of the following countries supplies the most liquid natural gas to the United States?
- A. Japan
  - B. China
  - C. Canada
  - D. Asia
16. According to the third paragraph (lines 39–54), misconceptions exist about liquid natural gas regarding:
- I. its abundance.
  - II. the expense of converting it.
  - III. public demand for it.
- F. I only
  - G. II only
  - H. II and III only
  - J. I, II, and III
17. As it is used in line 6, the word *phenomenal* most nearly means:
- A. special.
  - B. efficient.
  - C. extraordinary.
  - D. inconsequential.
18. The passage states that all of the following are reasons for America's reluctance to choose liquid natural gas EXCEPT:
- F. the expense of transporting liquid natural gas.
  - G. the increasing demand for liquid natural gas.
  - H. the difficulty in processing liquid natural gas.
  - J. the possibility of low natural gas prices.
19. The passage states that which of the following is true about natural gas?
- A. It currently supplies more than half of America's energy needs.
  - B. The United States has an unlimited supply of natural gas.
  - C. Canada is the world's largest exporter of natural gas.
  - D. Annual demand for natural gas is increasing at a rapid rate.
20. As it is used in line 32, the word *vessel* most nearly means:
- F. process.
  - G. source.
  - H. facility.
  - J. container.

# ANSWERS

11. The best answer is B. As stated in the passage, "in the past 30 years, known supplies have dwindled from almost 300 TCF to around 150 TCF," or known supplies have decreased by about 50 percent. Answer choice A is incorrect because the passage states that at predicted rates of consumption, the United States' natural gas supply would be exhausted in approximately five years. Answer choice C is incorrect because natural gas provides for roughly 25 percent of America's energy needs, which has nothing to do with the decrease in supply. Answer choice D is incorrect because the passage states that it is extremely difficult to obtain natural gas from other countries, not from within the U.S.
12. The best answer is G. At the end of the passage, the author states that "consumers and business leaders should not rely on liquid natural gas to solve America's energy needs." This can also be inferred from the point that natural gas is currently only supplying approximately 25 percent of the nation's energy needs, and even at this level there is much concern over whether supplies will run out. Answer choice H may appear to be correct, but the passage merely states that countries such as Japan and China will also be searching for fuel sources, including liquid natural gas, outside of their own countries in the future.
13. The best answer is D. This question can be difficult if you do not read the answer choices carefully. The third paragraph is devoted to a discussion on the limited availability of liquid natural gas, and the expense of processing the gas, which makes answer choice D the best selection. Answer choice A may appear to be correct; however, the passage focuses on the supply and use of liquid natural gas around the world. The passage does not discuss the supply and use of any other energy sources. Answer choice B was mentioned briefly in the passage, but is not a main idea. Answer choice C is beyond the scope of the passage.
14. The best answer is F. As stated in the second paragraph, it is predicted that "liquid natural gas imports will increase by almost 500 percent in a few short years." Although America may be reluctant to import liquid natural gas, it is necessary for the nation to do so in order to relieve and/or avoid shortages. Answer choice H may appear to be correct; however, the author states that even though transportation costs have been substantially decreased due to new technology, importing liquid natural gas is still often uneconomical. Answer choices G and J are beyond the scope of the passage.
15. The best answer is C. According to the passage, "Currently, Canada is the largest liquid natural gas supplier for the United States." Japan and China, two countries in Asia, are providing competition in attaining liquid natural gas.
16. The best answer is F. The first sentence of the third passage states "One of the largest misconceptions about liquid natural gas is that it is an abundant source of natural gas." While the passage goes on to discuss the expense of creating new processing facilities and prices making liquid natural gas uneconomical, the only misconception mentioned is the fact that liquid natural gas is an abundant source of natural gas. The other answer choices are not supported by the passage.
17. The best answer is C. The context surrounding the word *phenomenal* discusses the surprisingly large growth expected in natural gas demand and the huge impact that such growth will have on depletion of the resource. This context clearly indicates that the demand is increasing at "phenomenal," or extraordinary, rates. The other answer choices are not supported by the context of the passage.
18. The best answer is G. Answer choice G is the only reason that America is choosing liquid natural gas; consumers are demanding it so America must provide it. Answer choices F and H express current problems with choosing liquid natural gas; transportation and processing are both very costly relative to other fuel sources. Answer choice J is a potential problem. Liquid natural gas is inherently expensive due to its transportation and processing costs. If natural gas prices are low, the market for liquid natural gas will plummet, making liquid natural gas an uneconomical choice for consumers.
19. The best answer is D. As stated in the paragraph, "natural gas demand is increasing at phenomenal rates" and its consumption is expected to grow from 22 trillion cubic feet per year to 32 trillion cubic feet per year in less than a decade. Answer choice C may appear to be correct; however, the passage simply states that Canada is the largest liquid natural gas supplier for the United States alone. The passage does not compare Canada's liquid natural gas exports to those of any other country; therefore, we do not know whether Canada is the world's largest exporter. Likewise, the other answer choices are not supported by the passage.
20. The best answer is J. In the paragraph, the *vessel* in question is described as something that the liquid natural gas is injected into for transportation. It does not make sense that a liquid would be injected into a "process," "source," or "facility" for transportation. Answer choice J, "container," is the most logical choice.

