

PISA Reading Literacy Items and Scoring Guides

The *Reading Literacy Items and Scoring Guides* document contains 14 reading assessment units and 59 items associated with these units. These released items from the PISA 2000 and PISA 2009 assessments are distinct from the secure items, which are kept confidential so that they may be used in subsequent cycles to monitor trends.

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LAKE CHAD

Figure 1 shows changing levels of Lake Chad, in Saharan North Africa. Lake Chad disappeared completely in about 20,000 BC, during the last Ice Age. In about 11,000 BC it reappeared. Today, its level is about the same as it was in AD 1000.

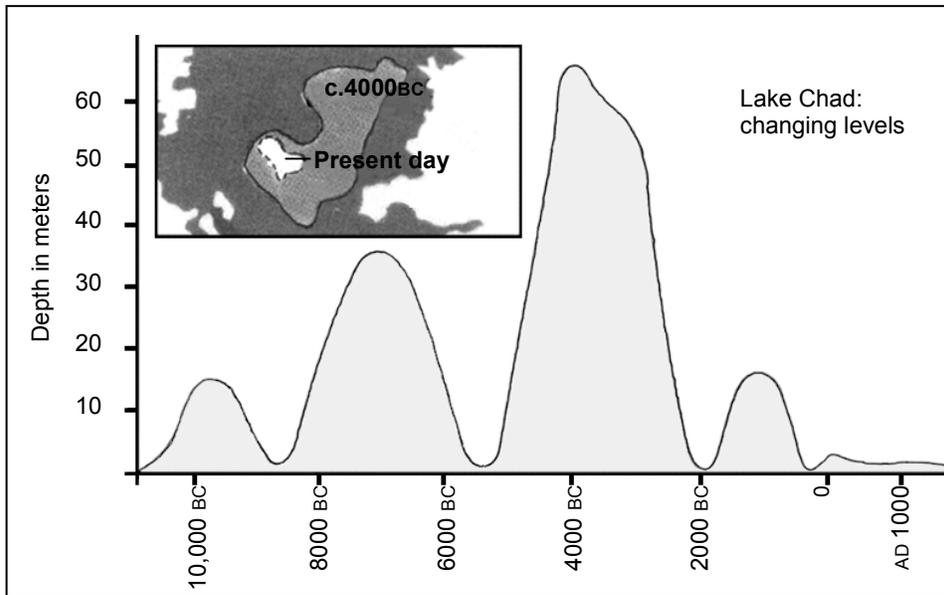


Figure 1

Figure 2 shows Saharan rock art (ancient drawings or paintings found on the walls of caves) and changing patterns of wildlife.

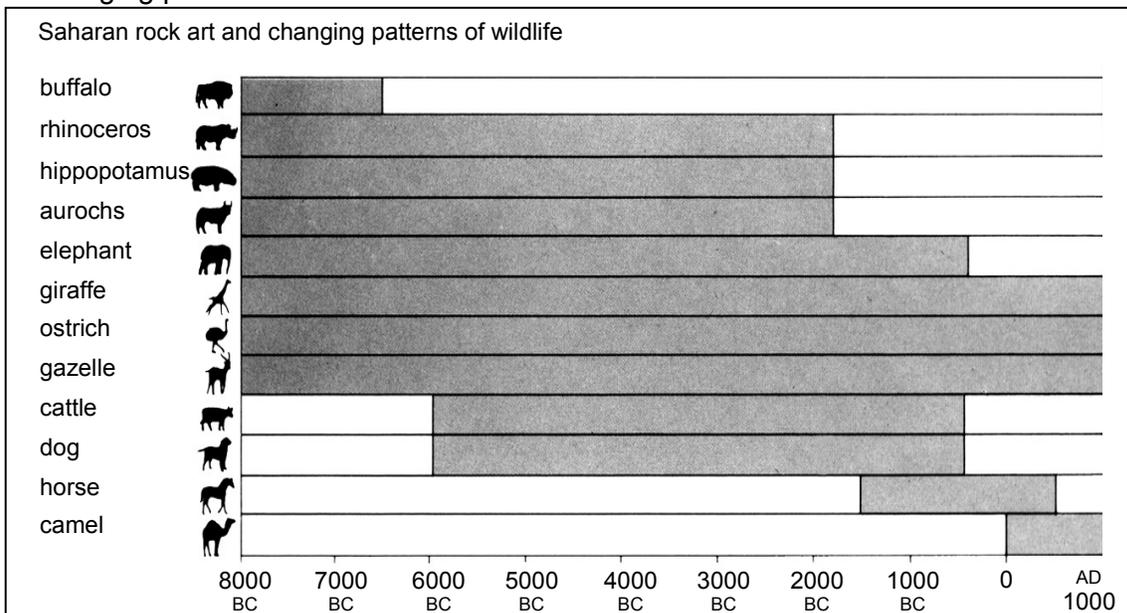


Figure 2

Source: Copyright Bartholomew Ltd. 1988. Extracted from *The Times Atlas of Archaeology* and reproduced by permission of Harper Collins Publishers.

Question 1: LAKE CHAD

R040Q02A

Question intent: Access and retrieve

Text format: Non-continuous

What is the depth of Lake Chad today?

- A About two meters.
- B About fifteen meters.
- C About fifty meters.
- D It has disappeared completely.
- E The information is not provided.

SCORING:

Correct

About two meters.

Incorrect

Other responses.

**Percentage of students
answering correctly in
PISA 2000:**

OECD average: 65%
U.S.: 60%

Question 2: LAKE CHAD

R040Q03A- 0 1 9

Question Intent: Access and retrieve

Text format: Non-continuous

In about which year does the graph in Figure 1 start?

SCORING:

Correct

11,000 BC (or approximation between 10,500 and 12,000)

Incorrect

Other responses.

**Percentage of students
answering correctly in
PISA 2000:**

OECD average: 51%
U.S.: 47%

Question 3: LAKE CHAD

R040Q03B- 0 1 9

Question intent: Reflect and evaluate

Text format: Non-continuous

Why has the author chosen to start the graph at this point?

SCORING:

Correct

Refers to reappearance of lake. Note: answer may receive full credit even if previous answer is incorrect.

Incorrect

Other responses.

**Percentage of students
answering correctly in
PISA 2000:**

OECD average: 37%
U.S.: 28%

Question 4: LAKE CHAD

R040Q04

Question intent: Integrate and interpret

Text format: Non-continuous

Figure 2 is based on the assumption that

- A the animals in the rock art were present in the area at the time they were drawn.
- B the artists who drew the animals were highly skilled.
- C the artists who drew the animals were able to travel widely.
- D there was no attempt to domesticate the animals which were depicted in the rock art.

SCORING:

Correct

Answer A. the animals in the rock art were present in the area at the time they were drawn.

Incorrect

Other responses.

**Percentage of students
answering correctly in
PISA 2000:**

OECD average: 77%
U.S.: 71%

Question 5: LAKE CHAD

R040Q06

Question intent: Integrate and interpret

Text format: Non-continuous

For this question you need to draw together information from Figure 1 and Figure 2.

The disappearance of the rhinoceros, hippopotamus and aurochs from Saharan rock art happened

- A at the beginning of the most recent Ice Age.
- B in the middle of the period when Lake Chad was at its highest level.
- C after the level of Lake Chad had been falling for over a thousand years.
- D at the beginning of an uninterrupted dry period.

SCORING:

Correct

Answer C. after the level of Lake Chad had been falling for over a thousand years.

Incorrect

Other responses.

**Percentage of students
answering correctly in
PISA 2000:**

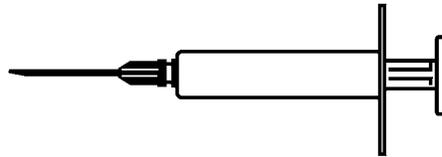
OECD average: 57%
U.S.: 56%

FLU

ACOL VOLUNTARY FLU IMMUNIZATION PROGRAM

As you are no doubt aware, the flu can strike rapidly and extensively during winter. It can leave its victims ill for weeks.

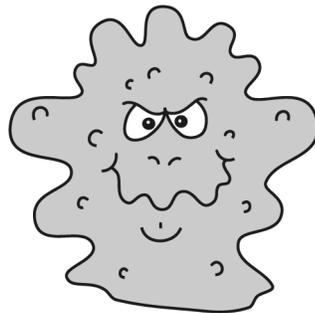
The best way to fight the virus is to have a fit and healthy body. Daily exercise and a diet including plenty of fruit and vegetables are highly recommended to assist the immune system to fight this invading virus.



ACOL has decided to offer staff the opportunity to be immunized against the flu as an additional way to prevent this insidious virus from spreading amongst us. ACOL has arranged for a nurse to administer the immunizations at ACOL, during a half-day session in work hours in the week of May 17. This program is free and available to all members of staff.

Participation is voluntary. Staff taking up the option will be asked to sign a consent form indicating that they do not have any allergies, and that they understand they may experience minor side effects.

Medical advice indicates that the immunization does not produce influenza. However, it may cause some side effects such as fatigue, mild fever and tenderness of the arm.



WHO SHOULD BE IMMUNIZED?

Anyone interested in being protected against the virus.

This immunization is especially recommended for people over the age of 65. But regardless of age, ANYONE who has a chronic debilitating disease, especially cardiac, pulmonary, bronchial or diabetic conditions.

In an office environment ALL staff are at risk of catching the flu.

WHO SHOULD NOT BE IMMUNIZED?

Individuals hypersensitive to eggs, people suffering from an acute feverish illness and pregnant women.

Check with your doctor if you are taking any medication or have had a previous reaction to a flu injection.



If you would like to be immunized in the week of May 17 please advise the personnel officer, Fiona McSweeney, by Friday May 7. The date and time will be set according to the availability of the nurse, the number of participants and the time convenient for most staff. If you would like to be immunized for this winter but cannot attend at the arranged time please let Fiona know. An alternative session may be arranged if there are sufficient numbers.

For further information please contact Fiona on ext. 5577.

Enjoy
Good Health

Fiona McSweeney, the personnel officer at a company called ACOL, prepared the information sheet above for ACOL staff. Refer to the information sheet to answer the questions which follow.

Question 1: FLU

R077Q02

Question intent: Access and retrieve

Text format: Continuous

Which one of the following describes a feature of the ACOL flu immunization program?

- A Daily exercise classes will be run during the winter.
- B Immunizations will be given during working hours.
- C A small bonus will be offered to participants.
- D A doctor will give the injections.

SCORING:

Correct

Answer B. Immunizations will be given during working hours.

Incorrect

Other responses.

**Percentage of students
answering correctly in
PISA 2000:**

OECD average: 71%
U.S.: 70%

Question 2: FLU

R077Q03- 0 1 2 9

Question intent: Reflect and evaluate

Text format: Continuous

We can talk about the content of a piece of writing (what it says).

We can talk about its style (the way it is presented).

Fiona wanted the style of this information sheet to be friendly and encouraging.

Do you think she succeeded?

Explain your answer by referring in detail to the layout, style of writing, pictures or other graphics.

SCORING:

Fully Correct

Answers which refer accurately to the text AND relate style to purpose, and in a way that is consistent with the writer’s intention of being “friendly and encouraging”. The answer must do AT LEAST ONE of the following:

1. refer to one of the features in detail (layout, style of writing, pictures or other graphics; or other similar detail) – that is, to a specific part or quality of a feature; AND/OR
2. use evaluative terms other than “friendly” and “encouraging.” (Note that such terms as “interesting,” “easy to read” and “clear” are not considered to be adequately specific.)

Opinion about whether Fiona succeeded may be stated or implied.

Partially Correct

Answers which refer accurately to the text and relate purpose to information and content (rather than style), and acknowledge the writer’s intention of being “friendly and encouraging”.

Opinion about whether Fiona succeeded may be stated or implied.

