

Teaching Notes

Critical Reading

Overview

The twenty-four transparencies that follow provide a variety of activities designed to give students practice with reading passages and exercises similar to those found on the SAT and on state-specific tests.

Types of Items

- **Sentence Completion.** Students are directed to read short sentences and choose appropriate answers to complete the ideas presented in the sentences.
- **Passage Completion.** Students are directed to read a paragraph-length passage and choose words or phrases that will complete the ideas presented in the passage.
- **Passage Analysis.** Students are directed to read a passage and answer two questions related to the ideas in the passage. The activity includes one or more of the following types of questions—**main idea** questions, **detail** questions, **logic** questions, **inference** questions, **tone** questions, **rhetoric** questions, and **vocabulary** questions.

Answers

Answers are provided for your convenience on the transparencies.

- Present students with a strategy: Suggest that they guess the missing word or words before looking at the choices.
- These three items all contain words or phrases that signal **contrast**.
- Answers: 1 D, 2 D, 3 A.

Critical Reading: Sentence Completions

DIRECTIONS

- Read each sentence, and think about its main idea. Look for key words or phrases that signal contrast, such as *but*, *although*, and *however*.
- Select the word or set of words that best completes each sentence. Then, explain your choice.

- 1 Some people predict that the most stunning achievements in the next few years will be in global communication and commerce, but _____ believe advances in the study of the brain will be even greater.

A the media

D others

B natives

E veterinarians

C athletes

- 2 Although many law enforcement officials _____ that lie detectors are accurate 75 percent of the time, most courts will not _____ the use of polygraph evidence.

A deny ... comprehend

D affirm ... allow

B predict ... modify

E sustain ... maintain

C misconstrue ... necessitate

- 3 Traditionally, mountain lions _____ human beings and were rarely seen; in recent years, however, they have become less _____ to approach people.

A avoided ... reluctant

D shunned ... eager

B attacked ... eager

E abhorred ... determined

C tolerated ... liable

- Present students with a strategy: Suggest that they look for clues to the meanings of the missing words.
- These three items all contain words or phrases that signal **comparison**.
- Answers: 1 C, 2 D, 3 E.

Critical Reading: Sentence Completions

DIRECTIONS

- Read each sentence, and think about its main idea. Look for key words or phrases that signal comparison, such as *just as*, *like*, and *as ... as*.
- Select the word or set of words that best completes each sentence. Then, explain your choice.

1 A quilt can be made out of bits of cloth, just as a _____ of songs from the past can be put together.

A quorum

D collateral

B perspective

E intonation

C medley

2 The fact that they had not been promoted _____ the officers; consequently, like villains from spy movies, they _____ sold military secrets.

A contented ... parasitically

D upset ... treacherously

B intimidated ... influentially

E flustered ... respectably

C worried ... resolutely

3 The new mall may have as _____ an effect on existing retail stores as a devastating earthquake, forcing merchants to re-evaluate whether or not their businesses are _____.

A radical ... benign

D incompatible ... premature

B perceptible ... restored

E catastrophic ... workable

C applicable ... animated

- Present students with a strategy: Suggest that they use context clues to guess the meanings of the missing words.
- These three items all contain words or phrases that signal **cause and effect**.
- Answers: 1 E, 2 D, 3 E.

Critical Reading: Sentence Completions

DIRECTIONS

- Read each sentence, and think about its main idea. Look for key words or phrases that signal cause and effect, such as *since*, *because of*, and *because*.
- Select the word or set of words that best completes each sentence. Then, explain your choice.

-
- 1 Finding food is of ____ importance to hummingbirds, since they need huge amounts of energy to fuel their flights.
- A hysterical
B congruent
C susceptible
D ravenous
E paramount
- 2 The situation in some countries is extremely ____, perhaps because of widespread poverty and the ____ conditions under which many of their people live.
- A hypothetical ... gaudy
B immune ... incessant
C immaterial ... nominal
D volatile ... oppressive
E partial ... slanderous
- 3 In 1947, Thor Heyerdahl completed his daring ____ of sailing from Peru to Polynesia on a balsa wood raft; his theory that the South Seas were originally settled by people from South America gained ____ because Heyerdahl had proven such a voyage was possible.
- A amends ... preservation
B feat ... initiative
C epic ... emphasis
D encore ... grandeur
E venture ... credibility

- Present students with a strategy: Suggest that they guess the missing word or words before looking at the choices.
- These three items all contain words or phrases that signal **example**.
- Answers: 1 C, 2 C, 3 A.

