

Section Three: Reading Comprehension (4)**Questions 1-10**

Baseball evolved from a number of different ball-and-stick games (paddle ball, trap ball, one-old-cat, rounders, and town ball) originating in England. As early as the American Revolution, it was noted that troops played “base ball” in their free time. In 1845 Alexander Cartwright formalized the New York Knickerbockers’ version of the game: a diamond shaped infield, with bases ninety feet apart, three strikes-you’re-out, batter out on a caught ball, three outs per inning, a nine man team. The “New York Game” spread rapidly, replacing earlier localized forms. From its beginnings, baseball was seen as a way of satisfying the recreational needs of an increasingly urban-industrial society. At its inception it was played by and for wealthy gentlemen. A club might consist of 40 members. The president would appoint two captains who would choose teams from among the members. Games were played on Monday and Thursday afternoons, with the losers often providing a lavish evening’s entertainment for the winners.

During the 1850-70 period the game was changing, however, with increasing commercialism (charging admission), under-the-table payments to exceptional players, and gambling on the outcome of games. By 1868 it was said that a club would have their regular professional ten, an amateur first-nine, and their “muffins” (the gentlemanly duffers who once ran the game). Beginning with the first openly all-salaried team (Cincinnati’s Red Stocking Club) in 1869, the 1870-1890 period saw the complete professionalization of baseball, including formation of the National Association of Professional Baseball Players in 1871. The National League of Professional Base Ball Clubs was formed in 1876, run by business-minded investors in joint-stock company clubs. The 1880s has been called Major League Baseball’s “Golden Age”. Profits soared, player’s salaries rose somewhat, a season of 84 games became one of 132, a weekly periodical “The Sporting News” came into being, wooden stadiums with double-deck stands replaced open fields, and the standard refreshment became hot dogs, soda pop and peanuts. In 1900 the Western League based in the growing cities of the Midwest proclaimed itself the American League.

1. What is the passage mainly about?
 - (a) the origins of baseball
 - (b) the commercialization of baseball
 - (c) the influence of the “New York Game” on baseball
 - (d) the development of baseball in the nineteenth century
2. Which of the following can be inferred from the passage?
 - (a) the wealthy gentlemen who first played baseball, later needed to find another recreational opportunity if they did not want to mix with others or become a “muffin”
 - (b) hot dogs would not have become as popular as they did, without the professionalism and commercialism that developed in baseball
 - (c) the “New York Game” spread rapidly because it was better formalized
 - (d) business-minded investors were only interested in profits

3. The word “inception” in line 9 is closest in meaning to
 - (a) requirements
 - (b) beginning
 - (c) insistence
 - (d) rules
4. The word “lavish” in line 12 is closest in meaning to
 - (a) prolonged
 - (b) very generous
 - (c) grand
 - (d) extensive
5. Which of the following is true of the way the game was played by wealthy gentlemen at its inception
 - (a) a team might consist of 40 members
 - (b) the president would choose teams from among the members
 - (c) they didn’t play on weekends
 - (d) they might be called “duffers” if they didn’t make the first nine
6. According to the second paragraph, all of the following are true except
 - (a) commercialism became more prosperous
 - (b) the clubs are smaller
 - (c) outstanding players got extra income
 - (d) people gamed on the outcome of games
7. Which of the following is NOT mentioned as a feature of the 1880s “Golden Age”?
 - (a) wooden stadiums replaced open fields
 - (b) a weekly periodical commenced
 - (c) the National Association of Professional Baseball Players was formed
 - (d) profits soared
8. The word “somewhat” in line 24 is closest in meaning to
 - (a) to a significant extent
 - (b) to a minor extent
 - (c) to not the same extent
 - (d) to some extent
9. The word “itself” in line 28 refers to
 - (a) the Western League
 - (b) growing cities
 - (c) the Midwest
 - (d) the American League
10. Where in the passage does the author first mention payments to players
 - (a) lines 5-9