Reading Literacy

Incorrect

Answers which show inaccurate comprehension of the material or are implausible or irrelevant.

**Percentage of students
answering correctly in
PISA 2000:**

OECD average: 45%

U.S.: 39%

Question 3: FLU

R077Q04

Question intent: Interpreting texts

Text format: Continuous

This information sheet suggests that if you want to protect yourself against the flu virus, a flu injection is

- A more effective than exercise and a healthy diet, but more risky.
- B a good idea, but not a substitute for exercise and a healthy diet.
- C as effective as exercise and a healthy diet, and less troublesome.
- D not worth considering if you have plenty of exercise and a healthy diet.

SCORING:

Correct

Answer B. a good idea, but not a substitute for exercise and a healthy diet.

Incorrect

Other responses.

**Percentage of students
answering correctly in
PISA 2000:**

OECD average: 54%
U.S.: 69%

Question 4: FLU

R077Q05- 0 1 2 9

Question intent: Reflection and evaluation

Text format: Continuous

Part of the information sheet says:

WHO SHOULD BE IMMUNIZED?

Anyone interested in being protected against the virus.

After Fiona had circulated the information sheet, a colleague told her that she should have left out the words “Anyone interested in being protected against the virus” because they were misleading.

Do you agree that these words are misleading and should have been left out?

Explain your answer.

SCORING:

Correct

Answers which evaluate the section of text in relation to the term “misleading” by indicating that there is a potential contradiction. May or may not explain what the contradiction is. Agreement or disagreement may be stated or implied.

OR

Answers which evaluate the section of text in relation to the term “misleading” by indicating that the statement may be an exaggeration. (*i.e.* Not everyone needs the immunization, or the immunization does not offer complete protection). May or may not explain what the exaggeration is. Agreement or disagreement may be stated or implied.

Incorrect

Answers which evaluate the section of text, but not in relation to the term “misleading”.

Answers which indicate that the statement is strong, effective, and/or encouraging without mentioning potential contradiction or misleading element; or indicates that the statement “Anyone interested in being protected against the virus” is redundant because it is stating the obvious.

Answers which are insufficient or vague, or restates “misleading” without explanation, or which show inaccurate comprehension of the material or are implausible or irrelevant.

**Percentage of students
answering correctly in
PISA 2000:**

OECD average: 31%
U.S.: 38%

Question 5: FLU

R077Q06

Question intent: Integrate and interpret

Text format: Continuous

According to the information sheet which one of these staff members should contact Fiona?

- A Steve from the store, who does not want to be immunized because he would rather rely on his natural immunity.
- B Julie from sales, who wants to know if the immunization program is compulsory.
- C Alice from the mailroom who would like to be immunized this winter but is having a baby in two months.
- D Michael from accounts who would like to be immunized but will be on leave in the week of May 17.

SCORING:

Correct

Answer D. Michael from accounts who would like to be immunized but will be on leave in the week of May 17.

Incorrect

Other responses.

**Percentage of students
answering correctly in
PISA 2000:**

OECD average: 45%
U.S.: 46%

PLAN INTERNATIONAL
PLAN International Program Results Financial Year 1996
Region of Eastern and Southern Africa


| | EGYPT | ETHIOPIA | KENYA | MALAWI | SUDAN | TANZANIA | UGANDA | ZAMBIA | ZIMBABWE | TOTALS |
|--|--------|----------|-------|--------|-------|----------|--------|--------|----------|---------|
| Growing up Healthy | | | | | | | | | | |
| Health posts built with 4 rooms or less | 1 | 0 | 6 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 9 | 26 |
| Health workers trained for 1 day | 1 053 | 0 | 719 | 0 | 425 | 1 003 | 20 | 80 | 1 085 | 4 385 |
| Children given nutrition supplements > 1 week | 10 195 | 0 | 2 240 | 2 400 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 251 402 | 266 237 |
| Children given financial help with health/dental treatment | 984 | 0 | 396 | 0 | 305 | 0 | 581 | 0 | 17 | 2 283 |



| | EGYPT | ETHIOPIA | KENYA | MALAWI | SUDAN | TANZANIA | UGANDA | ZAMBIA | ZIMBABWE | TOTALS |
|---|--------|----------|--------|--------|-------|----------|--------|--------|----------|---------|
| Learning | | | | | | | | | | |
| Teachers trained for 1 week | 0 | 0 | 367 | 0 | 970 | 115 | 565 | 0 | 303 | 2 320 |
| School exercise books bought/donated | 667 | 0 | 0 | 41 200 | 0 | 69 106 | 0 | 150 | 0 | 111 123 |
| School textbooks bought/donated | 0 | 0 | 45 650 | 9 600 | 1 182 | 8 769 | 7 285 | 150 | 58 387 | 131 023 |
| Uniforms bought/made/donated | 8 897 | 0 | 5 761 | 0 | 2 000 | 6 040 | 0 | 0 | 434 | 23 132 |
| Children helped with school fees/a scholarship | 12 321 | 0 | 1 598 | 0 | 154 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 014 | 16 087 |
| School desks built/bought/donated | 3 200 | 0 | 3 689 | 250 | 1 564 | 1 725 | 1 794 | 0 | 4 109 | 16 331 |
| Permanent classrooms built | 44 | 0 | 50 | 8 | 93 | 31 | 45 | 0 | 82 | 353 |
| Classrooms repaired | 0 | 0 | 34 | 0 | 0 | 14 | 0 | 0 | 33 | 81 |
| Adults receiving training in literacy this Financial Year | 1 160 | 0 | 3 000 | 568 | 3 617 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 350 | 8 695 |



| | EGYPT | ETHIOPIA | KENYA | MALAWI | SUDAN | TANZANIA | UGANDA | ZAMBIA | ZIMBABWE | TOTALS |
|--|-------|----------|-------|--------|-------|----------|--------|--------|----------|--------|
| Habitat | | | | | | | | | | |
| Latrines or toilets dug/built | 50 | 0 | 2 403 | 0 | 57 | 162 | 23 | 96 | 4 311 | 7 102 |
| Houses connected to a new sewage system | 143 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 143 |
| Wells dug/improved (or springs capped) | 0 | 0 | 15 | 0 | 7 | 13 | 0 | 0 | 159 | 194 |
| New positive boreholes drilled | 0 | 0 | 8 | 93 | 14 | 0 | 27 | 0 | 220 | 362 |
| Gravity feed drinking water systems built | 0 | 0 | 28 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 29 |
| Drinking water systems repaired/improved | 0 | 0 | 392 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 31 | 425 |
| Houses improved with PLAN project | 265 | 0 | 520 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 788 |
| New houses built for beneficiaries | 225 | 0 | 596 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 6 | 0 | 313 | 1 142 |
| Community halls built or improved | 2 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 2 | 12 |
| Community leaders trained for 1 day or more | 2 214 | 95 | 3 522 | 232 | 200 | 3 575 | 814 | 20 | 2 693 | 13 365 |
| Miles of roadway improved | .75 | 0 | 16 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 33 | 50 |
| Bridges built | 0 | 0 | 4 | 2 | 11 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 18 |
| Families benefited directly from erosion control | 0 | 0 | 1 092 | 0 | 1 500 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 18 405 | 20 997 |
| Houses newly served by electrification project | 448 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 44 | 494 |

Source: Adapted from PLAN International Program Output Chart financial year 1996, appendix to Quarterly Report to the International Board first quarter 1997.

The preceding table is part of a report published by PLAN International, an international aid organization. It gives some information about PLAN's work in one of its regions of operation (Eastern and Southern Africa). Refer to the table to answer the following questions.

Question 1: PLAN INTERNATIONAL

R099Q04A

What does the table indicate about the level of PLAN International's activity in Ethiopia in 1996, compared with other countries in the region?

- A The level of activity was comparatively high in Ethiopia.
- B The level of activity was comparatively low in Ethiopia.
- C It was about the same as in other countries in the region.
- D It was comparatively high in the Habitat category, and low in the other categories.

SCORING:

Correct

Answer B. The level of activity was comparatively low in Ethiopia.

Incorrect

Other responses.

Note: This question is for information only and will not independently contribute to the student's score. The answer is taken into account in assessing the response to Question 2. Percentage of students answering correctly is not available.

Question 2: PLAN INTERNATIONAL

R099Q04B- 0 1 2 3 9

*Question intent: Reflect and evaluate**Text format: Non-continuous*

In 1996 Ethiopia was one of the poorest countries in the world.

Taking this fact and the information in the table into account, what do you think might explain the level of PLAN International's activities in Ethiopia compared with its activities in other countries?

SCORING:***Fully Correct***

Student has answered Question 1 correctly (Answer B). Answers which explain the level of PLAN's activity by drawing on ALL the information supplied, with explicit or implicit reference to the type of activity conducted in Ethiopia by PLAN. Answer must also be consistent with (though does not need to refer to) BOTH of the following:

1. PLAN's low level of activity in Ethiopia (information supplied in the table); AND
2. Ethiopia's poverty (information given in the stem).

Partially Correct

Student has answered Question 1 correctly (Answer B). Answers which explain the level of PLAN's work by drawing on MOST of the information supplied. Answer must be consistent with (though does not need to refer to) BOTH of the following:

1. PLAN's low level of activity in Ethiopia (information supplied in the table); AND
2. Ethiopia's poverty (information given in the stem).

Incorrect

Student has answered Question 1 incorrectly (not Answer B).

OR

Student has answered Question 1 correctly (Answer B) but the answer does not take into account the information supplied about Ethiopia's relative poverty, or is insufficient, vague, implausible, or irrelevant.

**Percentage of students
answering correctly in
PISA 2000:**

OECD average: 11%
U.S.: 6%

POLICE

Scientific Police Weapons

A murder has been committed but the suspect denies everything. He claims not to know the victim. He says he never knew him, never went near him, never touched him... The police and the judge are convinced that he is not telling the truth. But how to prove it?

At the crime scene, investigators have gathered every possible shred of evidence imaginable: fibers from fabrics, hairs, finger marks, cigarette ends... The few hairs found on the victim's jacket are red. And they look strangely like the suspect's. If it could be proved that these hairs are indeed his, this would be evidence that he had in fact met the victim.

Every individual is unique

Specialists set to work. They examine some cells at the root of these hairs and some of the suspect's blood cells. In the nucleus of each cell in our bodies there is DNA. What is it? DNA is like a necklace made of two twisted strings

of pearls. Imagine that these pearls come in four different colors and that thousands of colored pearls (which make up a gene) are strung in a very specific order. In each individual this order is exactly the same in all the cells in the body: those of the hair roots as well as those of the big toe, those of the liver and those of the stomach or blood. But the order of the pearls varies from one person to another. Given the number of pearls strung in this way, there is very little chance of two people having the same DNA, with the exception of identical twins. Unique to each individual, DNA is thus a sort of genetic identity card.

Geneticists are therefore able

to compare the suspect's genetic identity card (determined from his blood) with that of the person with the red hair. If the genetic card is the same, they will know that the suspect did in fact go near the victim he said he'd never met.

Just one piece of evidence

More and more often in cases of sexual assault, murder, theft or other crimes, the police are having genetic analyses done. Why? To try to find evidence of contact between two people, two objects or a person and an object. Proving such contact is often very useful to the investigation. But it does not necessarily provide proof of a crime. It is just one piece of evidence amongst many others.

Anne Versailles

Genetic what?

DNA is made up of a number of genes, each consisting of thousands of "pearls". Together these genes form the genetic identity card of a person.

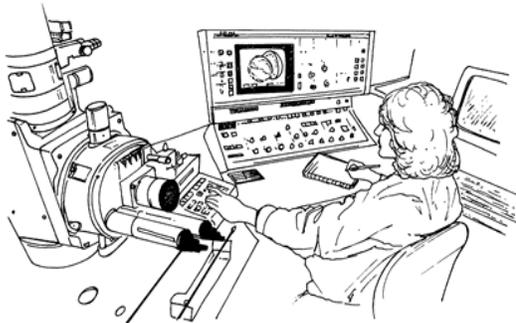
How is the genetic identity card revealed?