Critical Reading: Sentence Completions

DIRECTIONS

- Read each sentence, and think about its main idea. Look for key words or phrases that introduce examples, such as *for instance*, *for example*, and *specifically*.
- Select the word or set of words that best completes each sentence. Then, explain your choice.

1 Diana inherited many _____ of her father; for instance, she has his sense of humor, his intelligence, and his thoughtfulness.

A adages

D credentials

B allusions

E concerns

C attributes

2 Many students in the school are _____; for example, Juanita can speak Spanish and English, and Chang is _____ in English and Chinese.

A smug ... powerful

D baffled ... awkward

B predominant ... enticing

E ingenious ... functional

C bilingual ... fluent

3 The _____ prepared for the diners lacked important nutrients; specifically, it was _____ in calcium and carbohydrates.

A repast ... deficient

D menu ... ponderous

B feast ... tantalizing

E performance ... rich

C meal ... sufficient

- Present students with a strategy: Suggest that they use context clues to guess the meanings of the missing words.
- The second half of each sentence presents **additional information**.
- Answers: 1 A, 2 D, 3 B.

Critical Reading: Sentence Completions

DIRECTIONS

- Read each sentence, and think about its main idea. Look for key words or phrases that signal additional information, such as *moreover*, *in addition*, and *also*.
- Select the word or set of words that best completes each sentence. Then, explain your choice.

-
- 1 Homeowners can reduce their risk of exposure to dangerous levels of radon by installing radon detectors; moreover, sealing cracks in basement walls and floors is a wise ____.
- A precaution
B prerequisite
C inclination
D warranty
E administration
- 2 The destruction of forests in its seasonal habitat in Mexico ____ the monarch butterfly; in addition, freak snowstorms have caused the monarch population to ____ in recent years.
- A menaces ... abet
B idles ... challenge
C grieves ... assume
D imperils ... decrease
E impacts ... aggrandize
- 3 In the 1930s, Tibet was called "the Forbidden Kingdom," ____ romantic ideas about this remote land; also at that time, the novel *Lost Horizon* depicted Tibet as a paradise or "Shangri La," adding to the land's ____ appeal.
- A intensifying ... lackluster
B fueling ... exotic
C advocating ... manifest
D prompting ... prospective
E intoning ... fascinating

- Present students with a strategy: Suggest that they use their background knowledge to help choose the missing words.
- These three items all contain an idea that signals a **restatement** of another idea.
- Answers: 1 B, 2 A, 3 C.

Critical Reading: Sentence Completions

DIRECTIONS

- Read each sentence, and think about its main idea. Look for key words or phrases that signal a restatement, such as *that is*, *in other words*, and *which is to say*.
- Select the word or set of words that **best** completes each sentence. Then, explain your choice.

- 1 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., followed Gandhi's technique of civil disobedience; that is, both leaders refused to ____ with government regulations that they considered immoral.

A motivate	D tamper
B comply	E negotiate
C legislate	

- 2 To borrow money from a bank, store owners must have ____; in other words, they must pledge their shop's ____, or goods, as security in case they default on the loan.

A collateral ... inventory	D collective ... aspiration
B authenticity ... quota	E potency ... culmination
C capitalization ... automation	

- 3 After a tremendous ____ in the stock market, the value of the investors' portfolios ____ substantially; which is to say, the investors lost 50 percent of their money.

A adjustment ... soared	D controversy ... transpired
B barrier ... stalled	E monopoly ... appreciated
C upheaval ... depreciated	

- Present students with a strategy: Suggest that they think carefully about the shades of meanings of each choice before selecting an answer.
- These three items all contain words that have positive or negative **connotations**.
- Answers: 1 B, 2 A, 3 B.

