

## Reading Comprehension

### Passage 1 - Opera

Opera refers to a dramatic art form, originating in Europe, in which the emotional content is conveyed to the audience as much through music, both vocal and instrumental, as it is through the lyrics. By contrast, in musical theater an actor's dramatic performance is primary, and the music plays a lesser role. The drama in opera is presented using the primary elements of theater such as scenery, costumes, and acting. However, the words of the opera, or libretto, are sung rather than spoken. The singers are accompanied by a musical ensemble ranging from a small instrumental ensemble to a full symphonic orchestra.

1. It is pointed out in the reading that opera \_\_\_\_\_.

- a. has developed under the influence of musical theater
- b. is a drama sung with the accompaniment of an orchestra
- c. is not a high-budget production
- d. is often performed in Europe
- e. is the most complex of all the performing arts

2. We can understand from the reading that \_\_\_\_\_.

- a. people are captivated more by opera than musical theater
- b. drama in opera is more important than the music
- c. orchestras in operas can vary considerably in size
- d. musical theater relies above all on music

- e. there is argument over whether the music is important or the words in opera

**3. It is stated in the reading that \_\_\_\_\_.**

- a. acting and costumes are secondary to music in musical theater
- b. many people find musical theater more captivating than opera
- c. music in musical theater is not as important as it is in opera
- d. an opera requires a huge orchestra as well as a large choir
- e. opera doesn't have any properties in common with musical theater

### **Passage 2 - Dolphins**

Dolphins are regarded as the friendliest creatures in the sea and stories of them helping drowning sailors have been common since Roman times. The more we learn about dolphins, the more we realize that their society is more complex than people previously imagined. They look after other dolphins when they are ill, care for pregnant mothers and protect the weakest in the community, as we do. Some scientists have suggested that dolphins have a language but it is much more probable that they communicate with each other without needing words. Could any of these mammals be more intelligent than man? Certainly the most common argument in favor of man's superiority over them that we can kill them more easily than they can kill us is the least satisfactory. On the contrary, the more we discover about these remarkable creatures, the less we appear superior when we destroy them.

**1. It is clear from the passage that dolphins \_\_\_\_\_.**

- a. don't want to be with us as much as we want to be with them

- b. are proven to be less intelligent than once thought
- c. have a reputation for being friendly to humans
- d. are the most powerful creatures that live in the oceans
- e. are capable of learning a language and communicating with humans

**2. The fact that the writer of the passage thinks that we can kill dolphins more easily than they can kill us \_\_\_\_\_.**

- a. means that they are better adapted to their environment than we are
- b. shows that dolphins have a very sophisticated form of communication
- c. proves that dolphins are not the most intelligent species at sea
- d. does not mean that we are superior to them
- e. proves that Dolphins have linguistic skills far beyond what we previously thought

**3. One can infer from the reading that \_\_\_\_\_.**

- a. dolphins are quite abundant in some areas of the world
- b. dolphins are quite abundant in some areas of the world
- c. dolphins have skills that no other living creatures have such as the ability to think
- d. it is not usual for dolphins to communicate with each other
- e. dolphins have some social traits that are similar to those of humans

### **Passage 3 - Unsinkable Ship**

Naval architects never claim that a ship is unsinkable, but the sinking of the passenger-and-car ferry Estonia in the Baltic surely should have never happened. It was well designed and carefully

maintained. It carried the proper number of lifeboats. It had been thoroughly inspected the day of its fatal voyage. Yet hours later, the Estonia rolled over and sank in a cold, stormy night. It went down so quickly that most of those on board, caught in their dark, flooding cabins, had no chance to save themselves: Of those who managed to scramble overboard, only 139 survived. The rest died of hypothermia before the rescuers could pluck them from the cold sea. The final death toll amounted to 912 souls. However, there were an unpleasant number of questions about why the Estonia sank and why so many survivors were men in the prime of life, while most of the dead were women, children and the elderly.