The geneticist takes the few cells from the base of the hairs found on the victim, or from the saliva left on a cigarette end. He puts them into a product which destroys everything around the DNA of the cells. He then does the same thing with some cells from the suspect's blood. The DNA is then specially prepared for analysis. After this, it is placed in a special gel and an electric current is passed through the gel. After a few hours, this produces stripes similar to a bar code (like the ones on things we buy) which are visible under a special lamp. The bar code of the suspect's DNA is then compared with that of the hairs found on the victim.

Source: Le Liqueur, 27 may 1998.

We are made up of billions of cells

Every living thing is made up of lots of cells. A cell is very small indeed. It can also be said to be microscopic because it can only be seen using a microscope which magnifies it many times. Each cell has an outer membrane and a nucleus in which the DNA is found.



Microscope in a police laboratory

Refer to the magazine article above to answer the following questions.

Question 1: POLICE

R100Q04

Question intent: Access and retrieve

Text format: Continuous

To explain the structure of DNA, the author talks about a pearl necklace. How do these pearl necklaces vary from one individual to another?

- A They vary in length.
- B The order of the pearls is different.
- C The number of necklaces is different.
- D The color of the pearls is different.

SCORING:

Correct

Answer B. The order of the pearls is different.

Incorrect

Other responses.

| |
|--|
| <p>Percentage of students answering correctly in PISA 2000:</p> |
|--|

| |
|--|
| <p>OECD average: 61% U.S.: 57%</p> |
|--|

Question 2: POLICE

R100Q05

Question intent: Integrate and interpret

Text format: Continuous

What is the purpose of the box headed “How is the genetic identity card revealed”?

To explain

- A what DNA is.
- B what a bar code is.
- C how cells are analyzed to find the pattern of DNA.
- D how it can be proved that a crime has been committed.

SCORING:

Correct

Answer C. how cells are analyzed to find the pattern of DNA.

Incorrect

Other responses.

**Percentage of students
answering correctly in
PISA 2000:**

OECD average: 59%
U.S.: 69%

Question 3: POLICE

R100Q06

Question intent: Integrate and interpret

Text format: Continuous

What is the author's main aim?

- A To warn.
- B To amuse.
- C To inform.
- D To convince.

SCORING:

Correct

Answer C. To inform.

Incorrect

Other responses.

**Percentage of students
answering correctly in
PISA 2000:**

OECD average: 80%
U.S.: 84%

Question 4: POLICE

R100Q07

Question intent: Integrate and interpret

Text format: Continuous

The end of the introduction (the first shaded section) says: "But how to prove it?"

According to the passage, investigators try to find an answer to this question by

- A interrogating witnesses.
- B carrying out genetic analyses.
- C interrogating the suspect thoroughly.
- D going over all the results of the investigation again.

SCORING:

Correct

B. carrying out genetic analyses.

Incorrect

Other responses.

**Percentage of students
answering correctly in
PISA 2000:**

OECD average: 81%
U.S.: 79%

THE GIFT

How many days, she wondered, had she sat like this, watching the cold brown water inch up the dissolving bluff. She could just faintly remember the beginning of the rain, driving in across the swamp from the south and beating against the shell of her house. Then the river itself started rising, slowly at first until at last it paused to turn back. From hour to hour it slithered up creeks and ditches and poured over low places. In the night, while she slept, it claimed the road and surrounded her so that she sat alone, her boat gone, the house like a piece of drift lodged on its bluff. Now even against the tarred planks of the supports the waters touched. And still they rose.

As far as she could see, to the treetops where the opposite banks had been, the swamp was an empty sea, awash with sheets of rain, the river lost somewhere in its vastness. Her house with its boat bottom had been built to ride just such a flood, if one ever came, but now it was old. Maybe the boards underneath were partly rotted away. Maybe the cable mooring the house to the great live oak would snap loose and let her go turning downstream, the way her boat had gone.

No one could come now. She could cry out but it would be no use, no one would hear. Down the length and breadth of the swamp others were fighting to save what little they could, maybe even their lives. She had seen a whole house go floating by, so quiet she was reminded of sitting at a funeral. She thought when she saw it she knew whose house it was. It had been bad seeing it drift by, but the owners must have escaped to higher ground. Later, with the rain and darkness pressing in, she had heard a panther scream upriver.

Now the house seemed to shudder around her like something alive. She reached out to catch a lamp as it tilted off the table by her bed and put it between her feet to hold it steady. Then creaking and groaning with effort the house struggled up from the clay, floated free, bobbing like a cork and swung out slowly with the pull of the river. She gripped the edge of the bed. Swaying from side to side, the house moved to the length of its mooring. There was a jolt and a complaining of old timbers and then a pause. Slowly the current released it and let it swing back, rasping across its resting place. She caught her breath and sat for a long time feeling the slow pendulous sweeps. The dark sifted down through the incessant rain, and head on arm, she slept holding on to the bed.

Sometime in the night the cry awoke her, a sound so anguished she was on her feet before she was awake. In the dark she stumbled against the bed. It came from out there, from the river. She could hear something moving, something large that made a dredging, sweeping sound. It could be another house. Then it hit, not head on but glancing and sliding down the length of her house. It was a tree. She listened as the branches and leaves cleared themselves and went on downstream, leaving only the rain and the lappings of the flood, sounds so constant now that they seemed a part of the silence. Huddled on the bed, she was almost asleep again when another cry sounded, this time so close it could have been in the room. Staring into the dark, she eased back on the bed until her hand caught the cold shape of the rifle. Then crouched on the pillow, she cradled the gun across her knees. "Who's there?" she called.

The answer was a repeated cry, but less shrill, tired sounding, then the empty silence closing in. She drew back against the bed. Whatever was there she could hear it moving about on the porch. Planks creaked and she could distinguish the sounds of objects being knocked over. There was a scratching on the wall as if it would tear its way in. She knew now what it was, a big cat, deposited by the uprooted tree that had passed her. It had come with the flood, a gift.

Unconsciously she pressed her hand against her face and along her tightened throat. The rifle rocked across her knees. She had never seen a panther in her life. She had heard about

them from others and heard their cries, like suffering, in the distance. The cat was scratching on the wall again, rattling the window by the door. As long as she guarded the window and kept the cat hemmed in by the wall and water, caged, she would be all right. Outside, the animal paused to rake his claws across the rusted outer screen. Now and then, it whined and growled.

When the light filtered down through the rain at last, coming like another kind of dark, she was still sitting on the bed, stiff and cold. Her arms, used to rowing on the river, ached from the stillness of holding the rifle. She had hardly allowed herself to move for fear any sound might give strength to the cat. Rigid, she swayed with the movement of the house. The rain still fell as if it would never stop. Through the grey light, finally, she could see the rain-pitted flood and far away the cloudy shape of drowned treetops. The cat was not moving now. Maybe he had gone away. Laying the gun aside she slipped off the bed and moved without a sound to the window. It was still there, crouched at the edge of the porch, staring up at the live oak, the mooring of her house, as if gauging its chances of leaping to an overhanging branch. It did not seem so frightening now that she could see it, its coarse fur napped into twigs, its sides pinched and ribs showing. It would be easy to shoot it where it sat, its long tail whipping back and forth. She was moving back to get the gun when it turned around. With no warning, no crouch or tensing of muscles, it sprang at the window, shattering a pane of glass. She fell back, stifling a scream, and taking up the rifle, she fired through the window. She could not see the panther now, but she had missed. It began to pace again. She could glimpse its head and the arch of its back as it passed the window.

Shivering, she pulled back on the bed and lay down. The lulling constant sound of the river and the rain, the penetrating chill, drained away her purpose. She watched the window and kept the gun ready. After waiting a long while she moved again to look. The panther had fallen asleep, its head on its paws, like a housecat. For the first time since the rains began she wanted to cry, for herself, for all the people, for everything in the flood. Sliding down on the bed, she pulled the quilt around her shoulders. She should have got out when she could, while the roads were still open or before her boat was washed away. As she rocked back and forth with the sway of the house a deep ache in her stomach reminded her she hadn't eaten. She couldn't remember for how long. Like the cat, she was starving. Easing into the kitchen, she made a fire with the few remaining sticks of wood. If the flood lasted she would have to burn the chair, maybe even the table itself. Taking down the remains of a smoked ham from the ceiling, she cut thick slices of the brownish red meat and placed them in a skillet. The smell of the frying meat made her dizzy. There were stale biscuits from the last time she had cooked and she could make some coffee. There was plenty of water.

While she was cooking her food, she almost forgot about the cat until it whined. It was hungry too. "Let me eat," she called to it, "and then I'll see to you." And she laughed under her breath. As she hung the rest of the ham back on its nail the cat growled a deep throaty rumble that made her hand shake.

After she had eaten, she went to the bed again and took up the rifle. The house had risen so high now it no longer scraped across the bluff when it swung back from the river. The food had warmed her. She could get rid of the cat while light still hung in the rain. She crept slowly to the window. It was still there, mewling, beginning to move about the porch. She stared at it a long time, unafraid. Then without thinking what she was doing, she laid the gun aside and started around the edge of the bed to the kitchen. Behind her the cat was moving, fretting. She took down what was left of the ham and making her way back across the swaying floor to the window she shoved it through the broken pane. On the other side there was a hungry snarl and something like a shock passed from the animal to her. Stunned by what she had done, she drew back to the bed. She could hear the sounds of the panther tearing at the meat. The house rocked around her.

Reading Literacy

The next time she awoke she knew at once that everything had changed. The rain had stopped. She felt for the movement of the house but it no longer swayed on the flood. Drawing her door open, she saw through the torn screen a different world. The house was resting on the bluff where it always had. A few feet down, the river still raced on in a torrent, but it no longer covered the few feet between the house and the live oak. And the cat was gone. Leading from the porch to the live oak and doubtless on into the swamp were tracks, indistinct and already disappearing into the soft mud. And there on the porch, gnawed to whiteness, was what was left of the ham.

Source: Louis Dollarhide, "The Gift" in *Mississippi Writers: Reactions of Childhood and Youth*, Volume I, edited by Dorothy Abbott, University Press of Mississippi, 1985.

Use the story "The Gift" on the previous pages to answer the questions which follow. (Note that line numbers are given in the margin of the story to help you find parts which are referred to in the questions.)