Critical Reading: Sentence Completions

DIRECTIONS

- Read each sentence, and think about the connotations of the words.
- Select the word or set of words that best completes each sentence. Then, explain your choice.

1 Passing through the alley was extremely unpleasant because of the ____ smell of rotting garbage.

A bracing

D photogenic

B pungent

E lovely

C crystalline

2 The 1920s, as rollicking and ____ a period as any in U.S. history, is now largely remembered for its fearless hoodlums, ____ fads, and colorful slang.

A raucous ... bizarre

D abrasive ... chronic

B grueling ... thought-provoking

E creative ... congenial

C lengthy ... harmless

3 The anxious runner's ____ with improving his time made him so thin he looked like an ____.

A difficulty ... eccentric

D concern ... overachiever

B obsession ... apparition

E obstacle ... executive

C predicament ... illusion

- Present students with a strategy: Suggest that they guess the missing word or words before looking at the choices.
- These items incorporate mixed techniques for sentence completion.
- Answers: 1 E, 2 C, 3 D.

Critical Reading: Sentence Completions

DIRECTIONS

- Read each sentence, and think about its main idea. Look for words that help develop or support the main idea.
- Select the word or set of words that best completes each sentence. Then, explain your choice.

1 Before the newly elected commissioners undertook anything else, their first _____ was to repair deteriorating statues in all city parks.

A potion

D provision

B potency

E priority

C posterity

2 The supposedly _____ accounting error cost the shareholders an _____ amount of money, because the company was prevented from doing any further business until it paid a fine.

A superfluous ... indispensable

D approximate ... isolated

B yielding ... impassable

E momentous ... intensive

C trivial ... incalculable

3 American Indian storytellers are _____ of their tribes' ancient myths and tales and, as such, are respected for their ability to _____ material familiar to their audiences.

A critics ... invent

D performers ... dramatize

B trustees ... forget

E admirers ... omit

C gatherers ... concoct

- Remind students to consider key words, context clues, and the main idea of the passage.
- Advise students to consider the *entire* passage before making selections.
- Answers: 1 B, 2 A, 3 A, 4 A, 5 B, 6 A.

Critical Reading: Passage Completions

DIRECTIONS Choose the best answer. Then, explain your choice.

Scientists have long wondered about the Moon's origins. One ____ (1) is called the Giant Impact Theory. It accounts for a number of facts about Earth and the Moon. The theory claims that the relatively young Earth stood in the direct path of a huge object hurtling through space. This object dealt Earth a ____ (2) blow. The resulting explosion created enough heat to turn Earth's mantle, the layer between the crust and the core, into an ____ (3) vapor. Most of this "invader" from space was ____ (4) into Earth. The rest, hot and mixed with some of Earth's mantle, was hurled into space. There it cooled and eventually formed the Moon.

According to experts, this impact might have given Earth its 23-degree tilt, which causes the seasons. In addition, the ____ (5) accounts for why the Moon, unlike Earth, has no water. In the Moon's fiery birth, all water would have ____ (6).

- | | | |
|---|----------------|--------------|
| 1 | A formula | B hypothesis |
| 2 | A shattering | B hideous |
| 3 | A incandescent | B indelible |
| 4 | A absorbed | B adjusted |
| 5 | A document | B scenario |
| 6 | A vaporized | B dwindled |

- Remind students to consider key words, context clues, and the main idea of the passage.
- Advise students to consider the *entire* passage before making selections.
- Answers: 1 B, 2 A, 3 B, 4 B, 5 A, 6 B.

Critical Reading: Passage Completions

DIRECTIONS Choose the best answer. Then, explain your choice.

Have you ever wondered why peacocks have such big, beautiful tails? From a practical point of view, these tails seem to have ____ (1) value. A male peacock weighs 12 pounds. During flights, his heavy tail forces him to land and rest often.

Moreover, the long feathers are caught easily in brush and branches. Worst of all, the bright, blue-green tail is a clear target for jackals, leopards, eagles, and other ____ (2) animals.

Even in times of danger, the oversized tail is a ____ (3). What purpose could it serve? Is it for defense? Peacocks already have good defenses. They have ____ (4) eyesight and hearing; at the first sign of danger, they alert one another with special calls. Forced to fight, they attack with the sharp spurs on their legs.