# READING PASSAGE III

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## PASSAGE III

**HUMANITIES:** *This passage is adapted from The Nature of Goodness by George Herbert Palmer ©1903.*

My reader may well feel that goodness is already the most familiar of all the thoughts we employ, and yet he may at the same time suspect that there is something about it perplexingly remote. Familiar it certainly is. It attends all our wishes, acts, and projects as nothing else does, so that no estimate of its influence can be excessive. When we take a walk, read a book, pick out a dress, visit a friend, attend a concert, cast a vote, enter into business, we always do it in the hope of attaining something good. Since they are so frequently encountering goodness, both laymen and scholars are apt to assume that it is altogether clear and requires no explanation. But the very reverse is the truth. Familiarity obscures. It breeds instincts and not understanding. So woven has goodness become with the very web of life that it is hard to disentangle.

Consequently, we employ the word or some synonym of it during pretty much every waking hour of our lives. Wishing some test of this frequency I turned to Shakespeare, and found that he uses the word "good" fifteen hundred times, and its derivatives "goodness," "better," and "best," about as many more. He could not make men and women talk right without incessant reference to this concept.

How then do we employ the word "good"? I do not ask how we ought to employ it, but how we actually do. For the present, we shall be engaged in a psychological inquiry, not an ethical one. We need to get at the plain facts of usage. I will therefore ask each reader to look into his own mind, see on what occasions he uses the word, and decide what meaning he attaches to it. Taking up a few of the simplest possible examples, we will through them inquire when and why we call things good.

Here is a knife. When is it a good knife? Why, a knife is made for something, for cutting. Whenever the knife slides evenly through a piece of wood, and with a minimum of effort on the part of him who steers it, when there is no disposition of its edge to bend or break, but only to do its appointed work effectively, then we know that a good knife is at work. Or, looking at the matter from another point of view, whenever the handle of the knife neatly fits the hand, following its lines and presenting no obstruction, we may say that in these respects also the knife is a good knife. That is, the knife becomes good through adaptation to its work, an adaptation realized in its cutting of the wood and in its conformity to the hand. Its goodness always has reference to something outside itself, and is measured by its performance of an external task.

Or take something not so palpable. What glorious weather! When we woke this morning, drew aside our curtains and looked out, we said "It is a good day!" And of what qualities of the day were we thinking? We meant, I suppose, that the day was well fitted to its various purposes. Intending to go to our office, we saw there was nothing to hinder our doing so. We knew that

the streets would be clear, people in an amiable mood, business and social duties would move forward easily.

60 In fact, whatever our plans, in calling the day a good day we meant to speak of it as excellently adapted to something outside itself.

A usage more curious still occurs in the nursery. There when the question is asked, "Has the baby been good?" one discovers by degrees that the anxious mother wishes to know if it has been crying or quiet. This elementary life has as yet not acquired positive standards of measurement. It must be reckoned in negative terms, a failure to disturb.

70 This signification of goodness is lucidly put in the remark of Shakespeare's Portia, "Nothing I see is good without respect." We must have some respect or end in mind in reference to which the goodness is compared. Good always means good "for." That little preposition cannot be absent from our minds, though it need not audibly be uttered. The knife is good for cutting and the day for business. Omit the "for," and goodness ceases. To be bad or good implies external reference. To be good means to be an efficient means; and the end to be furthered must be already in mind before the word good is spoken.

In short, whenever we inspect the usage of the word good, we always find behind it an implication of some end to be reached. Good is a relative term. The good is the useful, and it must be useful for something. Silent or spoken, it is the mental reference to something else which puts all meaning into it. So Hamlet says, "There's nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so." No new quality is added to an object or act when it becomes good.