Question 1: THE GIFT

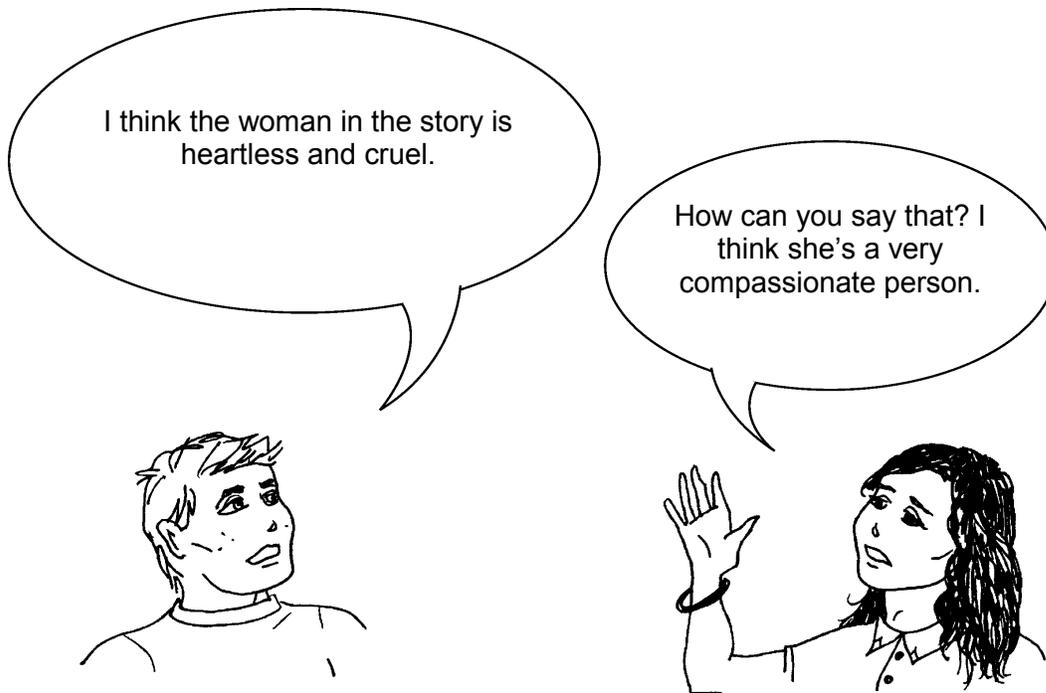
R119Q09A- 0 1 9

R119Q09B- 0 1 9

Question intent: Reflect and evaluate

Text format: Continuous

Here is part of a conversation between two people who read "The Gift":



Give evidence from the story to show how each of these speakers could justify their point of view.

Speaker 1

Speaker 2

SCORING:

Fully Correct: Answers scored as “Correct” for Speaker 1 AND Speaker 2

(Speaker 1 – “heartless and cruel”)

Correct

Answers which provide evidence from the story to support the idea that the woman is heartless and cruel. May refer to her intention to shoot the panther, or to the fact that she actually shoots at the panther. May use quotation or close paraphrase from the story.

Incorrect

Answers which show inaccurate comprehension of the material or are implausible or irrelevant

(Speaker 2 – “compassionate”)

Correct

Answers which provide evidence from the story to support the idea that the woman is compassionate. May refer to her action in feeding the panther, or to suggestions about her capacity for compassion towards the panther or more generally. May use quotation or close paraphrase from the story.

Incorrect

Answers which show inaccurate comprehension of the material or are implausible or irrelevant.

**Percentage of students
answering correctly in
PISA 2000:**

OECD average: 64%
U.S.: 65%

Question 2: THE GIFT

R119Q01

Question intent: Interpreting text

Text format: Continuous

What is the woman's situation at the beginning of the story?

- A She is too weak to leave the house after days without food.
- B She is defending herself against a wild animal.
- C Her house has been surrounded by flood waters.
- D A flooded river has swept her house away.

SCORING:

Correct

Answer C. Her house has been surrounded by flood waters.

Incorrect

Other responses.

**Percentage of students
answering correctly in
PISA 2000:**

OECD average: 73%
U.S.: 78%

Question 3: THE GIFT

R119Q07- 0 1 2 3 9

*Question intent: Interpreting text**Text format: Continuous*

Here are some of the early references to the panther in the story.

“the cry awoke her, a sound so anguished...” (line 32)

“The answer was a repeated cry, but less shrill, tired sounding...” (line 44)

“She had...heard their cries, like suffering, in the distance.” (lines 52–53)

Considering what happens in the rest of the story, why do you think the writer chooses to introduce the panther with these descriptions?

SCORING:***Fully Correct***

Answers which recognize that the descriptions are intended to evoke pity. Reference to writer’s intention or effect on the reader may be stated or implied. Reference to what happens in the rest of the story may be stated or implied. May suggest that:

1. the descriptions quoted link the panther with the woman (or humans generally) in suffering; OR
2. the descriptions quoted prepare for the woman’s later compassionate behavior towards the panther; OR the panther is presented as an object of compassion.

Partially correct

Answers which refer to possible intentions (or effects) of the quoted descriptions, other than that of evoking pity. Comment is consistent with comprehension of the text. Reference to writer’s intention or effect on the reader may be stated or implied. References to what happens in the rest of the story may be stated or implied. May refer to:

1. the intention/effect of creating suspense or mystery (Note that such terms as “frightening” and “scary” are considered to show lack of comprehension of the quoted descriptions; and “interesting”, “easy to read” and “clear” are not considered to be adequately specific); OR
2. the idea that the panther is presented from the woman’s point of view.

Answers which refer to the literal information given in the quoted descriptions. Comment is consistent with comprehension of the text. Reference to writer’s intention or effect on the reader

Reading Literacy

may be stated or implied. References to what happens in the rest of the story may be stated or implied. May refer to:

1. the realistic depiction of the panther; OR
2. the way the descriptions fit with the literal setting and situation.

Incorrect

Answers which show inaccurate comprehension of the material or are implausible or irrelevant.

**Percentage of students
answering correctly in
PISA 2000:**

OECD average: 43%
U.S.: 50%

Question 4: THE GIFT

R119Q06

Question intent: Access and retrieve

Text format: Continuous

“Then creaking and groaning with effort the house struggled up ...” (line 24)

What happened to the house in this part of the story?

- A It fell apart.
- B It began to float.
- C It crashed into the oak tree.
- D It sank to the bottom of the river.

SCORING:

Correct

Answer B. It began to float.

Incorrect

Other responses.

**Percentage of students
answering correctly in
PISA 2000:**

OECD average: 85%
U.S.: 85%

Question 5: THE GIFT

R119Q08- 0 1 2 9

Question intent: Integrate and interpret

Text format: Continuous

What does the story suggest was the woman's reason for feeding the panther?

SCORING:

Correct

Recognizes the implication that the woman is motivated by pity or empathy towards the panther. May also mention that the woman does not consciously understand her own motivation. OR

Recognizes that the story does not explicitly explain the woman's motivation and/or that she does not consciously understand it. OR

Recognizes the panther's physical need for food or help, without referring to the woman's motivation.

Incorrect

Answers which show inaccurate comprehension of the material or are implausible or irrelevant.

**Percentage of students
answering correctly in
PISA 2000:**

OECD average: 57%
U.S.: 58%

Question 6: THE GIFT

R119Q04

Question intent: Integrate and interpret

Text format: Continuous

When the woman says, “and then I’ll see to you” (line 92) she means that she is

- A sure that the cat won’t hurt her.
- B trying to frighten the cat.
- C intending to shoot the cat.
- D planning to feed the cat.

SCORING:

Correct

Answer C. intending to shoot the cat.

Incorrect

Other responses.

**Percentage of students
answering correctly in
PISA 2000:**

OECD average: 41%
U.S.: 35%

Question 7: THE GIFT

R119Q05-0 1 2 3 9

Question intent: Reflect and evaluate

Text format: Continuous

Do you think that the last sentence of “The Gift” is an appropriate ending?

Explain your answer, demonstrating your understanding of how the last sentence relates to the story’s meaning.

SCORING:

Fully Correct

Answers which go beyond a literal interpretation of the story while interpreting it in a way which is consistent with accurate literal comprehension. Evaluates the ending in terms of thematic completeness, by relating the last sentence to central relationships, issues or metaphors in the story. Answer may refer, for example, to the relationship between the panther and the woman; to survival; or to a gift or thanks. Opinion about appropriateness may be stated or implied.

Answers which go beyond a literal interpretation of the story while interpreting it in a way which is consistent with accurate literal comprehension. Evaluates the ending in terms of style or mood, by relating the last sentence to the general style or mood of the rest of the story. Opinion about appropriateness may be stated or implied.

Partially Correct

Answers which respond at a literal level, in a way which is consistent with accurate literal comprehension of the story. Evaluates the ending in terms of narrative sequence, by relating the last sentence to explicit events, (e.g. the cat having eaten the meat; the visit of the panther to the house; the subsiding of the flood). Opinion about appropriateness may be stated or implied.

Incorrect

Answers which show inaccurate comprehension of the material or are implausible or irrelevant.

**Percentage of students
answering correctly in
PISA 2000:**

OECD average: 37%
U.S.: 45%

The two letters below come from the internet and are about graffiti. Graffiti is illegal painting and writing on walls and elsewhere. Refer to the letters to answer the questions below.

GRAFFITI

I'm simmering with anger as the school wall is cleaned and repainted for the fourth time to get rid of graffiti. Creativity is admirable but people should find ways to express themselves that do not inflict extra costs upon society.

Why do you spoil the reputation of young people by painting graffiti where it's forbidden? Professional artists do not hang their paintings in the streets, do they? Instead they seek funding and gain fame through legal exhibitions.

In my opinion buildings, fences and park benches are works of art in themselves. It's really pathetic to spoil this architecture with graffiti and what's more, the method destroys the ozone layer. Really, I can't understand why these criminal artists bother as their "artistic works" are just removed from sight over and over again.

Helga

There is no accounting for taste. Society is full of communication and advertising. Company logos, shop names. Large intrusive posters on the streets. Are they acceptable? Yes, mostly. Is graffiti acceptable? Some people say yes, some no.

Who pays the price for graffiti? Who is ultimately paying the price for advertisements? Correct. The consumer.

Have the people who put up billboards asked your permission? No. Should graffiti painters do so then? Isn't it all just a question of communication – your own name, the names of gangs and large works of art in the street?

Think about the striped and checkered clothes that appeared in the stores a few years ago. And ski wear. The patterns and colors were stolen directly from the flowery concrete walls. It's quite amusing that these patterns and colors are accepted and admired but that graffiti in the same style is considered dreadful.

Times are hard for art.

Sophia

Question 1: GRAFFITI

R081Q01

Question intent: Integrate and interpret

Text format: Continuous

The purpose of each of these letters is to

- A explain what graffiti is.
- B present an opinion about graffiti.
- C demonstrate the popularity of graffiti.
- D tell people how much is spent removing graffiti.

SCORING:

Correct

B. Present an opinion about graffiti.

Incorrect

Other responses.

**Percentage of students
answering correctly in
PISA 2000:**

OECD average: 78%
U.S.: 84%

Question 2: GRAFFITI

R081Q05- 0 1 9

Question intent: Integrate and interpret

Text format: Continuous

Why does Sophia refer to advertising?

SCORING:

Correct

Answers which recognize that a comparison is being drawn between graffiti and advertising, and are consistent with the idea that advertising is a legal form of graffiti.

OR

Answers which recognize that referring to advertising is a strategy to defend graffiti.

Incorrect

Answers which show inaccurate comprehension of the material or are implausible or irrelevant.

**Percentage of students
answering correctly in
PISA 2000:**

OECD average: 53%
U.S.: 45%

Question 3: GRAFFITI

R081Q06A- 0 1 9

Question intent: Reflect and evaluate

Text format: Continuous

Which of the two letter writers do you agree with? Explain your answer by using your own words to refer to what is said in one or both of the letters.

SCORING:

Correct

Answers which explain student's point of view by referring to the content of one or both letters. May refer to the writer's general position (*i.e.* for or against) or to a detail of her argument. Interpretation of writer's argument must be plausible. Explanation may take the form of paraphrase of part of the text, but must not be wholly or largely copied without alteration or addition.

Incorrect

Support for own point of view is confined to a direct quotation (with or without quotation marks). OR

Answers which show inaccurate comprehension of the material or are implausible or irrelevant.

**Percentage of students
answering correctly in
PISA 2000:**

OECD average: 68%
U.S.: 74%

Question 4: GRAFFITI

R081Q06B- 0 1 9

Question intent: Reflect and evaluate

Text format: Continuous

We can talk about what a letter says (its content).

We can talk about the way a letter is written (its style).

Regardless of which letter you agree with, in your opinion, which do you think is the better letter? Explain your answer by referring to the way one or both letters are written.

SCORING:

Correct

Answers which explain opinion with reference to the style or form of one or both letters. They should refer to criteria such as style of writing, structure of argument, cogency of argument, tone, register used, strategies for persuading readers. Terms like “better arguments” must be substantiated.