- (b) lines 10-14
- (c) lines 15-19
- (d) lines 20-25

Questions 11-20

Philosophy in the second half of the 19th century was based more on biology and history than on mathematics and physics. Revolutionary thought drifted away from metaphysics and epistemology and shifted more towards ideologies in science, politics, and sociology. Pragmatism became the most vigorous school of thought in American philosophy during this time, and it continued the empiricist tradition of grounding knowledge on experience and stressing the inductive procedures of experimental science. The three most important pragmatists of this period were the American philosophers Charles Peirce (1839-1914), considered to be the first of the American pragmatists, William James (1842-1910), the first great American psychologist, and John Dewey (1859-1952), who further developed the pragmatic principles of Peirce and James into a comprehensive system of thought that he called “experimental naturalism”, or “instrumentalism”.

Pragmatism was generally critical of traditional western philosophy, especially the notion that there are absolute truths and absolute values. In contrast, Josiah Royce (1855-1916), was a leading American exponent of idealism at this time, who believed in an absolute truth and held that human thought and the external world were unified. Pragmatism called for ideas and theories to be tested in practice, assessing whether they produced desirable or undesirable results. Although pragmatism was popular for a time in Europe, most agree that it epitomized the American faith in know-how and practicality, and the equally American distrust of abstract theories and ideologies. Pragmatism is best understood in its historical and cultural context. It arose during a period of rapid scientific advancement, industrialization, and material progress; a time when the theory of evolution suggested to many thinkers that humanity and society are in a perpetual state of progress. This period also saw a decline in traditional religious beliefs and values. As a result, it became necessary to rethink fundamental ideas about values, religion, science, community, and individuality. Pragmatists regarded all theories and institutions as tentative hypotheses and solutions. According to their critics, the pragmatist’s refusal to affirm any absolutes carried negative implications for society, challenging the foundations of society’s institutions.

11. What is this passage primarily about?
 - (a) the evolution of philosophy in the second half of the 19th century
 - (b) the three most important American pragmatists of the late 19th century
 - (c) the differences between pragmatism and traditional western philosophy
 - (d) American pragmatism
12. Which of the following is true
 - (a) idealism was an important part of the pragmatic approach

- (b) “pragmatism” was also known as “traditional western philosophy”
 - (c) pragmatism continued the empiricist tradition
 - (d) pragmatism is best understood independently of its historical and cultural context
13. Which of the following is true, according to the passage
- (a) absolute truths and values are notions in western traditional philosophy
 - (b) John Dewey was the first great American psychologist
 - (c) the empiricist tradition is part of traditional western philosophy
 - (d) revolutionary thought was not pragmatic
14. The phrase “at this time” in line 14 refers to
- (a) at the time traditional western philosophy was dominant in America
 - (b) at the time pragmatism was popular in Europe
 - (c) 1855-1916
 - (d) the second half of the 19th century
15. According to the passage, pragmatism was more popular in America than Europe because
- (a) Americans had greater acceptance of the theory of evolution
 - (b) it epitomized the American faith in know-how and practicality
 - (c) Europe had a more traditional society based on a much longer history
 - (d) industrialization and material progress was occurring at a faster pace in America at that time
16. The word “abstract” in line 19 is closest in meaning to
- (a) unclear
 - (b) not concrete
 - (c) new
 - (d) old
17. The word “perpetual” in line 22 is closest in meaning to
- (a) challenging
 - (b) continuous
 - (c) declining
 - (d) secular
18. The word “fundamental” in line 24 is closest in meaning to
- (a) new
 - (b) personal
 - (c) essential
 - (d) threatening
19. All of the following are true EXCEPT

- (a) revolutionary thought shifted more towards ideologies in science, politics and sociology
- (b) pragmatists regarded all theories and institutions as tentative hypotheses and solutions
- (c) Josiah Royce was not a pragmatist
- (d) pragmatism was based on the theory of evolution