21. One of the main arguments the author is trying to make in the passage is that:
  - A. the word *good* always connotes the same idea no matter the context of the usage, whether people realize it or not.
  - B. although the word *good* is used frequently, the exact definition and connotation of the word is difficult to identify precisely.
  - C. things or people are either good or not good; goodness is not a quality that is debatable.
  - D. a debate of ethics, not psychology, will most clearly identify the exact definition and connotation of the word *good*.
22. The main idea of the sixth paragraph (lines 63–69) is that:
  - F. it is irrelevant for a mother to inquire if her baby has been well-behaved or not.
  - G. a baby has not been alive long enough to be judged as either good or bad.
  - H. since the baby is so young, it is not judged as good by what it does, but rather what it does not do.
  - J. whether a baby has been crying is not a significant standard upon which to determine its goodness.

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23. According to the passage, why does the author concern himself with Shakespeare's usage of the word *good*?
- A. He was seeking confirmation for his belief that both the use of the word and the concept of *good* are strikingly common.
  - B. He was looking for a definition of the concept of *good* and turned to Shakespeare for inspiration.
  - C. He was trying to understand the lack of the concept of *good* and *goodness* in the works of Shakespeare.
  - D. He was seeking support for his belief that Shakespeare was able to use the concept of *good* more effectively than any other author.
24. The author of the passage asserts that the weather and a knife are similar because:
- F. both are defined as good if and only if they can be helpful to many people for a variety of reasons.
  - G. neither can be defined as good unless they remain consistent and unchanged in the wake of fluctuating circumstances.
  - H. both are defined as good when their characteristics serve appropriate external circumstances.
  - J. neither one can be good unless a universal definition of the concept is accepted.
25. As it is used in line 70, the word *lucidly* most nearly means:
- A. obscurely.
  - B. inappropriately.
  - C. enthusiastically.
  - D. coherently.
26. The author argues that a knife may be described as good:
- F. only if it cuts wood.
  - G. only if it is made for something other than cutting.
  - H. only as it relates to something other than itself.
  - J. only if it requires extra effort in its use.
27. As it is used in the passage, the word *palpable* most nearly means:
- A. apparent.
  - B. powerful.
  - C. drab.
  - D. complicated.
28. The main argument that the author tries to make in the seventh paragraph (lines 70–81) is that:
- F. it is always clear what is meant when someone describes something as *good*.
  - G. the concept of being *good* is entirely different than the concept of being *good for*.
  - H. it is often easier to understand the concept of *good* without using the phrase *good for*.
  - J. the word *good* is relative, finding meaning only when there is a specific end in mind.
29. It can be reasonably inferred from the passage that the author would agree that the word *good* actually means:
- A. measurable.
  - B. significant.
  - C. persistent.
  - D. practical.
30. When, referring to the role of goodness in life, the author states, "no estimate of its influence can be excessive" (lines 6–7), he most likely means that:
- F. people must be careful not to allow the search for goodness to monopolize their lives.
  - G. it is impossible to over-emphasize the power that the quest for goodness has on us.
  - H. it is impossible to conceptualize and grasp the definition of the word good.
  - J. people often inaccurately describe the role that goodness plays in their own lives.

# ANSWERS

### PASSAGE III

21. **The best answer is B.** Throughout the passage, the author talks about the prevalence of the word “good,” further discusses several different meanings and methods for interpreting the word, and suggests that there is no one specific denotation for the word “good.” The other answer choices are not supported by the context of the passage.
22. **The best answer is H.** As stated by the author, babies are so young and powerless (“this elementary life has not yet acquired positive standards of measurement”), that they can only be judged in negative terms, “a failure to disturb.” Answer choice G may appear to be correct; however, the “anxious mother” is still able to judge whether her baby has been good by what the baby did or did not do—in this case, cry.
23. **The best answer is A.** The author states that “we employ the word or some synonym of it during pretty much every waking hour of our lives. Wishing some test of this frequency, I turned to Shakespeare.” In simpler terms, the author is asserting that we use the word “good” or some form of it constantly, and he believed that the works of Shakespeare would provide a good test of this notion. In other words, if Shakespeare used forms of the word “good” as often as the author predicted, the author’s theory on use of the word would be proven true. This best supports answer choice A.
24. **The best answer is H.** The author writes “goodness always has reference to something outside itself, and is measured by its performance of an external task.” The author goes on to write, “The knife is good for cutting and the day for business . . . To be bad or good implies external reference.” This best supports answer choice H.
25. **The best answer is D.** The author describes a quote by Shakespeare’s Portia as being spoken “lucidly,” and goes on to analyze and apply Portia’s quotation. The author does so in a positive light, thus eliminating answer choices A and B. It does not make sense that Portia’s quote was “enthusiastic,” or excited. Answer choice D makes the most sense within the context of the passage; “coherently” means “logically and meaningfully.”
26. **The best answer is H.** When discussing the knife, the author states, “Its goodness always has reference to something outside itself.” Although the passage mentions cutting wood, the author never says that a knife is good *only* if it cuts wood. Answer choices G and J are not supported by the context of the passage.
27. **The best answer is A.** The author begins by discussing the goodness of a clear, tangible object—a knife. The author then moves on to discussing the goodness of the weather—something “not so palpable.” Answer choice A, “apparent,” makes the most sense. The goodness of an intangible thing, such as the weather, is not nearly as “evident or clear” as that of a tangible object.
28. **The best answer is J.** The author states, “We must have some respect or end in mind in reference to which the goodness is compared.” In other words, in order to understand what “good” means, you must know specifically what is being referred to as “good” before interpreting the definition of “good.” Answer choice G may appear to be correct, but the passage states that “good always means good ‘for;’” thereby asserting that the two are actually identical concepts.
29. **The best answer is D.** Throughout the passage the author refers to the actual application of the word “good,” and that the word “must be useful for something.” This best supports answer choice D.
30. **The best answer is G.** According to the author, goodness in life “attends all our wishes, acts, and projects as nothing else does, so that no estimate of its influence can be excessive.” The author furthers this point by adding that every action we take is in hopes of achieving something good. In simpler terms, the author is saying that because our pursuit of goodness has such a huge impact on our lives, there is no way we could overestimate or over-emphasize the influence this has on us. Answer choice F is incorrect because it is the opposite of what the author is trying to say. Answer choices H and J are beyond the scope of the passage.