Incorrect

Answers which judge in terms of agreement or disagreement with the writer’s position, or simply paraphrases content. OR

Answers which show inaccurate comprehension of the material or are implausible or irrelevant.

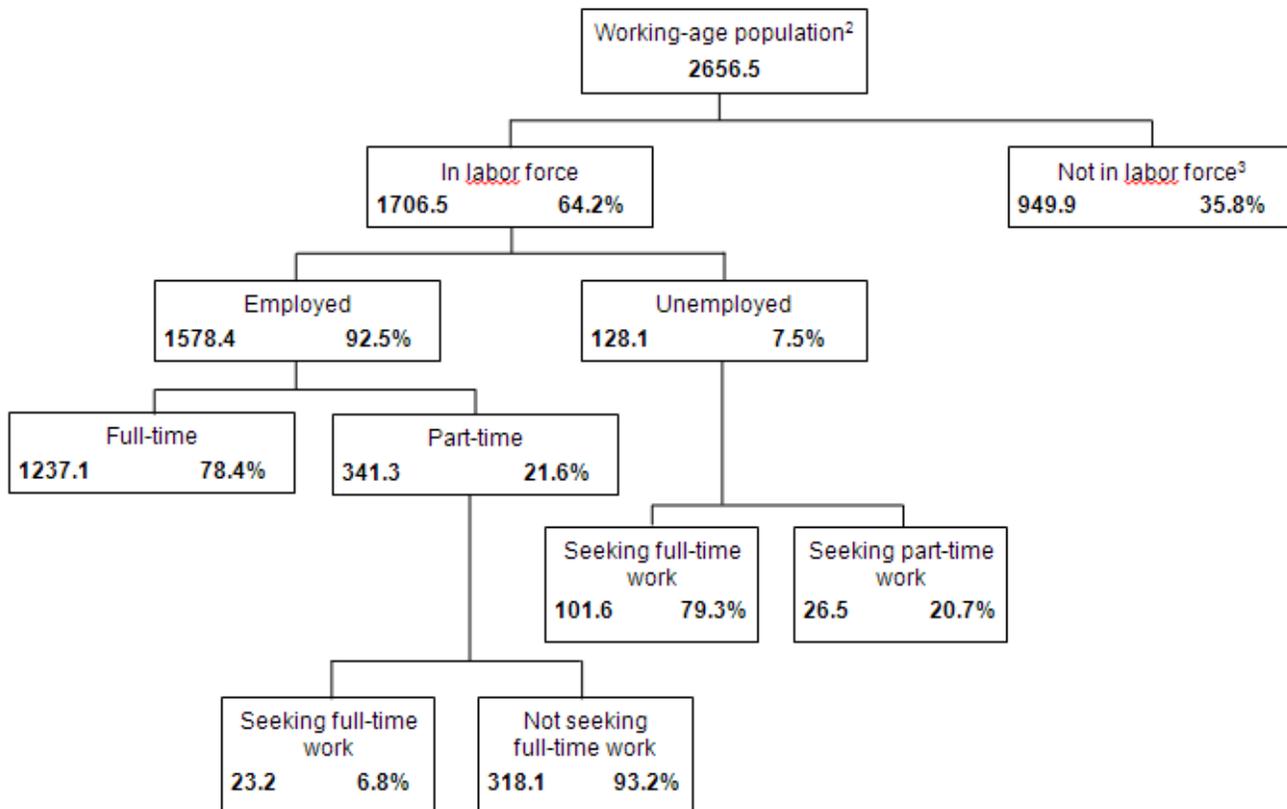
**Percentage of students
answering correctly in
PISA 2000:**

OECD average: 45%
U.S.: 44%

LABOR

The tree diagram below shows the structure of a country's labor force or "working-age population". The total population of the country in 1995 was about 3.4 million.

The Labor Force Structure year ended 31 March 1995 (000s)¹



Notes

1. Numbers of people are given in thousands (000s).
2. The working-age population is defined as people between the ages of 15 and 65.
3. People "Not in labor force" are those not actively seeking work and/or not available for work.

Source: D.Miller, *Form 6 Economics*, ESA Publications, Box 9453, Newmarker, Auckland, NZ, p.64.

Use the information about a country's labor force to answer the questions below.

Question 1: LABOR

R088Q01

Question intent: Integrate and interpret

Text format: Non-continuous

What are the two main groups into which the working-age population is divided?

- A Employed and unemployed.
- B Of working age and not of working age.
- C Full-time workers and part-time workers.
- D In the labor force and not in the labor force.

SCORING:

Correct

Answer D. In the labor force and not in the labor force.

Incorrect

Other responses.

**Percentage of students
answering correctly in
PISA 2000:**

OECD average: 63%
U.S.: 65%

Question 2: LABOR

R088Q03- 0 1 2 9

Question intent: Access and retrieve

Text format: Non-continuous

How many people of working age were not in the labor force? (Write the number of people, not the percentage.)

SCORING:

Fully Correct

Answers which indicate that the number in the tree diagram AND the “000s” in the title/footnote have been integrated: 949,900. Allow approximations 949,000 and 950,000 in figures or words. Also accept 900,000 or one million (in words or figures) with qualifier.

Partially Correct

Answers which indicate that the number in tree diagram has been located, but that the “000s” in the title/footnote have not been correctly integrated. Answers 949.9 in words or figures. Allow approximations comparable to those “Fully Correct”. For example, 949.9; 94,900; almost a thousand; just under 950; about 900; just under 1000.

Incorrect

Other responses.

**Percentage of students
answering correctly in
PISA 2000:**

OECD average: 46%
U.S.: 48%

QUESTION 3: LABOR

R088Q04

Question intent: Integrate and interpret

Text format: Non-continuous

In which part of the tree diagram, if any, would each of the people listed in the table below be included?

The first one has been done for you.

| | "In labor force: employed" | "In labor force: unemployed" | "Not in labor force" | Not included in any category |
|--|-------------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| A part-time waiter, aged 35 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| A business woman, aged 43, who works a sixty-hour week | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| A full-time student, aged 21 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| A man, aged 28, who recently sold his shop and is looking for work | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| A woman, aged 55, who has never worked or wanted to work outside the home | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| A grandmother, aged 80, who still works a few hours a day at the family's market stall | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

SCORING:

| | "In labor force: employed" | "In labor force: unemployed" | "Not in labor force" | Not included in any category |
|--|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| A part-time waiter, aged 35 | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| A business woman, aged 43, who works a sixty-hour week | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| A full-time student, aged 21 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| A man, aged 28, who recently sold his shop and is looking for work | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| A woman, aged 55, who has never worked or wanted to work outside the home | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| A grandmother, aged 80, who still works a few hours a day at the family's market stall | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

Fully Correct

5 correct. See marked boxes.

Partially Correct

3 or 4 correct.

Incorrect

2 or fewer correct.

Percentage of students answering correctly in PISA 2000:

OECD average: 39%
U.S.: 40%

QUESTION 4: LABOR

R088Q05

*Question intent: Reflect and evaluate**Text format: Non-continuous*

Suppose that information about the labor force was presented in a tree diagram like this every year.

Listed below are four features of the tree diagram. Show whether or not you would expect these features to change from year to year, by circling either “Change” or “No change”. The first one has been done for you.

| Features of Tree Diagram | Answer |
|--|---------------------------|
| The labels in each box (e.g. “In labor force”) | Change / <u>No change</u> |
| The percentages (e.g. “64.2%”) | Change / No change |
| The numbers (e.g. “2656.5”) | Change / No change |
| The footnotes under the tree diagram | Change / No change |

SCORING:

| Features of Tree Diagram | Answer |
|--|---------------------------|
| The labels in each box (e.g. “In labor force”) | Change / <u>No change</u> |
| The percentages (e.g. “64.2%”) | <u>Change</u> / No change |
| The numbers (e.g. “2656.5”) | <u>Change</u> / No change |
| The footnotes under the tree diagram | Change / <u>No change</u> |

Reading Literacy

Correct

3 correct. See circled answers.

Incorrect

2 or fewer

**Percentage of students
answering correctly in
PISA 2000:**

OECD average: 69%

U.S.: 67%

QUESTION 5: LABOR

R088Q07

Question intent: Reflect and evaluate

Text format: Non-continuous

The information about the labor force structure is presented as a tree diagram, but it could have been presented in a number of other ways, such as a written description, a pie chart, a graph or a table.

The tree diagram was probably chosen because it is especially useful for showing

- A changes over time.
- B the size of the country's total population.
- C categories within each group.
- D the size of each group.

SCORING:

Correct

Answer C. Categories within each group.

Incorrect

Other responses.

**Percentage of students
answering correctly in
PISA 2000:**

OECD average: 62%
U.S.: 64%

On the next two pages there are two texts. Text 1 is an extract from the play *Léocadia* by Jean Anouilh and Text 2 gives definitions of theatrical occupations. Refer to the texts to answer the questions which follow.

AMANDA AND THE DUCHESS

TEXT 1

AMANDA AND THE DUCHESS

Summary: Since Léocadia's death, the Prince, who was in love with her, has been inconsolable. At a shop called *Réséda Soeurs*, the Duchess, who is the Prince's aunt, has met a young shop assistant, Amanda, who looks amazingly like Léocadia. The Duchess wants Amanda to help her set the Prince free from the memories which haunt him.

A crossroads in the castle grounds, a circular bench around a small obelisk...evening is falling...

AMANDA

I still don't understand. What can I do for him, ma'am? I can't believe you could possibly have thought...And why me? I'm not particularly pretty. And even if someone were very pretty—who could suddenly come between him and his memories like that?

THE DUCHESS

No one but you.

AMANDA, *sincerely surprised*

Me?

THE DUCHESS

The world is so foolish, my child. It sees only parades, gestures, badges of office...that must be why you have never been told. But my heart hasn't deceived me—I almost cried out at *Réséda Soeurs* the first time I saw you. To someone who knew more of her than just her public image, you are the living likeness of Léocadia.

A silence. The evening birds have now taken over from the afternoon birds. The grounds are filled with shadows and twittering.

AMANDA, *very gently*

I really don't think I can, ma'am. I have nothing, I am nothing, and those lovers...that was **my** fancy, don't you see?

She has got up. As if about to leave, she has picked up her small suitcase.

THE DUCHESS, *gently also, and very wearily*
Of course, my dear. I apologize.

She in turn gets up, with difficulty, like an old woman. A bicycle bell is heard in the evening air; she gives a start.

Listen...it's him! Just show yourself to him, leaning against this little obelisk where he first met her. Let him see you, even if it's just this once, let him call out, take a sudden interest in this likeness, in this stratagem which I shall confess to him tomorrow and for which he will hate me—in anything but this dead girl who'll take him away from me one of these days, I'm sure...*(She has taken her by the arm.)* You will do that, won't you? I beg you most humbly, young lady. *(She looks at her, beseechingly, and quickly adds:)* And then, that way, you'll see him too. And...I can feel that I'm blushing again from saying this to you—life is just too mad! That's the third time I've blushed in sixty years, and the second time in ten minutes—you'll see him; and if he could ever (why not him, since he's handsome and charming and he wouldn't be the first?) if he could ever have the good fortune, for himself and for me, to take your fancy for one moment...*The bell again in the shadows, but very close now.*

AMANDA, *in a whisper*

What should I say to him?

Reading Literacy

THE DUCHESS, *gripping her arm*

Simply say: "Excuse me, Sir, can you tell me the way to the sea?"

She has hurried into the deeper shadows of the trees. Just in time. There is a pale blur. It is the Prince on his bicycle. He passes very close to the pale blur of Amanda by the obelisk. She murmurs.

AMANDA

Excuse me, Sir...

He stops, dismounts from the bicycle, takes off his hat and looks at her.