20. Which of the following can be inferred from the passage?

- (a) Josiah Royce considered Charles Peirce to be challenging the foundations of society's institutions
- (b) Charles Peirce considered Josiah Royce to be too influenced by the theory of evolution
- (c) John Dewey would not have developed his system of thought called "experimental naturalism" or "instrumentalism" without the pioneering work of Charles Peirce and William James
- (d) Josiah Royce was a revolutionary thinker

Questions 21-30

The human criterion for perfect vision is 20/20 for reading the standard lines on a Snellen eye chart without a hitch. The score is determined by how well you read lines of letters of different sizes from 20 feet away. But being able to read the bottom line on the eye chart does not approximate perfection as far as other species are concerned. Most birds would consider us very visually handicapped. The hawk, for instance, has such sharp eyes that it can spot a dime on the sidewalk while perched on top of the Empire State Building. It can make fine visual distinctions because it is blessed with one million cones per square millimeter in its retina. And in water, humans are farsighted, while the kingfisher, swooping down to spear fish, can see well in both the air and water because it is endowed with two foveae – areas of the eye, consisting mostly of cones, that provide visual distinctions. One foveae permits the bird, while in the air, to scan the water below with one eye at a time. This is called monocular vision. Once it hits the water, the other fovea joins in, allowing the kingfisher to focus both eyes, like binoculars, on its prey at the same time. A frog's vision is distinguished by its ability to perceive things as a constant motion picture. Known as "bug detectors", a highly developed set of cells in a frog's eyes responds mainly to moving objects. So, it is said that a frog sitting in a field of dead bugs wouldn't see them as food and would starve.

The bee has a "compound" eye, which is used for navigation. It has 15,000 facets that divide what it sees into a pattern of dots, or mosaic. With this kind of vision, the bee sees the sun only as a single dot, a constant point of reference. Thus, the eye is a superb navigational instrument that constantly measures the angle of its line of flight in relation to the sun. A bee's eye also gauges flight speed. And if that is not enough to leave our 20/20 "perfect vision" paling into insignificance, the bee is capable of seeing something we can't – ultraviolet light. Thus, what humans consider to be "perfect vision" is in fact rather limited when we look at other species. However, there is still much to be said for the human eye. Of all the mammals, only humans and some primates can enjoy the pleasures of color vision.

21. What does the passage mainly discuss?
- (a) limits of the human eye
 - (b) perfect vision
 - (c) different eyes for different uses
 - (d) eye variation among different species
22. The word “criterion” in line 1 is closest in meaning to
- (a) standard
 - (b) need
 - (c) expectation
 - (d) rule
23. The phrase “without a hitch” in line 2 is closest in meaning to
- (a) unaided
 - (b) without glasses
 - (c) with little hesitation
 - (d) easily
24. According to the passage, why might birds and animals consider humans very visually handicapped?
- (a) humans can’t see very well in either air or water
 - (b) human eyes are not as well suited to our needs
 - (c) the main outstanding feature of human eyes is color vision
 - (d) human eyes can’t do what their eyes can do
25. The word “that” in line 10 refers to
- (a) foveae
 - (b) areas of the eye
 - (c) cones
 - (d) visual distinctions
26. According to the passage, “bug detectors” are useful for
- (a) navigation
 - (b) seeing moving objects
 - (c) avoiding bugs when getting food
 - (d) avoiding starvation
27. According to the passage, which of the following is NOT true
- (a) kingfishers have monocular vision
 - (b) bees see patterns of dots
 - (c) hawks eyes consist mostly of cones that can allow it to scan with one eye at a time
 - (d) humans are farsighted in water
28. Where in the passage does the author discuss that eyes are useful for avoiding starvation?

