

GRE Prep

Reading Comprehension 2



Reading Comprehension 2

Passage 1

It is frequently assumed that the mechanization of work has a revolutionary effect on the lives of the people who operate the new machines and on the society into which the machines have been introduced. For example, it has been suggested that the employment of women in industry took them out of the household, their traditional sphere, and fundamentally altered, their position in society. In the nineteenth century, when women began to enter factories, Jules Simon, a French politician, warned that by doing so, women would give up their femininity. Friedrich Engels, however, predicted that women would be liberated from the "social, legal, and economic subordination" of the family by technological developments that made possible the recruitment of "the whole female sex ... into public industry." Observers thus differed concerning the social desirability of mechanization's effects, but they agreed that it would transform women's lives.

Historians, particularly those investigating the history of women, now seriously question this assumption of transforming power. They conclude that such dramatic technological innovations as the spinning jenny, the sewing machine, the typewriter, and the vacuum cleaner have not resulted in equally dramatic social changes in women's economic position or in the prevailing evaluation of women's work. The employment of young women in textile mills during the Industrial Revolution was largely an extension of an older pattern of employment of young, single women as domestics. It was not the change in office technology, but rather the separation of secretarial work, previously seen as an apprenticeship for beginning managers, from administrative work that in the 1880's created a new class of "dead-end" jobs, thenceforth considered "women's work."



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The increase in the numbers of married women employed outside the home in the twentieth century had less to do with the mechanization of housework and an increase in leisure time for these women than it did with their own economic necessity and with high marriage rates that shrank the available pool of single women workers, previously, in many cases, the only women employers would hire.

Women's work has changed considerably in the past 200 years, moving from the household to the office or the factory, and later becoming mostly white-collar instead of blue-collar work. Fundamentally, however, the conditions under which women work have changed little since before the Industrial Revolution: the segregation of occupations by gender, lower pay for women as a group, jobs that require relatively low levels of skill and offer women little opportunity for advancement all persist, while women's household labor remains demanding. Recent historical investigation has led to a major revision of the notion that technology is always inherently revolutionary in its effects on society. Mechanization may even have slowed any change in the traditional position of women both in the labor market and in the home.



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For each of the following questions, select one answer choice unless otherwise instructed.

1. Which of the following statements best summarizes the main idea of the passage?
 - A. The effects of the mechanization of women's work have not borne out the frequently held assumption that new technology is inherently revolutionary.
 - B. Recent studies have shown that mechanization revolutionizes a society's traditional values and the customary roles of its members.
 - C. Mechanization has caused the nature of women's work to change since the Industrial Revolution.
 - D. The mechanization of work creates whole new classes of jobs that did not previously exist.
 - E. The mechanization of women's work, while extremely revolutionary in its effects, has not, on the whole, had the deleterious effects that some critics had feared



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For the following question, consider each of the choices separately and select all that apply.

2. The author mentions which of the following inventions as an example(s) of dramatic technological innovations
 - A. sewing machine
 - B. vacuum cleaner
 - C. typewriter



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For each of the following questions, select one answer choice unless otherwise instructed.

3. It can be inferred from the passage that, before the Industrial Revolution, the majority of women's work was done in which of the following settings?
- A. Textile mills
 - B. Private households
 - C. Offices
 - D. Factories
 - E. Small shops



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4. It can be inferred from the passage that the author would consider which of the following to be an indication of a fundamental alteration in the conditions of women's work?
- A. Statistics showing that the majority of women now occupy white-collar positions
 - B. Interviews with married men indicating that they are now doing some household tasks
 - C. Surveys of the labor market documenting the recent creation of a new class of jobs in electronics in which women workers outnumber men four to one
 - D. Census results showing that working women's wages and salaries are, on the average, as high as those of working men
 - E. Enrollment figures from universities demonstrating that increasing numbers of young women are choosing to continue their education beyond the undergraduate level



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5. The passage states that, before the twentieth century, which of the following was true of many employers?
- A. They did not employ women in factories.
 - B. They tended to employ single rather than married women.
 - C. They employed women in only those jobs related to women's traditional household work.
 - D. They resisted technological innovations that would radically change women's familial roles.
 - E. They hired women only when qualified men were not available to fill the open positions.