THE PRINCE

Yes?

AMANDA

Can you tell me the way to the sea?

THE PRINCE

Take the second turning on your left.

He bows, sadly and courteously, gets back on the bicycle and rides away. The bell is heard

again in the distance. The Duchess comes out of the shadows, very much an old woman.

AMANDA, *gently, after a while*

He didn't recognize me...

THE DUCHESS

It was dark...And then, who knows what face he gives her now, in his dreams? (*She asks timidly:*) The last train has gone, young lady. In any case, wouldn't you like to stay at the castle tonight?

AMANDA, *in a strange voice*

Yes, ma'am.

It is completely dark. The two of them can no longer be seen in the shadows, and only the wind can be heard in the huge trees of the grounds.

THE CURTAIN FALLS

Source: Jean ANOUILH, *Léocadia* (end of Scene II). Published by LA TABLE RONDE, 1984

TEXT 2

DEFINITIONS OF SOME THEATRICAL OCCUPATIONS

Actor: plays a character on stage.

Director: controls and oversees all aspects of a play. He not only positions the actors, arranges their entrances and exits and directs their acting, but also suggests how the script is to be interpreted.

Wardrobe staff: produce the costumes from a model.

Set designer: designs models of the sets and costumes. These models are then transformed into their full size in the workshop.

Props manager: in charge of finding the required props. The word “props” is used to mean everything that can be moved: armchairs, letters, lamps, bunches of flowers, etc. The sets and costumes are not props.

Sound technician: in charge of all sound effects required for the production. He is at the controls during the show.

Lighting assistant or lighting technician: in charge of lighting. He is also at the controls during the show. Lighting is so sophisticated that a well-equipped theatre can employ up to ten lighting technicians.

Question 1: AMANDA AND THE DUCHESS

R216Q01

Question intent: Interpreting text

Text format: Continuous

What is this extract from the play about?

The Duchess thinks of a trick

- A to get the Prince to come and see her more often.
- B to get the Prince to make up his mind finally to get married.
- C to get Amanda to make the Prince forget his grief.
- D to get Amanda to come and live at the castle with her.

SCORING:

Correct

Answer C. to get Amanda to make the Prince forget his grief.

Incorrect

Other responses.

**Percentage of students
answering correctly in
PISA 2000:**

OECD average: 74%
U.S.: 66%

Question 2: AMANDA AND THE DUCHESS

R216Q02- 0 1 9

Question intent: Reflect and evaluate

Text format: Continuous

In the script of the play, in addition to the words to be spoken by the actors, there are directions for the actors and theatre technicians to follow.

How can these directions be recognized in the script?

SCORING:

Correct

Answers which refer to italics. Allow non-technical descriptions. May mention parentheses as well as italics.

Incorrect

Answers which show inaccurate comprehension of the material or are implausible or irrelevant.

**Percentage of students
answering correctly in
PISA 2000:**

OECD average: 45%
U.S.: 48%

Question 3: AMANDA AND THE DUCHESS

R216Q03A-019

R216Q03B-019

R216Q03C-019

*Question intent: Integrate and interpret**Text format: Non-continuous*

The table below lists theatre technicians involved in staging this extract from *Léocadia*. Complete the table by indicating one stage direction from TEXT 1 which would require the involvement of each technician.

The first one has been done for you.

| Theatre technicians | Stage direction |
|----------------------------|---|
| Set designer | A circular bench around a small obelisk |
| Props manager | |
| Sound technician | |
| Lighting technician | |

SCORING:**Props Manager*****Correct***

Answers which indicate suitcase OR bicycle. May quote a phrase from the stage directions.

Incorrect

Other responses.

Reading Literacy

Sound technician

Correct

Answers which indicate bird song OR (evening) birds OR twittering OR bicycle bell OR wind OR silence. May quote a phrase from the stage directions.

Incorrect

Other responses.

Lighting technician

Correct

Indicates shadows OR pale blur OR [completely] dark OR evening

Incorrect

Other responses.

**Percentage of students
answering correctly in
PISA 2000:**

OECD average: 44%
U.S.: 44%

Question 4: AMANDA AND THE DUCHESS

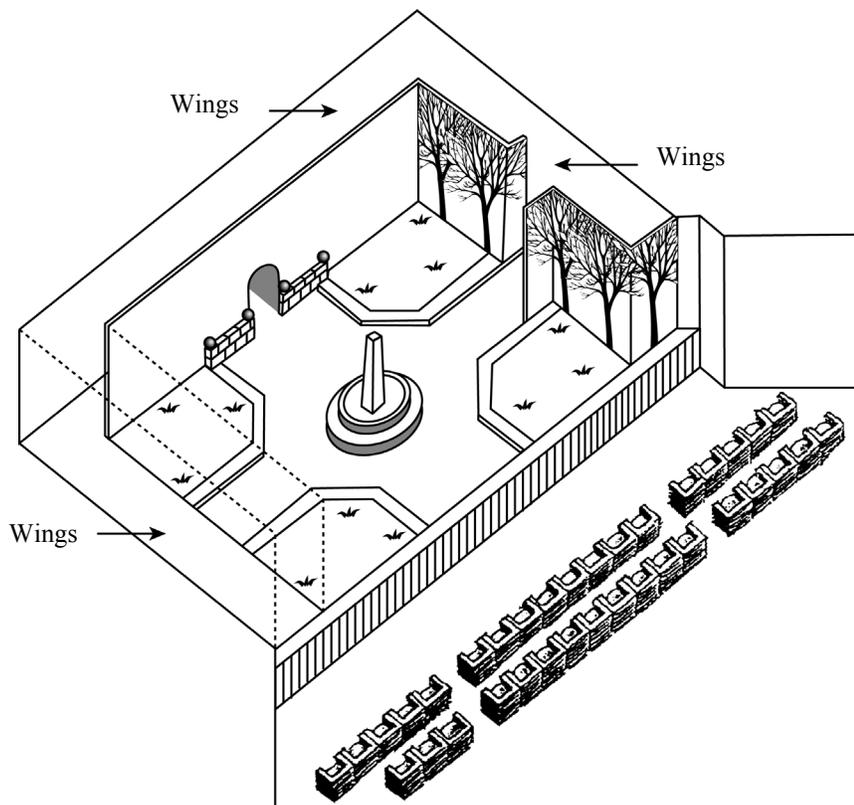
R216Q04- 0 1 9

Question intent: Access and retrieve

Text format: Continuous

The director positions the actors on the stage. On a diagram, the director represents Amanda with the letter A and the Duchess with the letter D.

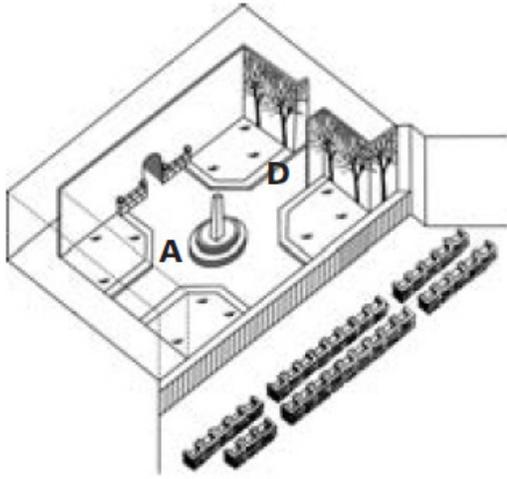
Put an A and a D on the following diagram of the set to show approximately where Amanda and the Duchess are when the Prince arrives.



SCORING:

Correct

Marks A by the obelisk and D behind or near the trees.



Incorrect

Other responses.

**Percentage of students
answering correctly in
PISA 2000:**

OECD average: 37%
U.S.: 28%

Question 5: AMANDA AND THE DUCHESS

R216Q06

Question intent: Integrate and interpret

Text format: Continuous

Towards the end of the extract from the play, Amanda says, “He didn’t recognize me...”.

What does she mean by that?

- A That the Prince didn’t look at Amanda.
- B That the Prince didn’t realize that Amanda was a shop assistant.
- C That the Prince didn’t realize that he’d already met Amanda.
- D That the Prince didn’t notice that Amanda looked like Léocadia.

SCORING:

Correct

Answer D. That the Prince didn’t notice that Amanda looked like Léocadia.

Incorrect

Other responses.

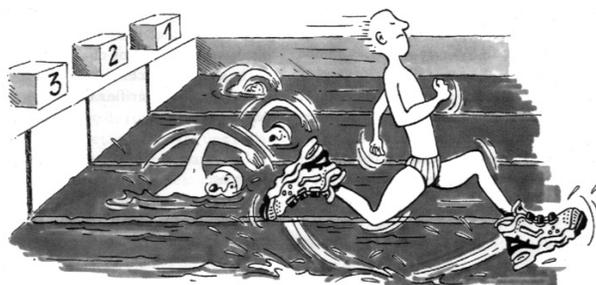
| |
|--|
| <p>Percentage of students answering correctly in PISA 2000:</p> |
|--|

| |
|--|
| <p>OECD average: 67% U.S.: 61%</p> |
|--|

RUNNERS

Feel Good in your Runners

For 14 years the Sports Medicine Centre of Lyon (France) has been studying the injuries of young sports players and sports professionals. The study has established that the best course is prevention ... and good shoes.



Knocks, falls, wear and tear...

Eighteen percent of sports players aged 8 to 12 already have heel injuries. The cartilage of a footballer's ankle does not respond well to shocks, and 25% of professionals have discovered for themselves that it is an especially weak point. The cartilage of the delicate knee joint can also be irreparably damaged and if care is not taken right from childhood (10–12 years of age), this can cause premature osteoarthritis. The hip does not escape damage either and, particularly when tired, players run the risk of fractures as a result of falls or collisions.

According to the study, footballers who have been playing for more than ten years have bony outgrowths either on the tibia or on the heel. This is what is known as "footballer's foot", a deformity caused by shoes with soles and ankle parts that are too flexible.

Protect, support, stabilize, absorb

If a shoe is too rigid, it restricts movement. If it is too flexible, it increases the risk of injuries and sprains. A good sports shoe should meet four criteria:

Firstly, it must *provide exterior protection*: resisting knocks from the ball or another player, coping with unevenness in the ground, and keeping the foot warm and dry even when it is freezing cold and raining.

It must *support the foot*, and in particular the ankle joint, to avoid sprains, swelling and other problems, which may even affect the knee.

It must also provide players with good *stability* so that they do not slip on a wet ground or skid on a surface that is too dry.

Finally, it must *absorb shocks*, especially those suffered by volleyball and basketball players who are constantly jumping.

Dry feet

To avoid minor but painful conditions such as blisters or even splits or athlete's foot (fungal infections), the shoe must allow evaporation of perspiration and must prevent outside dampness from getting in. The ideal material for this is leather, which can be water-proofed to prevent the shoe from getting soaked the first time it rains.

Use the article above to answer the questions below.

Question 1: RUNNERS

R110Q01

Question intent: Integrate and interpret

Text format: Continuous

What does the author intend to show in this text?

- A That the quality of many sports shoes has greatly improved.
- B That it is best not to play football if you are under 12 years of age.
- C That young people are suffering more and more injuries due to their poor physical condition.
- D That it is very important for young sports players to wear good sports shoes.

SCORING:

Correct

Answer D. That it is very important for young sports players to wear good sports shoes.

Incorrect

Other responses.

**Percentage of students
answering correctly in
PISA 2000:**

OECD average: 85%
U.S.: 77%

Question 2: RUNNERS

R110Q04- 0 1 9

Question intent: Access and retrieve

Text format: Continuous

According to the article, why should sports shoes not be too rigid?

SCORING:

Correct

Answers which refer to restriction of movement.

Incorrect

Answers which show inaccurate comprehension of the material or are implausible or irrelevant.