Watching peacocks in springtime provides a clue to the purpose of their tails. Proudly, each peacock ____ (5) before the other peafowl. Slowly he ruffles his train into a ____ (6) semi-circle. "Look at me!" his actions proclaim. When it is time to nest, peahens choose peacocks with the most glorious tails.

- | | | |
|---|-----------------|---------------|
| 1 | A adequate | B dubious |
| 2 | A predatory | B parasitic |
| 3 | A distraction | B hindrance |
| 4 | A eloquent | B acute |
| 5 | A promenades | B toils |
| 6 | A inconspicuous | B magnificent |

- Remind students to consider key words, context clues, and the main idea of the passage.
- Advise students to consider the *entire* passage before making selections.
- Answers: 1 A, 2 B, 3 A, 4 A, 5 B, 6 B.

Critical Reading: Passage Completions

DIRECTIONS Choose the best answer. Then, explain your choice.

The Japanese ____ (1) on Pearl Harbor in December 1941 plunged the United States into World War II. This attack, however, seemed far removed to many people on the eastern seaboard of the United States. It wasn't long, though, before German submarines, or U-boats, brought the ____ (2) to the East Coast. On the night of February 20, 1942, a U-boat torpedoed an American tanker, the *Pan America*, off the coast of Florida. The tanker, filled with gasoline, exploded into a fireball that ____ (3) woke up Easterners to the reality of war.

Any ____ (4) that the war would remain a remote event faded over the next two months. During that time, U-boats sank two dozen ____ (5) ships off the southeastern coast. Most shocking was the torpedoing of the SS *Gulfamerica* off Jacksonville Beach, Florida, on April 10 of the same year. Thousands of stunned men, women, and children on shore watched in ____ (6) as the tanker suddenly exploded into flames. The terror worsened when the U-boat surfaced and fired shells at the burning tanker to sink it.

- | | |
|------------------|----------------|
| 1 A assault | B venture |
| 2 A agitation | B hostilities |
| 3 A abruptly | B gradually |
| 4 A illusions | B calculations |
| 5 A contemporary | B defenseless |
| 6 A appreciation | B astonishment |

- Remind students to consider key words, context clues, and the main idea of the passage.
- Advise students to consider the *entire* passage before making selections.
- Answers: 1 B, 2 A, 3 A, 4 B, 5 A, 6 B.

Critical Reading: Passage Completions

DIRECTIONS Choose the best answer. Then, explain your choice.

Snowshoe hares are so ____ (1) at keeping out of sight that few people ever see one. In winter, the hare sports a white coat that blends with the snow. In warmer months, its coat changes to reddish-brown, making it ____ (2) against dry leaves and dirt. This yearly ____ (3), or change, gives the animal its nickname—the “varying hare.”

Snowshoe hares typically live in swamps and on hillsides, wherever thick shrubs and evergreens ____ (4) them from foxes, coyotes, owls, hawks, and bobcats. The hares feed when the light is low, at night or early morning, and rather than risk a trip to a stream, they depend on snow or juicy plants for moisture. When they are ____ (5) by a hunter, snowshoe hares can bound away at high speeds. Their paws, larger than a rabbit’s, let the hares “snowshoe” across snowdrifts to escape. Generally, however, they are more likely to ____ (6) danger by remaining motionless.

- 1 A acknowledged B adept
2 A inconspicuous B inaudible
3 A metamorphosis B manipulation
4 A conduct B conceal
5 A confronted B confirmed
6 A eradicate B elude

- Remind students to consider key words, context clues, and the main idea of the passage.
- Advise students to consider the *entire* passage before making selections.
- Answers: 1 B, 2 A, 3 B, 4 A, 5 B, 6 A.

Critical Reading: Passage Completions

DIRECTIONS Choose the best answer. Then, explain your choice.