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6. It can be inferred from the passage that the author most probably believes which of the following to be true concerning those historians who study the history of women?
- A. Their work provides insights important to those examining social phenomena affecting the lives of both sexes.
 - B. Their work can only be used cautiously by scholars in other disciplines.
 - C. Because they concentrate only on the role of women in the workplace, they draw more reliable conclusions than do other historians.
 - D. While highly interesting, their work has not had an impact on most historians' current assumptions concerning the revolutionary effect of technology in the workplace.
 - E. They oppose the further mechanization of work, which, according to their findings, tends to perpetuate existing inequalities in society.



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7. Which of the following best describes the function of the concluding sentence of the passage?
- A. It sums up the general points concerning the mechanization of work made in the passage as a whole.
 - B. It draws a conclusion concerning the effects of the mechanization of work which goes beyond the evidence presented in the passage as a whole.
 - C. It restates the point concerning technology made in the sentence immediately preceding it.
 - D. It qualifies the author's agreement with scholars who argue for a major revision in the assessment of the impact of mechanization on society.
 - E. It suggests a compromise between two seemingly contradictory views concerning the effects of mechanization on society.



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8. The author's attitude about 'the revolutionary effect of the mechanization of work' can be best described as:
- A. Laudatory
 - B. Ambivalent
 - C. Nonchalant
 - D. Irreverent
 - E. Dismissive



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9. Select the sentence from the passage that indicates the true reason for a shift in the marital status of the female workforce.



Reading Comprehension 2

Passage 2

Because of its accuracy in outlining the Earth's subsurface, the seismic-reflection method remains the most important tool in the search for petroleum reserves. In field practice, a subsurface is mapped by arranging a series of wave-train sources, such as small dynamite explosions, in a grid pattern. As each source is activated, it generates a wave train that moves downward at a speed determined uniquely by the rock's elastic characteristics. As rock interfaces are crossed, the elastic characteristics encountered generally change abruptly, which causes part of the energy to be reflected back to the surface, where it is recorded by seismic instruments. The seismic records must be processed to correct for positional differences between the source and the receiver, for unrelated wave trains, and for multiple reflections from the rock interfaces. Then the data acquired at each of the specific source locations are combined to generate a physical profile of the subsurface, which can eventually be used to select targets for drilling.



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For each of the following questions, select one answer choice unless otherwise instructed.

10. The passage is primarily concerned with
- A. describing an important technique
 - B. discussing a new method
 - C. investigating a controversial procedure
 - D. announcing a significant discovery
 - E. promoting a novel application



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For the following question, consider each of the choices separately and select all that apply.

11. According to the passage, in the seismic-reflection method, which of the following has/have a significant effect on the signal detected by the seismic instruments:
- A. number of sources in the grid pattern
 - B. nature of the reflectivity of the rock interfaces
 - C. properties of rocks through which the wave train has traveled



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For each of the following questions, select one answer choice unless otherwise instructed.

12. It can be inferred from the passage that the seismic-reflection method would be likely to yield an inaccurate physical profile of the subsurface in which of the following circumstances?
- A. If the speed at which the wave train moved downward changed
 - B. If the receiver were not positioned directly at the wave-train source
 - C. If the rock on one side of a rock interface had similar elastic characteristics to those of the rock on the other side
 - D. If the seismic records obtained for the different sources in a grid were highly similar to each other
 - E. If there were no petroleum deposits beneath the area defined by the grid of wave-train sources



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13. Select the sentence from the passage that indicates the requisite backend process to be undertaken before a physical profile of the subsurface can be generated.



Reading Comprehension 2

Passage 3

(This Passage is excerpted from an article that was published in 1982.)

Warm-blooded animals have elaborate physiological controls to maintain constant body temperature (in humans, 37° C). Why then during sickness should temperature rise, apparently increasing stress on the infected organism? It has long been known that the level of serum iron in animals falls during infection. Garibaldi first suggested a relationship between fever and iron. He found that microbial synthesis of siderophores - substances that bind iron - in bacteria of the genus *Salmonella* dwindled at environmental temperatures above 37° C and stopped at 40.3° C. Thus, fever would make it more difficult for an infecting bacterium to acquire iron and thus to multiply. Cold-blooded animals were used to test this hypothesis because their body temperature can be controlled in the laboratory. Kluger reported that of Iguanas infected with the potentially lethal bacterium *A. hydrophilia*, more survived at temperatures of 42° C than at 37° C, even though healthy animals prefer the lower temperature. When animals at 42° C were injected with an iron solution, however, mortality rates increased significantly. Research to determine whether similar phenomena occur in warm-blooded animals is sorely needed.