**Percentage of students
answering correctly in
PISA 2000:**

OECD average: 79%
U.S.: 74%

Question 3: RUNNERS

R110Q05- 0 1 9

Question intent: Access and retrieve

Text format: Continuous

One part of the article says, "A good sports shoe should meet four criteria."

What are these criteria?

SCORING:

Correct

Answers which refer to the four criteria in italics in the text. Each reference may be a direct quotation, a paraphrase or an elaboration of the criterion. Criteria may be given in any order. The four criteria are:

1. *To provide exterior protection*
2. *To support the foot*
3. *To provide good stability*
4. *To absorb shocks*

Incorrect

Other responses.

**Percentage of students
answering correctly in
PISA 2000:**

OECD average: 76%
U.S.: 78%

Question 4: RUNNERS

R110Q06

Question intent: Reflect and evaluate

Text format: Continuous

Look at this sentence from near the end of the article. It is presented here in two parts:

“To avoid minor but painful conditions such as blisters or even splits or athlete’s foot (fungal infections),...” *(first part)*

“...the shoe must allow evaporation of perspiration and must prevent outside dampness from getting in.” *(second part)*

What is the relationship between the first and second parts of the sentence?

The second part

- A contradicts the first part.
- B repeats the first part.
- C illustrates the problem described in the first part.
- D gives the solution to the problem described in the first part.

SCORING:

Correct

Answer D. Gives the solution to the problem described in the first part.

Incorrect

Other responses.

| |
|--|
| <p>Percentage of students answering correctly in PISA 2000:</p> <p>OECD average: 78%</p> <p>U.S.: 78%</p> |
|--|

NEW RULES

EDITORIAL

Technology creates the need for new rules

SCIENCE has a way of getting ahead of law and ethics. That happened dramatically in 1945 on the destructive side of life with the atomic bomb, and is now happening on life's creative side with techniques to overcome human infertility.

Most of us rejoiced with the Brown family in England when Louise, the first test-tube baby, was born. And we have marveled at other firsts — most recently the births of healthy babies that had once been embryos frozen to await the proper moment of implantation in the mother-to-be.

It is about two such frozen embryos in Australia that a storm of legal and ethical questions has arisen. The embryos were destined to be implanted in Elsa Rios, wife of Mario Rios. A previous embryo implant had been unsuccessful, and the Rioses wanted to have another chance at becoming parents. But before they had a second chance to try, the Rioses perished in an airplane crash.

What was the Australian hospital to do with the frozen embryos? Could they be implanted in someone else? There were numerous volunteers. Were the embryos somehow entitled to the Rioses' substantial estate? Or should the embryos be destroyed? The Rioses, understandably, had made no provision for the embryos' future.

The Australians set up a commission to study the matter. Last week, the commission made its report. The embryos should be thawed, the panel said, because donation of embryos to someone

else would require the consent of the "producers," and no such consent had been given. The panel also held that the embryos in their present state had no life or rights and thus could be destroyed.

The commission members were conscious of treading on slippery legal and ethical grounds. Therefore, they urged that three months be allowed for public opinion to respond to the commission recommendation. Should there be an overwhelming outcry against destroying the embryos, the commission would reconsider.

Couples now enrolling in Sydney's Queen Victoria hospital for in vitro fertilization programs must specify what should be done with the embryos if something happens to them.

This assures that a situation similar to the Rioses won't recur. But what of other complex questions? In France, a woman recently had to go to court to be allowed to bear a child from her deceased husband's frozen sperm. How should such a request be handled? What should be done if a surrogate mother breaks her child-bearing contract and refuses to give up the infant she had promised to bear for someone else?

Our society has failed so far to come up with enforceable rules for curbing the destructive potential of atomic power. We are reaping the nightmarish harvest for that failure. The possibilities of misuse of scientists' ability to advance or retard procreation are manifold. Ethical and legal boundaries need to be set before we stray too far.

Use the newspaper editorial "Technology creates the need for new rules" above to answer the questions below.

Question 1: NEW RULES

R236Q01- 0 1 9

Question intent: Integrate and interpret

Text format: Continuous

Underline the sentence that explains what the Australians did to help decide how to deal with the frozen embryos belonging to a couple killed in the plane crash.

SCORING:

Correct

Answers which underline OR circle the sentence OR a part of the sentence that contains at least ONE of the following:

1. "set up a commission"
2. "three months be allowed for public opinion to respond to the commission recommendation...."

Incorrect

Other responses.

**Percentage of students
answering correctly in
PISA 2000:**

OECD average: 48%
U.S.: 41%

Question 2: NEW RULES

R236Q02- 0 1 2 9

Question intent: Integrate and interpret

Text format: Continuous

List two examples from the editorial that illustrate how modern technology, such as that used for implanting frozen embryos, creates the need for new rules.

SCORING:

Correct

Answers which mention at least TWO of the following:

1. When the Rioses died, there was a controversy over what was to be done with the embryos. [Don't accept controversies in paragraph 4 (e.g., "What was the hospital to do with the frozen embryos?" "Were the embryos entitled to the estate?") unless the respondent explicitly links these controversies to the death of the embryo donors (the Rioses).]
2. A woman in France had to go to court to be allowed to use her deceased husband's sperm.
3. What should the rules be for a surrogate mother who refused to give up the infant she bore?

OR

Mentions ONE of the examples given above relating to bio-technology ((1), (2) or (3)) AND (the destructive potential of) atomic power.

Incorrect

Other responses.

**Percentage of students
answering correctly in
PISA 2000:**

OECD average: 25%
U.S.: 22%

PERSONNEL

CANCO

CANCO Manufacturing Company
Personnel Department

Center on Internal and External Mobility

What is CIEM?

CIEM stands for Center on Internal and External Mobility, an initiative of the personnel department. A number of workers of this department work in CIEM, together with members from other departments and outside career consultants.

CIEM is available to help employees in their search for another job inside or outside the Canco Manufacturing Company.

What does CIEM do?

CIEM supports employees who are seriously considering other work through the following activities:

- ***Job Data Bank***

After an interview with the employee, information is entered into a data bank that tracks job seekers and job openings at Canco and at other manufacturing companies.

- ***Guidance***

The employee's potential is explored through career counseling discussions.

- ***Courses***

Courses are being organized (in collaboration with the department for information and training) that will deal with job search and career planning.

- ***Career Change Projects***

CIEM supports and coordinates projects to help employees prepare for new careers and new perspectives.

- ***Mediation***

CIEM acts as a mediator for employees who are threatened with dismissal resulting from reorganization, and assists with finding new positions when necessary.

How much does CIEM cost?

Payment is determined in consultation with the department where you work. A number of services of CIEM are free. You may also be asked to pay, either in money or in time.

How does CIEM work?

CIEM assists employees who are seriously considering another job within or outside the company.

That process begins by submitting an application. A discussion with a personnel counselor can also be useful. It is obvious that you should talk with the counselor first about your wishes and the internal possibilities regarding your career. The counselor is familiar with your abilities and with developments within your unit.

Contact with CIEM in any case is made via the personnel counselor. He or she handles the application for you, after which you are invited to a discussion with a CIEM representative.

For more information

The personnel department can give you more information.

Use the announcement from a personnel department above to answer the questions below.

Question 1: PERSONNEL

R234Q01- 0 1 9

Question intent: Access and retrieve

Text format: Continuous

According to the announcement, where could you get more information about CIEM?

SCORING:

Correct

Answers which mention at least ONE of the following:

From the personnel department
From the personnel counsellor

Incorrect

Other responses.

**Percentage of students
answering correctly in
PISA 2000:**

OECD average: 86%
U.S.: 92%

Question 2: PERSONNEL

R234Q02- 0 1 9

Question intent: Access and retrieve

Text format: Continuous

List two ways in which CIEM helps people who will lose their jobs because of a departmental reorganization.

SCORING:

Correct

Mentions BOTH of the following:

1. They act as a mediator for employees OR mediation
2. They assist with finding new positions. *[Don't accept: "Job Data Bank", "Guidance", "Courses", or "Career Change Projects".]*

Incorrect

Other responses.

**Percentage of students
answering correctly in
PISA 2000:**

OECD average: 31%
U.S.: 26%

CELL PHONE SAFETY

Are cell phones dangerous?

Key Point

Conflicting reports about the health risks of cell phones appeared in the late 1990s.

Key Point

Millions of dollars have now been invested in scientific research to investigate the effects of cell phones.

| Yes | No |
|--|--|
| 1. Radio waves given off by cell phones can heat up body tissue, having damaging effects. | Radio waves are not powerful enough to cause heat damage to the body. |
| 2. Magnetic fields created by cell phones can affect the way that your body cells work. | The magnetic fields are incredibly weak, and so unlikely to affect cells in our body. |
| 3. People who make long cell phone calls sometimes complain of fatigue, headaches, and loss of concentration. | These effects have never been observed under laboratory conditions and may be due to other factors in modern lifestyles. |
| 4. Cell phone users are 2.5 times more likely to develop cancer in areas of the brain adjacent to their phone ears. | Researchers admit it's unclear this increase is linked to using cell phones. |
| 5. The International Agency for Research on Cancer found a link between childhood cancer and power lines. Like cell phones, power lines also emit radiation. | The radiation produced by power lines is a different kind of radiation, with much more energy than that coming from cell phones. |
| 6. Radio frequency waves similar to those in cell phones altered the gene expression in nematode worms. | Worms are not humans, so there is no guarantee that our brain cells will react in the same way. |

If you use a cell phone ...

Key Point

Given the immense numbers of cell phone users, even small adverse effects on health could have major public health implications.

Key Point

In 2000, the Stewart Report (a British report) found no known health problems caused by cell phones, but advised caution, especially among the young, until more research was carried out. A further report in 2004 backed this up.

Do

Keep the calls short.

Carry the cell phone away from your body when it is on standby.

Buy a cell phone with a long "talk time". It is more efficient, and has less powerful emissions.

Don't

Don't use your cell phone when the reception is weak, as the phone needs more power to communicate with the base station, and so the radio-wave emissions are higher.

Don't buy a cell phone with a high "SAR" value¹. This means that it emits more radiation.

Don't buy protective gadgets unless they have been independently tested.

¹ SAR (specific absorption rate) is a measurement of how much electromagnetic radiation is absorbed by body tissue whilst using a cell phone.

“Cell Phone Safety” on the previous two pages is from a website.

Use “Cell Phone Safety” to answer the questions that follow.

Question 1: CELL PHONE SAFETY

R414Q02

Question intent: Integrate and interpret

Text format: Non-continuous

What is the purpose of the **Key points**?

- A To describe the dangers of using cell phones.
- B To suggest that debate about cell phone safety is ongoing.
- C To describe the precautions that people who use cell phones should take.
- D To suggest that there are no known health problems caused by cell phones.

SCORING:

Correct

Answer B. To suggest that debate about mobile phone safety is ongoing.

Incorrect

Other responses.

**Percentage of students
answering correctly in
PISA 2009:**

OECD average: 46%
U.S.: 49%

Question 2: CELL PHONE SAFETY

R414Q11

Question intent: Reflect and evaluate

Text format: Non-continuous

“It is difficult to prove that one thing has definitely caused another.”

What is the relationship of this piece of information to the Point 4 **Yes** and **No** statements in the table **Are cell phones dangerous?**

- A It supports the Yes argument but does not prove it.
- B It proves the Yes argument.
- C It supports the No argument but does not prove it.
- D It shows that the No argument is wrong.

SCORING:

Correct

Answer C. It supports the No argument but does not prove it.

Incorrect

Other responses.

**Percentage of students
answering correctly in
PISA 2009:**

OECD average: 36%
U.S.: 43%

Question 3: CELL PHONE SAFETY

R414Q06 – 0 1 9

Question intent: Reflect and evaluate

Text format: Non-continuous

Look at Point 3 in the **No** column of the table. In this context, what might one of these “other factors” be? Give a reason for your answer.