# READING PASSAGE IV

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## PASSAGE IV

NATURAL SCIENCE: *The Armored Armadillo*

Meandering along the shoulder of the highway, the armadillo is surprisingly unaffected by its surroundings. This nomad of the desert appears to have no cares in the world, and really, why should it, when it carries on its back a natural suit of armor? The armadillo looks far more awkward than do most animals, yet this alien creature handles itself remarkably well. For such a small animal, the armadillo can withstand a surprising amount of aggression from most predators. Although its shell is far from impenetrable, the armadillo can rest assured that it is safer than many animals who wander the Texas roads.

The *Dasypos novemcinctus*, or nine-banded armadillo, is characterized by the bands that arch across its back. The bands are made of bony plates and are covered with leathery skin—these plates, in fact cover the animal's back, sides, tail, and the top of its head, creating a somewhat turtle-like shell. The interesting thing about the nine-banded armadillo is that the number of bands on its back may be anywhere between seven and eleven; nine is just the most common number. Contrary to popular belief, only one species of armadillo can roll itself into a ball; the three-banded armadillo does this as its primary defense against predators. Other armadillos often scurry under thorn bushes, rather like tanks strengthening their position.

Armadillos are, on average, two and a half feet long and they typically weigh between eight and sixteen pounds, although across different species those numbers can vary dramatically. Nine-banded females give birth once a year, generally to four identical young, which come from a single fertilized egg. The nine-banded armadillo is the only species of animal in which this remarkable trait occurs. The four-month-long gestation period is more than enough time for the offspring to develop, as they are born fully formed with their eyes open. After a few hours, they begin to walk and are able to distance themselves from their mothers after only a few months. Few animals are able to outrun a startled armadillo, and if chased into its burrow, the animal is able to arch its armor against the burrow walls, making the armadillo nearly impossible to become dislodged; this is quite frustrating to dogs and other animals who would like to eat the armadillo. In addition to threats of being eaten by an opportunistic predator, the armadillo must also endure a more severe danger: automobiles. A significant number of armadillos die each year after being struck by cars.

Armadillos can be found in the northern parts of South America and as far north as the State of Texas. Nine-banded armadillos prefer warm climates and like to build burrows in the wet soil near streambeds, which they often share with other species, such as rabbits and opossums. Armadillos are nocturnal, and they spend their evenings digging for grubs and other invertebrates which make up the majority of their diet.

Most Texans see the armadillo as a pest, since the creatures have a tendency to ruin corn by eating the parts of the plants that are low to the ground; they

occasionally will eat other farm vegetables as well. Armadillos provide some benefits however, as they eat many annoying and harmful insects and are often used in medical research. Interestingly enough, they are the only mammal besides humans that can contract leprosy.

While armadillos are seen as strange and often troublesome animals, they are unique and valuable for research. This armored native of the south will most likely continue to fascinate and charm people for many years to come.