Reading Comprehension 2

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For each of the following questions, select one answer choice unless otherwise instructed.

14. The passage is primarily concerned with attempts to determine:
- A. the role of siderophores in the synthesis of serum iron
 - B. new treatments for infections that are caused by *A. hydrophilia*
 - C. the function of fever in warm-blooded animals
 - D. the mechanisms that ensure constant body temperature
 - E. iron utilization in cold-blooded animals



Reading Comprehension 2

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For each of the following questions, select one answer choice unless otherwise instructed.

15. According to the passage, Garibaldi determined which of the following?
- A. That serum iron is produced through microbial synthesis
 - B. That microbial synthesis of siderophores in warm-blooded animals is more efficient at higher temperatures
 - C. That only iron bound to other substances can be used by bacteria
 - D. That there is a relationship between the synthesis of siderophores in bacteria of the genus *Salmonella* and environmental temperature
 - E. That bacteria of the genus *Salmonella* require iron as a nutrient.



Reading Comprehension 2

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For each of the following questions, select one answer choice unless otherwise instructed.

16. Select the sentence from the passage that implies that the body temperature of warm-blooded animals cannot be easily controlled artificially.



Reading Comprehension 2

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Warm-blooded animals have elaborate physiological controls to maintain constant body temperature (in humans, 37° C). Why then during sickness should temperature rise, apparently increasing stress on the infected organism? It has long been known that the level of serum iron in animals falls during infection. Garibaldi first suggested a relationship between fever and iron. He found that microbial synthesis of siderophores - substances that bind iron - in bacteria of the genus *Salmonella* dwindled at environmental temperatures above 37° C and stopped at 40.3° C. Thus, fever would make it more difficult for an infecting bacterium to acquire iron and thus to multiply. Cold-blooded animals were used to test this hypothesis because their body temperature can be controlled in the laboratory. Kluger reported that of Iguanas infected with the potentially lethal bacterium *A. hydrophilia*, more survived at temperatures of 42° C than at 37° C, even though healthy animals prefer the lower temperature. When animals at 42° C were injected with an iron solution, however, mortality rates increased significantly. Research to determine whether similar phenomena occur in warm-blooded animals is sorely needed.

For each of the following questions, select one answer choice unless otherwise instructed.

17. If it were to be determined that “similar phenomena occur in warm-blooded animals” (highlighted), which of the following, assuming each is possible, is likely to be the most effective treatment for warm-blooded animals with bacterial infections?
- A. Administering a medication that lowers the animals' body temperature
 - B. Injecting the animals with an iron solution
 - C. Administering a medication that makes serum iron unavailable to bacteria
 - D. Providing the animals with reduced-iron diets
 - E. Keeping the animals in an environment with temperatures higher than 37° C.



Reading Comprehension 2

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For each of the following questions, select one answer choice unless otherwise instructed.

18. In the context in which it appears, “dwindled” most nearly means:
- A. controlled
 - B. aggravated
 - C. decreased
 - D. increased
 - E. exacerbated



Reading Comprehension 2

Passage 4

The belief that art originates in intuitive rather than rational faculties was worked out historically and philosophically in the somewhat wearisome volumes of Benedetto Croce, who is usually considered the originator of a new aesthetic. Croce was, in fact, expressing a very old idea. Long before the Romantics stressed intuition and self-expression, the frenzy of inspiration was regarded as fundamental to art, but philosophers had always assumed it must be controlled by law and by the intellectual power of putting things into harmonious order. This general philosophic concept of art was supported by technical necessities. It was necessary to master certain laws and to use intellect in order to build Gothic cathedrals or set up the stained-glass windows of Chartres. When this bracing element of craftsmanship ceased to dominate artists' outlook, new technical elements had to be adopted to maintain the intellectual element in art. Such were linear perspective and anatomy.



Reading Comprehension 2

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For each of the following questions, select one answer choice unless otherwise instructed.