.....

SCORING:

Correct

Answers which identify a factor in modern lifestyles that could be related to fatigue, headaches, or loss of concentration. The explanation may be self-evident, or explicitly stated.

Incorrect

Answers which give an insufficient or vague response.

Fatigue. *[Repeats information in the text.]*

Tiredness. *[Repeats information in the text.]*

Answers which show inaccurate comprehension of the material or are implausible or irrelevant.

**Percentage of students
answering correctly in
PISA 2009:**

OECD average: 55%

U.S.: 53%

Question 4: CELL PHONE SAFETY

R414Q09

Question intent: Integrate and interpret

Text format: Non-continuous

Look at the table with the heading **If you use a cell phone ...**

Which of these ideas is the table based on?

- A There is no danger involved in using cell phones.
- B There is a proven risk involved in using cell phones.
- C There may or may not be danger involved in using cell phones, but it is worth taking precautions.
- D There may or may not be danger involved in using cell phones, but they should not be used until we know for sure.
- E The **Do** instructions are for those who take the threat seriously, and the **Don't** instructions are for everyone else.

SCORING:

Correct

Answer C. There may or may not be danger involved in using cell phones, but it is worth taking precautions.

Incorrect

Other responses.

**Percentage of students
answering correctly in
PISA 2009:**

OECD average: 63%
U.S.: 70%

THE PLAY'S THE THING

Takes place in a castle by the beach in Italy.

FIRST ACT

Ornate guest room in a very nice beachside castle. Doors on the right and left. Sitting room set in the middle of the stage: couch, table, and two armchairs. Large windows at the back. Starry night. It is dark on the stage. When the curtain goes up we hear men conversing loudly behind the door on the left. The door opens and three tuxedoed gentlemen enter. One turns the light on immediately. They walk to the center in silence and stand around the table. They sit down together, Gál in the armchair to the left, Turai in the one on the right, Ádám on the couch in the middle. Very long, almost awkward silence. Comfortable stretches. Silence. Then:

GÁL

Why are you so deep in thought?

TURAI

I'm thinking about how difficult it is to begin a play. To introduce all the principal characters in the beginning, when it all starts.

ÁDÁM

I suppose it must be hard.

TURAI

It is – devilishly hard. The play starts. The audience goes quiet. The actors enter the stage and the torment begins. It's an eternity, sometimes as much as a quarter of an hour before the audience finds out who's who and what they are all up to.

GÁL

Quite a peculiar brain you've got. Can't you forget your profession for a single minute?

TURAI

That cannot be done.

GÁL

Not half an hour passes without you discussing theatre, actors, plays. There are other things in this world.

TURAI

There aren't. I am a dramatist. That is my curse.

GÁL

You shouldn't become such a slave to your profession.

TURAI

If you do not master it, you are its slave. There is no middle ground. Trust me, it's no joke starting a play well. It is one of the toughest problems of stage mechanics. Introducing your characters promptly. Let's look at this scene here, the three of us. Three gentlemen in tuxedos. Say they enter not this room in this lordly castle, but rather a stage, just when a play begins. They would have to chat about a whole lot of uninteresting topics until it came out who we are. Wouldn't it be much easier to start all this by standing up and introducing ourselves? *Stands up.* Good evening. The three of us are guests in this castle. We have just arrived from the dining room where we had an excellent dinner and drank two bottles of champagne. My name is Sándor Turai, I'm a playwright, I've been writing plays for thirty years, that's my profession. Full stop. Your turn.

GÁL

Stands up. My name is Gál, I'm also a playwright. I write plays as well, all of them in the company of this gentleman here. We are a famous playwright duo. All playbills of good comedies and operettas read: written by Gál and Turai. Naturally, this is my profession as well.

GÁL and TURAI

Together. And this young man ...

ÁDÁM

Stands up. This young man is, if you allow me, Albert Ádám, twenty-five years old, composer. I wrote the music for these kind gentlemen for their latest operetta. This is my first work for the stage. These two elderly angels have discovered me and now, with their help, I'd like to become famous. They got me invited to this castle. They got my dress-coat and tuxedo made. In other words, I am poor and unknown, for now. Other than that I'm an orphan and my grandmother raised me. My grandmother has passed away. I am all alone in this world. I have no name, I have no money.

TURAI

But you are young.

GÁL

And gifted.

ÁDÁM

And I am in love with the soloist.

TURAI

You shouldn't have added that. Everyone in the audience would figure that out anyway.

They all sit down.

TURAI

Now wouldn't this be the easiest way to start a play?

GÁL

If we were allowed to do this, it would be easy to write plays.

TURAI

Trust me, it's not that hard. Just think of this whole thing as ...

GÁL

All right, all right, all right, just don't start talking about the theatre again. I'm fed up with it. We'll talk tomorrow, if you wish.

“The Play’s the Thing” is the beginning of a play by the Hungarian dramatist Ferenc Molnár.

Use “The Play’s the Thing” on the previous two pages to answer the questions that follow. (Note that line numbers are given in the margin of the script to help you find parts that are referred to in the questions.)

Question 1: THE PLAY’S THE THING

R452Q03 – 0 1 9

Question intent: Access and retrieve

Text format: Continuous

What were the characters in the play doing **just before** the curtain went up?

SCORING:

Correct

Answer which refer to dinner or drinking champagne. May paraphrase or quote the text directly.

They have just had dinner and champagne.

“We have just arrived from the dining room where we had an excellent dinner.” *[direct quotation]*

“An excellent dinner and drank two bottles of champagne.” *[direct quotation]*

Incorrect

Answers which give an insufficient or vague response, show inaccurate comprehension of the material, or are implausible or irrelevant.

**Percentage of students
answering correctly in
PISA 2009:**

OECD average: 13%

U.S.: 13%

Question 2: THE PLAY’S THE THING

R452Q04

Question intent: Integrate and interpret

Text format: Continuous

“It’s an eternity, sometimes as much as a quarter of an hour ... ” (lines 29-30)

According to Turai, why is a quarter of an hour “an eternity”?

- A It is a long time to expect an audience to sit still in a crowded theatre.
- B It seems to take forever for the situation to be clarified at the beginning of a play.
- C It always seems to take a long time for a dramatist to write the beginning of a play.
- D It seems that time moves slowly when a significant event is happening in a play.

SCORING:

Correct

Answer B. It seems to take forever for the situation to be clarified at the beginning of a play.

Incorrect

Other responses.

**Percentage of students
answering correctly in
PISA 2009:**

OECD average: 66%
U.S.: 62%

Question 3: THE PLAY'S THE THING

R452Q06 – 019

*Question intent: Integrate and interpret**Text format: Continuous*

A reader said, “Ádám is probably the most excited of the three characters about staying at the castle.”

What could the reader say to support this opinion? Use the text to give a reason for your answer.

SCORING:**Correct**

Indicates a contrast between Ádám and the other two characters by referring to one or more of the following: Ádám’s status as the poorest or youngest of the three characters; his inexperience (as a celebrity).

- Ádám is poor, he must be excited to stay at a fancy castle.
- He must be happy to be with the two guys who can make him famous.
- He is writing music with two really famous people.
- He is young, and young people just get more excited about things, it’s a fact!
- He’s young to stay at the castle. *[minimal]*
- He has the least experience. *[minimal]*

Incorrect

Answers which give an insufficient or vague response.

- He is excited. *[Repeats stem.]*

Answers which show inaccurate comprehension of the material or give an implausible or irrelevant response.

- He is an artist.
- He has fallen in love. *[not an explanation of why he is excited to be staying at the castle]*
- Ádám must be excited; surely the soloist will show up. *[no support in the text]*
- He has been given a tuxedo. *[an explanatory detail, not the reason itself]*

**Percentage of students
answering correctly in
PISA 2009:**

OECD average: 50%
U.S.: 55%

Question 4: THE PLAY'S THE THING

R452Q07

Question intent: Integrate and interpret

Text format: Continuous

Overall, what is the dramatist Molnár doing in this extract?

- A He is showing the way that each character will solve his own problems.
- B He is making his characters demonstrate what an eternity in a play is like.
- C He is giving an example of a typical and traditional opening scene for a play.
- D He is using the characters to act out one of his own creative problems.

SCORING:

Correct

Answer D. He is using the characters to act out one of his own creative problems.

Incorrect

Other responses.

**Percentage of students
answering correctly in
PISA 2009:**

OECD average: 46%
U.S.: 44%

TELECOMMUTING

The way of the future

Just imagine how wonderful it would be to “telecommute”¹ to work on the electronic highway, with all your work done on a computer or by phone! No longer would you have to jam your body into crowded buses or trains or waste hours and hours travelling to and from work. You could work wherever you want to – just think of all the job opportunities this would open up!

Molly

Disaster in the making

Cutting down on commuting hours and reducing the energy consumption involved is obviously a good idea. But such a goal should be accomplished by improving public transportation or by ensuring that workplaces are located near where people live. The ambitious idea that telecommuting should be part of everyone’s way of life will only lead people to become more and more self-absorbed. Do we really want our sense of being part of a community to deteriorate even further?

Richard

¹ “Telecommuting” is a term coined by Jack Nilles in the early 1970s to describe a situation in which workers work on a computer away from a central office (for example, at home) and transmit data and documents to the central office via telephone lines.

Use “Telecommuting” above to answer the questions that follow.

Question 1: TELECOMMUTING

R458Q01

Question intent: Integrate and interpret

Text format: Multiple

What is the relationship between “The way of the future” and “Disaster in the making”?

- A They use different arguments to reach the same general conclusion.
- B They are written in the same style but they are about completely different topics.
- C They express the same general point of view, but arrive at different conclusions.
- D They express opposing points of view on the same topic.

SCORING:

Correct

Answer D. They express opposing points of view on the same topic.

Incorrect

Other responses.

**Percentage of students
answering correctly in
PISA 2009:**

OECD average: 52%
U.S.: 55%

Question 2: TELECOMMUTING

R458Q07 – 0 1 9

*Question intent: Reflect and evaluate**Text format: Continuous*

What is one kind of work for which it would be difficult to telecommute? Give a reason for your answer.

SCORING:***Correct***

Answers which identify a kind of work and give a plausible explanation as to why a person who does that kind of work could not telecommute. Responses **MUST** indicate (explicitly or implicitly) that it is necessary to be physically present for the specific work.

- Building. It's hard to work with the wood and bricks from just anywhere.
- Sportsperson. You need to really be there to play the sport.
- Plumber. You can't fix someone else's sink from your home!
- Digging ditches because you need to be there.
- Nursing – it's hard to check if patients are ok over the Internet.

Incorrect

Answers which identify a kind of work but include no explanation OR provide an explanation that does not relate to telecommuting.

- Digging ditches.
- Fire fighter.
- Student.
- Digging ditches because it would be hard work. [Explanation does not show why this would make it difficult to telecommute.]
- Gives an insufficient or vague response.
 - You need to be there.
- Shows inaccurate comprehension of the material or gives an implausible or irrelevant response.
 - Manager. No-one takes any notice of you anyway. [*irrelevant explanation*]

**Percentage of students
answering correctly in
PISA 2009:**

OECD average: 56%
U.S.: 60%

Question 3: TELECOMMUTING

R458Q04

Question intent: Integrate and interpret

Text format: Multiple

Which statement would **both** Molly and Richard agree with?

- A People should be allowed to work for as many hours as they want to.
- B It is not a good idea for people to spend too much time getting to work.
- C Telecommuting would not work for everyone.
- D Forming social relationships is the most important part of work.

SCORING:

Correct

Answer B. It is not a good idea for people to spend too much time getting to work.

Incorrect

Other responses.

**Percentage of students
answering correctly in
PISA 2009:**

OECD average: 60%
U.S.: 52%