At an auction in the late 1990s, a skeletal *Tyrannosaurus rex* called Sue sold for \$8.36 million, making it the world's most valuable dinosaur fossil. Chicago's Field Museum of Natural History, which offered the ____ (1) bid, competed with a number of private collectors at the auction. Scientists were relieved that a public museum had ____ (2) Sue, since she would now be available for study and research. Because of a ____ (3) commercial fossil market, many recently discovered fossils have disappeared into private collections. Scientists complain that some amateur fossil hunters ____ (4) evidence at discovery sites. Sue is particularly ____ (5) to scientists because she is the most complete *tyrannosaur* ever found. After approximately a century of searching, only twenty or so *T. rex* skeletons have been discovered, and just four of those have 60 percent or more of the original bones. Over 90 percent of Sue's skeleton is ____ (6). What a discovery!

- | | |
|-------------------|---------------|
| 1 A lowest | B successful |
| 2 A acquired | B affected |
| 3 A sluggish | B flourishing |
| 4 A destroy | B negotiate |
| 5 A irretrievable | B beneficial |
| 6 A intact | B functional |

- Remind students to consider key words, context clues, and the main idea of the passage.
- Advise students to consider the *entire* passage before making selections.
- Answers: 1 B, 2 B, 3 A, 4 B, 5 A, 6 A.

Critical Reading: Passage Completions

DIRECTIONS Choose the best answer. Then, explain your choice.

One of the most famous tombs in the world was discovered in 1974 in Xian, China, when archaeologists ____ (1) a massive burial pit guarded by a 4,000-year-old clay army. Covering several square miles, the tomb contains 7,000 life-sized terra cotta warriors, 600 clay horses, and 130 battle chariots. The detailed figures, each with ____ (2) facial features, are arranged by rank in battle ____ (3).

The tomb was built for Shi Huang Di, the first emperor of China. A bold and ____ (4) leader, Shi Huang Di had unified and expanded China by taxing his subjects heavily and forcing them to perform unpaid labor. These ____ (5) policies created many enemies for the emperor. Since he was an absolute ruler who controlled all the military equipment in China, he was able to put down ____ (6) quickly.

- | | | |
|---|--------------|----------------|
| 1 | A instigated | B unearthed |
| 2 | A crucial | B unique |
| 3 | A formation | B congregation |
| 4 | A animated | B ruthless |
| 5 | A oppressive | B cumbersome |
| 6 | A rebellions | B regimes |

- Remind students to consider key words, context clues, and the main idea of the passage.
- Advise students to consider the *entire* passage before making selections.
- Answers: 1 B, 2 B, 3 B, 4 A, 5 A, 6 B.

Critical Reading: Passage Completions

DIRECTIONS Choose the best answer. Then, explain your choice.

Walking 45 minutes a day is a better way to lose weight than dieting is. Walking is ____ (1) and easy on the body. By contrast, ____ (2) diets and an obsession with counting calories can often take a toll on a person's emotional well-being. Of course, numerous people do lose weight by dieting. In fact, over a year's time, a person can probably lose more by dieting than by walking. After a year, however, dieting and calorie-counting can become too ____ (3) a task. That's why three quarters of all dieters eventually ____ (4) their diets and regain the weight they have lost. This experience usually leaves them feeling ____ (5). By contrast, 90 percent of all walkers who have lost 30 pounds or more keep off that weight. To lose weight, walkers certainly have to eat a ____ (6) diet, too, but if they walk every day, there is less pressure to count calories.

- 1 A inconvenient B recreational
2 A bland B drastic
3 A frivolous B grueling
4 A abandon B denounce
5 A demoralized B intolerant
6 A relevant B sensible

- Remind students to consider key words, context clues, and the main idea of the passage.
- Advise students to consider the *entire* passage before making selections.
- Answers: 1 B, 2 A, 3 B, 4 B, 5 B, 6 B.

Critical Reading: Passage Completions

DIRECTIONS Choose the best answer. Then, explain your choice.

A recent experiment shows the truth of the ____ (1) “Looks are deceiving.” Researchers gathered the health records of 164 men and women born between 1920 and 1929. They also ____ (2) photographs taken when these subjects were about age 18. The experimenters then asked a group of volunteers to ____ (3) the photographs and cluster the subjects by appearance into three groups: “Most Attractive,” “Medium Attractive,” and “Least Attractive.” The raters agreed closely in their conclusions.