**1. One can understand from the reading that \_\_\_\_\_.**

- a. the lifesaving equipment did not work well and lifeboats could not be lowered
- b. design faults and incompetent crew contributed to the sinking of the Estonia ferry
- c. 139 people managed to leave the vessel but died in freezing water
- d. naval architects claimed that the Estonia was unsinkable
- e. most victims were trapped inside the boat as they were in their cabin

**2. It is clear from the passage that the survivors of the accident \_\_\_\_\_.**

- a. helped one another to overcome the tragedy that had affected them all
- b. were mostly young men but women, children and the elderly stood little chance
- c. helped save hundreds of lives
- d. are still suffering from severe post-traumatic stress disorder
- e. told the investigators nothing about the accident

**3. According to the passage, when the Estonia sank, \_\_\_\_\_.**

- a. there were only 139 passengers on board
- b. few of the passengers were asleep
- c. there were enough lifeboats for the number of people on board
- d. faster reaction by the crew could have increased the Estonia's chances of survival
- e. all the passengers had already moved out into the open decks

### **Passage 4 - Sunset**

When the air is clear, the sunset will appear yellow, because the light from the sun has passed a long distance through air and the blue light has been scattered away. If the air is polluted with small particles, natural or otherwise, the sunset will be more red. Sunsets over the sea may also be orange, due to salt particles in the air. The sky around the sun is seen reddened, as well as the light coming directly from the sun. This is because all light is scattered relatively well through small angles, but blue light is then more likely to be scattered twice over the greater distances, leaving the yellow, red and orange colors.

**1. As it is pointed out in the passage, the color of the sunset \_\_\_\_\_.**

- a. may be lighter than expected due to salt particles in the air
- b. is red if the sky is clear
- c. owes its blueness to the distance between the sun and the earth
- d. is a combination of all the colors
- e. depends on the weather conditions and the location where it takes place

**2. One can infer from the passage that the sunset looks yellow because**

\_\_\_\_\_.

- a. scattering does not play an appreciable role in determining the color of the transmitted light
- b. the blue light is scattered on the long way through the air at that time
- c. the light coming directly from the sun is blue
- d. the air is polluted to such a degree that the Earth's climate is actually changing
- e. sunsets generally take place on the sea

**3. As it is pointed out in the passage, \_\_\_\_\_.**

- a. our eyes are more sensitive to light with blue frequencies
- b. the red light passes easily through the air without scattering at all
- c. when the sun sets, only the blue light is left
- d. the sunset is likely to look orange when small particles, such as salt from sea spray, are in the air
- e. by the time the light from a sunset gets to you, only red light remains

### **Passage 5 - How Does Brain Work?**

Theories about how brain works remain a topic of debate. It is agreed, though, that the hippocampus, a part of the brain, is undeniably important for memory. When we experience something, the information is sent via our senses to the hippocampus, where it is processed. Scientists believe that brain cells called neurons first transform the sensory stimuli we experience into images in our immediate memory. Then, these images are sent to the hippocampus and

stored temporarily in short term memory. In the hippocampus information is organized, and it is during this process that parts of the image of our experience fade away. Finally, certain information is then transferred to long term memory in a section in the frontal lobe of the brain known as the cerebral cortex. Scientists think this process may happen while we are sleeping, but exactly how the information is transferred from one area of the brain to another is a mystery.

**1. This reading is mainly concerned with \_\_\_\_\_.**

- a. how to improve our memory
- b. why some of the information in short term memory fades away
- c. illness that results in severe memory loss
- d. how human brain processes and stores information
- e. the importance of neurons in transferring sensory stimuli

**1. According to the passage scientists \_\_\_\_\_.**

- a. know that information is sent from the long term memory to the hippocampus
- b. have found out why some of the information is lost in the hippocampus
- c. don't know exactly how the information is transferred from one area of the brain to another
- d. agree on how the brain works
- e. still debate whether the hippocampus is important for memory