31. The author likens armadillos scurrying under thorn bushes to "tanks strengthening their position" in Paragraph 2 because:
  - A. armadillos are well armored and thorn bushes give them even more protection.
  - B. an armadillo's shell is as hard as steel.
  - C. the scurrying of an armadillo sounds like a tank rolling over land.
  - D. the armadillo resembles a tank in appearance.
32. The author calls the armadillo an "alien creature" in the first paragraph because:
  - F. not much is known about armadillos.
  - G. armadillos can be uncharacteristically aggressive.
  - H. armadillos are very aggressive.
  - J. an armadillo's unique appearance makes it stand out.
33. The passage indicates that, unlike some other desert animals, the armadillo:
  - A. lacks a means of defending itself.
  - B. can go without drinking water for long periods of time.
  - C. reproduces many times each year.
  - D. can withstand most predators' attacks.
34. As it is used in the passage (line 42), the phrase "arch its armor" most nearly means:
  - F. to construct.
  - G. to curve.
  - H. to dig.
  - J. to fight.
35. Based on information in the passage, the author feels that the nine-banded armadillo is especially unique because:
  - A. it can curl into a ball.
  - B. it is the rarest type of armadillo.
  - C. it gives birth to four identical young.
  - D. its diet consists entirely of grubs.

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36. The passage indicates that most Texans consider the armadillo to be both:  
F. rare and sacred.  
G. common and interesting.  
H. annoying and helpful.  
J. valued and dangerous.
37. What does the passage state is one of armadillo's greatest threats?  
A. farmers  
B. cars  
C. opossums  
D. dogs
38. The passage states that, in the Southern United States, armadillos cause damage to:  
F. crops.  
G. deserts.  
H. rivers.  
J. houses.
39. The passage indicates that, at birth, armadillos:  
A. are utterly helpless.  
B. are identical to adults.  
C. are able to see.  
D. are totally independent.
40. According to the passage, the scientific name *Dasypus novemcinctus* is unique to:  
F. the three-banded armadillo.  
G. the six-banded armadillo.  
H. all armadillos.  
J. the nine-banded armadillo.

**END OF THE READING TEST.**  
**STOP! IF YOU HAVE TIME LEFT OVER, CHECK YOUR WORK ON THIS SECTION ONLY.**

# ANSWERS

#### PASSAGE IV

31. The best answer is A. At this point in the passage, the defense mechanisms of armadillos are being discussed. If tanks were strengthening their positions, they would be improving their safety and increasing their level of protection from enemies. Therefore, if armadillos “often scurry under thorn bushes, rather like tanks strengthening their position,” they are giving themselves better protection against their predators. This best supports answer choice A.
32. The best answer is J. The first paragraph states that armadillos look “far more awkward than most animals.” The passage then goes on to describe the armadillo as an “alien creature,” which suggests that the armadillo’s awkward appearance is what makes it an alien creature. The other answer choices are not supported by the passage.
33. The best answer is D. According to the passage, the armadillo is “safer than most animals who wander the Texas roads” because its shell protects it from predators. Answer choices A through C are beyond the scope of the passage and, therefore, are incorrect.
34. The best answer is G. The author’s statement that “if chased into its burrow, the animal is able to arch its armor against the burrow walls making the armadillo nearly impossible to become dislodged” suggests that the armadillo curves its back against the burrow walls, wedging itself into the burrow. The other answer choices are not supported by the passage.
35. The best answer is C. Information in the passage indicates that “The nine-banded armadillo is the only species of animal in which this remarkable trait occurs,” which is speaking in reference to their ability to have four identical offspring emerging from the same egg. This best supports answer choice C.
36. The best answer is H. According to the passage, most Texans feel the armadillo is a “pest” when it destroys crops and other plants that are low to the ground; however, most Texans also see that armadillos provide “benefits” as well, such as its eating harmful insects and aiding in medical research. This best supports answer choice H.
37. The best answer is B. Although the passage mentions both opossums and farmers, neither are identified as predators of the armadillo. Both dogs and cars are acknowledged as predators of the armadillo; however, the passage explicitly states that “In addition to threats of being eaten by an opportunistic predator, the armadillo must also endure a more severe danger: automobiles.” Therefore, automobiles are more dangerous to armadillos than are any other predator. This best supports answer choice B.
38. The best answer is F. The passage states that, “Texans see the armadillo as a pest, since the creatures have a tendency to ruin corn by eating the parts of the plants that are low to the ground.” This suggests that armadillos are damaging crops. The other answer choices are not supported by the passage.
39. The best answer is C. According to the passage, armadillos “are born fully formed with their eyes open” so it makes sense that they would be able to see. The other answer choices contradict statements made elsewhere in the passage, or are unsupported by the passage.
40. The best answer is J. The only scientific name mentioned, *Dasypus novemcinctus*, is directly defined as being the name for the nine-banded armadillo. The other choices are similar species of armadillo, but not mentioned in reference to that specific scientific name.