- (a) lines 5-9
- (b) lines 10-14
- (c) lines 15-19
- (d) lines 20-25

29. The phrase “paling into insignificance” in line 23 is closest in meaning to
- (a) fading away
 - (b) of less importance
 - (c) without colored light
 - (d) being reduced to little importance
30. Which of the following can be inferred from the passage?
- (a) eyes have developed differently in each species
 - (b) bees have the most complex eye
 - (c) humans should not envy what they don’t need
 - (d) perfect vision is not perfect

Questions 31-39

Labor Day, the first Monday in September, is a creation of the labor movement and is dedicated to the social and economic achievements of American workers. The first Labor Day holiday was celebrated on Tuesday, September 5, 1882 in New York City in accordance with the plans of the Central Labor Union. The idea for this day is attributed to a man named McGuire, but there is some controversy about which man named McGuire. This celebration was repeated the following year, then in 1884, the first Monday in September was selected, and the Central Labor Union urged similar organizations in other cities to follow the example of New York and celebrate a “workingmen’s holiday” on that date. The idea spread with the growth of labor organizations, and in 1885 Labor Day was celebrated in many industrial centers of the country.

Through the years the nation gave increasing emphasis to Labor Day. The first government recognition came through municipal ordinances passed during 1885 and 1886, leading to a movement to secure State legislation. The first bill was introduced into the New York legislature, but the first to become law was passed by Oregon in 1887. During that year four more States (Colorado, Massachusetts, New Jersey, and New York) also legislated for Labor Day. By 1894, 23 other States had adopted the holiday, and in June of that year, Congress passed an Act, making the first Monday in September of each year a legal holiday in the District of Columbia and the territories.

The form that the observance and celebration should take, was outlined to be a street parade to exhibit to the public “the strength and ‘esprit de corps’ of the trade and labor organizations”, followed by a festival for the recreation and amusement of workers and their families. By resolution of the American Federation of Labor Convention in 1909, the Sunday preceding Labor Day was adopted as Labor Sunday, and dedicated to the spiritual and educational aspects of the labor movement.

31. The phrase “this day” in line 4 refers to

- (a) the first Monday in September
 - (b) Labor Day holiday
 - (c) Tuesday, September 5
 - (d) the workingman's holiday
32. The author implies that which of the following is true?
- (a) Labor Day has lost its importance over the years
 - (b) Labor Day was, in part, a religious festival
 - (c) there is a dispute about who thought of the idea for Labor Day
 - (d) celebrations were usually limited to the industrial centers
33. The word "urged" in line 7 is closest in meaning to
- (a) devoted
 - (b) propelled
 - (c) speeded
 - (d) satisfied
34. According to the passage, Government recognition for Labor Day was first achieved in
- (a) 1882
 - (b) 1884
 - (c) 1885
 - (d) 1887
35. The word "secure" in line 14 is closest in meaning to
- (a) gain
 - (b) implement
 - (c) guarantee
 - (d) pass
36. According to the passage, the first State to pass legislation for Labor Day was
- (a) Columbia
 - (b) Oregon
 - (c) New York
 - (d) Colorado
37. The word "exhibit" in line 21 is closest in meaning to
- (a) celebrate
 - (b) exemplify
 - (c) demonstrate
 - (d) display
38. Which of the following is NOT true
- (a) by 1894, twenty eight States had passed legislation for Labor Day
 - (b) including families was an important part of Labor Day celebrations
 - (c) the first legislative bill was introduced in New York

(d) Labor Day has always been held on the first Monday in September

39. The word “preceding” in line 24 is closest in meaning to

- (a) closest to
- (b) following
- (c) before
- (d) on

Questions 40-50

At the turn of the nineteenth century, Concord was a thriving community, already famous throughout the young nation for its critical early role in the events leading up to the American Revolution. It was the half shire town for Middlesex County, attracting over 500 visitors to the courts twice a year, among them customers for Concord’s hats, shoes, carriages and clocks. Among Concord’s approximately 400 heads of households in this period, about 65% were in agriculture, 4% in commerce, and 35% in manufacturing. Of those in manufacturing, seven men headed clockmaking shops and another thirty or so were engaged in the shops or in businesses that supplied the clockmaking trade – the brass foundry, iron forge, wire-drawing mill, and a number of cabinetmaking shops. In short, the center of Concord, the Milldam, was a machine for the production of clocks, second only in importance to Boston’s industrial Roxbury Neck, where the influential Willard family had been producing clocks since about 1785.