**2. It is pointed out in the reading that \_\_\_\_\_.**

- a. the brain was not considered as a highly complex organ in the past

- b. damage to hippocampus doesn't cause memory loss
- c. all of the information stored in the short term is transferred to long time memory
- d. hippocampus is in the frontal lobe of the brain
- e. scientists agree that the hippocampus is important in processing information

### **Passage 6 - People with Extraordinary Abilities**

Fictional stories about people who have extraordinary abilities have always attracted people's attention. One of them is the story of Vera Petrova, who is able to perceive things with different parts of her skin, and through solid walls. One day she comes into his father's office and puts her hands on the door of a locked safe. Suddenly she asks her father why he keeps so many old newspapers locked away there. Vera's curious talent is brought to the notice of a scientific research institute and she is given a series of tests by a special commission. During these tests she manages to read a newspaper through an opaque screen and then she describes the figures and colors of a picture hidden under a carpet. During all these tests Vera is blindfolded; and, indeed, except when blindfolded she lacks the ability to perceive things with her skin. It was also found that although she could perceive things with her fingers, this ability ceased the moment her hands were wet.

**1. As we understand from the reading, Vera Petrova \_\_\_\_\_.**

- a. can only perceive things with her fingers
- b. is a curious child
- c. is not the only fictional character who has extraordinary abilities
- d. fails most of the tests administered by a special commission



- e. perceives the objects only when her fingers are wet

**2. It is pointed out in the reading that Vera Petrova loses the ability to perceive objects with her fingers \_\_\_\_\_.**

when her father first notices this ability

when she is asked to read a newspaper through an opaque screen

after she is given a series of tests

as soon as her hands get wet

when the object is hidden under a carpet

**3. According to the reading, \_\_\_\_\_.**

- a. Vera Petrova's father asks her why she keeps the old newspapers in the locked safe
- b. the scientific research institute is not interested in Vera Petrova's talent
- c. Vera can't perceive objects with her skin unless she is blindfold
- d. there are several scientific research institutes which examine people like Vera
- e. the special commission is made up by people who can also perceive objects with their skin

### **Passage 7 - The Bermuda Triangle**

The Bermuda Triangle occupies a disturbing and almost unbelievable place in the world's catalog of unexplained mysteries. More than a hundred planes and ships have vanished in this area into the air since 1945, and more than a thousand lives have been lost, without a single body or even a piece wreckage from the vanishing planes or ships having been found. Many of the planes concerned have vanished while in normal radio contact with their base until the very moment of

their disappearance, while others have radioed the most extraordinary messages, implying that they could not get their instruments to function, that their compasses were spinning, that the sky had turned yellow and hazy on a clear day, and the ocean, which was calm nearby, didn't look right without further clarification of what was wrong.

**1. One can infer from the reading that \_\_\_\_\_.**

- a. the wreckages of some ships and planes have been found in the Bermuda Triangle
- b. the number of incidents involving lost ships is no larger than that of any other heavily traveled region of the world
- c. the ships. and the planes couldn't contact with their base due to the lack of equipment.
- d. the weather in Bermuda Triangle is always stormy
- e. the first mention of disappearances in the area was made in 1945

**2. It is pointed out in the passage that \_\_\_\_\_.**

- a. thousands of people lost their lives in the Bermuda Triangle in 1945
- b. all of the disappearances happened during the day time
- c. the Bermuda Triangle mystery was solved in 1945
- d. most of the missing planes could contact with their base by their own special means until the very moment of disappearing
- e. the ocean floor near Bermuda, highly unexplored, is host to many strange phenomena

**3. The reading mainly deals with \_\_\_\_\_.**

- a. why so many ships and planes disappear in the Bermuda Triangle

- b. the mysterious disappearances of ships and planes in the Bermuda Triangle
- c. the location of the Bermuda Triangle
- d. the frequency of the disappearances in the Bermuda Triangle
- e. the unpredictable weather conditions in the Bermuda Triangle