19. The passage suggests that which of the following would most likely have occurred if linear perspective and anatomy had not come to influence artistic endeavor?
- A. The craftsmanship that shaped Gothic architecture would have continued to dominate artists' outlooks.
 - B. Some other technical elements would have been adopted to discipline artistic inspiration.
 - C. Intellectual control over artistic inspiration would not have influenced painting as it did architecture.
 - D. The role of intuitive inspiration would not have remained fundamental to theories of artistic creation.
 - E. The assumptions of aesthetic philosophers before Croce would have been invalidated.



Reading Comprehension 2

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For the following question, consider each of the choices separately and select all that apply.

20. The passage supplies information for answering which of the following questions
- A. Are the intellectual and intuitive faculties harmoniously balanced in post-Romantic art?
 - B. Are the effects of the rational control of artistic inspiration evident in the great works of pre-Romantic eras?
 - C. Was the artistic craftsmanship displayed in Gothic cathedrals also an element in paintings of this period?



Reading Comprehension 2

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For each of the following questions, select one answer choice unless otherwise instructed.

21. The passage implies that which of the following was a traditional assumption of aesthetic philosophers?
- A. Intellectual elements in art exert a necessary control over artistic inspiration.
 - B. Architecture has never again reached the artistic greatness of the Gothic cathedrals.
 - C. Aesthetic philosophy is determined by the technical necessities of art.
 - D. Artistic craftsmanship is more important in architectural art than in pictorial art.
 - E. Paintings lacked the intellectual element before the invention of linear perspective and anatomy.



Reading Comprehension 2

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For each of the following questions, select one answer choice unless otherwise instructed.

22. The author mentions “linear perspective and anatomy” in the last sentence in order to do which of the following?
- A. Expand his argument to include painting as well as architecture.
 - B. Indicate his disagreement with Croce's theory of the origins of art.
 - C. Support his point that rational order of some kind has often seemed to discipline artistic inspiration.
 - D. Explain the rational elements in Gothic painting that corresponded to craftsmanship in Gothic architecture.
 - E. Show the increasing sophistication of artists after the Gothic period.



Reading Comprehension 2

Additional Questions

Passage 5

The dark regions in the starry night sky are not pockets in the universe that are devoid of stars as had long been thought. Rather, they are dark because of interstellar dust that hides the stars behind it. Although its visual effect is **conspicuous**, dust is only a minor constituent of the material, extremely low in density, that lies between the stars. Dust accounts for about one percent of the total mass of interstellar matter. The rest is hydrogen and helium gas, with small amounts of other elements. The interstellar material, rather like terrestrial clouds, comes in all shapes and sizes. The average density of interstellar material in the vicinity of our Sun is 1,000 to 10,000 times less than the best terrestrial laboratory vacuum. It is only because of the enormous interstellar distances that so little material per unit of volume becomes so significant. Optical astronomy is most directly affected, for although interstellar gas is perfectly transparent, the dust is not.



Reading Comprehension 2

Additional Questions

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For each of the following questions, select one answer choice unless otherwise instructed.

23. According to the passage, which of the following is a direct perceptual consequence of interstellar dust
- A. Some stars are rendered invisible to observers on Earth.
 - B. Many visible stars are made to seem brighter than they really are.
 - C. The presence of hydrogen and helium gas is revealed.
 - D. The night sky appears dusty at all times to observers on Earth.
 - E. The dust is conspicuously visible against a background of bright stars



Reading Comprehension 2

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For each of the following questions, select one answer choice unless otherwise instructed.

24. It can be inferred from the passage that the density of interstellar material is
- A. higher where distances between the stars are shorter
 - B. equal to that of interstellar dust
 - C. unusually low in the vicinity of our Sun
 - D. independent of the incidence of gaseous components
 - E. not homogeneous throughout interstellar space



Reading Comprehension 2

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For each of the following questions, select one answer choice unless otherwise instructed.

25. It can be inferred from the passage that it is because space is so vast that
- A. little of the interstellar material in it seems substantial.
 - B. normal units of volume seem futile for measurements of density.
 - C. stars can be far enough from Earth to be obscured even by very sparsely distributed matter.
 - D. interstellar gases can, for all practical purposes, be regarded as transparent.
 - E. optical astronomy would be of little use even if no interstellar dust existed



Reading Comprehension 2

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For each of the following questions, select one answer choice unless otherwise instructed.

26. In the context in which it appears, “conspicuous” could mean all of the following **EXCEPT**
- A. pronounced
 - B. unmistakable
 - C. obvious
 - D. enigmatic
 - E. striking





Thank you