While the handsome and well-crafted clocks of these seven shops, featuring inlaid mahogany cases, enameled dials and reverse painted glasses, are generally perceived as products of a traditional clockmaker (one person at a bench fashioning an eight-day clock from scratch) , they are actually products of a network of shops employing journeymen labor that extended from Concord to Boston and overseas to the highly developed tool trade of Lancashire, England,

In addition to crafting in the fashionable Willard features such as the pierced fretwork, columns with brass fixtures, and white enamel dial, Concord clockmakers attempted to differentiate their products from those of the Willards through such means as a distinctive ornamental inlay, which added to the perception of custom work not usually seen on the Willard’s standardized products. The Willards also made less expensive wall clocks, including “banjo clocks” patented by Simon Willard in 1802. The distinctive diamond shaped design and inverted movement of some Concord wall clocks may reflect an attempt to circumvent Willard’s patent.

40. What is the passage primarily about?

- (a) clockmaking in Concord at the turn of the nineteenth century
- (b) Concord at the turn of the nineteenth century
- (c) Competition between Concord clockmakers and the Willards
- (d) The influence of the Willards on clockmaking in Concord

41. According to the passage, which of the following businesses did NOT supply the clockmaking trade?

- (a) wire-drawing mill

- (b) cabinetmaking shops
- (c) iron forge
- (d) glass shops

42. The phrase “in short” in line 10 is closest in meaning to
- (a) generally speaking
 - (b) to sum up
 - (c) in conclusion
 - (d) however
43. According to the passage, “the Milldam” was
- (a) where the Willard family had been producing clocks
 - (b) a type of clock
 - (c) in Boston’s industrial Roxbury Neck
 - (d) in Concord
44. Which of the following terms does the author explain in the passage?
- (a) banjo clocks(line 24)
 - (b) journeymen labor(line 17)
 - (c) traditional clockmaker(line 15)
 - (d) pierced fretwork(line 20)
45. Which of the following features is NOT mentioned as a way the Concord clockmakers attempted to differentiate their products from Willards
- (a) inverted movements
 - (b) brass fixtures
 - (c) distinctive ornamental inlay
 - (d) diamond shaped design
46. The word “differentiate” in line 21 is closest in meaning to
- (a) identify
 - (b) distinguish
 - (c) dignify
 - (d) divide
47. The author implies that the Concord clockmakers
- (a) would do anything to try to compete with Willards
 - (b) attempted to customize their products as much as possible
 - (c) were the most important industry in Concord
 - (d) were in danger of being prosecuted for breach of patent
48. The word “inverted” in line 25 is closest in meaning to
- (a) intricate
 - (b) musical
 - (c) upside down
 - (d) external

49. The word “circumvent” in line 26 is closest in meaning to
- (a) copy
 - (b) evade
 - (c) compete with
 - (d) minimize
50. Where in the passage does the author mention the features of the well-crafted clocks of Concord?
- (a) lines 5-9
 - (b) lines 10-14
 - (c) lines 15-19
 - (d) lines 20-25

Test 4 – Answer Key

1.d	2.c	3.b	4.b	5.c	6.c	7.c	8.d	9.a	10.c
11.d	12.c	13.a	14.d	15.b	16.b	17.d	18.c	19.d	20.a
21.d	22.a	23.d	24.d	25.a	26.b	27.c	28.c	29.d	30.a
31.b	32.c	33.b	34.c	35.a	36.b	37.d	38.d	39.c	40.a
41.d	42.b	43.d	44.c	45.b	46.b	47.b	48.c	49.b	50.b