A second group of volunteers were “health raters.” These raters looked at each picture and guessed the ____ (4) state of health of each subject as a teen, a young adult, and an older adult. They were given no ____ (5) information about the subjects’ health. In almost every case, raters gave overly positive estimates of health to people in the “Most Attractive” group. The “Least Attractive” subjects uniformly received negative health ratings. According to health records, however, the “Most Attractive” teens showed no greater ____ (6) toward better health than the “Least Attractive” teens.

- | | | |
|---|---------------|-------------|
| 1 | A folklore | B adage |
| 2 | A compiled | B developed |
| 3 | A contemplate | B assess |
| 4 | A exact | B probable |
| 5 | A excess | B actual |
| 6 | A prowess | B tendency |

- Remind students that the main idea must relate to the entire passage.
- Point out that questions may require students to make inferences about information in the passage.
- Answers: 1 B, 2 D.

Critical Reading: Passage Analysis

DIRECTIONS Choose the best answer. Then, explain your choice.

A century ago in the city of New Orleans, brass bands played in almost all neighborhoods. African American musicians living in New Orleans used brass instruments to play music that drew on their African cultural heritage. This new kind of music used “blue” notes—sad, mournful sounds not usually found in European music—and syncopated rhythms. This music incorporated influences from many cultures that thrived in New Orleans—French, Spanish, Irish, and Caribbean. Sailors who visited New Orleans helped spread this new music around the world. So too did the African American musicians who traveled up the Mississippi River. Jazz, this new blend of sounds, became one of America’s great contributions to the music world.

- 1 Which sentence best states the main idea of this passage?
 - A The city of New Orleans is a melting pot of cultures.
 - B Jazz originated in New Orleans and incorporated many cultural influences.
 - C Jazz has its roots in the music played by traditional European orchestras.
 - D Jazz, born in the early twentieth century, is the only home-grown American music.
- 2 From the passage it can be inferred that
 - A New Orleans is a wealthy city
 - B “blue” notes are not popular sounds
 - C syncopated rhythms have a smooth, regular beat
 - D New Orleans is a port city

- Remind students to use context to determine the meaning of unfamiliar words.
- Point out that some questions require students to draw logical conclusions from information in the passage.
- Answers: 1 C, 2 B.

Critical Reading: Passage Analysis

DIRECTIONS Choose the best answer. Then, explain your choice.

Many people use products that include herbs to fight or prevent disease. Unfortunately, there is not enough accurate information about these products; many have not been tested under scientific conditions. Some herbal medicines simply don't work. They may be harmless, ineffective, and in some cases, downright dangerous. Those that do work may have temporary but disabling side effects, such as severe stomach cramps, but no warning labels to inform users of this possibility. Another problem is that some herbal mixes are far stronger than others with the same label information. The industry is being pressured to correct labeling problems and do rigorous testing before releasing herbal products for sale.

- 1 From the information in this passage, you can infer that
 - A all herbal products are harmful
 - B all herbal products are used as medicines
 - C herbal medicines need more testing
 - D herbal medicines need to be stronger
- 2 In the fifth sentence, the meaning of the word disabling is
 - A weak
 - B harmful
 - C tasty
 - D central

- Remind students that the questions may require them to make inferences about information in the passage.
- Point out that students need to pay attention to passage details.
- Answers: 1 D, 2 A.

Critical Reading: Passage Analysis

DIRECTIONS Choose the best answer. Then, explain your choice.

The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences was founded to promote the movie industry. In the late 1920s, the academy began handing out awards. Since 1928, these Academy Awards have been given annually for pictures released in the preceding year. Winners receive a small gold-plated statue that looks like an elderly man. In the 1930s the statue was nicknamed Oscar. Some sources credit the name to actress Bette Davis. Others say the nickname was given to the statue by Margaret Herrick, the academy's librarian. In the decades since, the Academy Awards have emerged as the most famous annual honors in the world of entertainment.

- 1 Based on details, which of these inferences can you make?
 - A Bette Davis never won an Academy Award.
 - B The Academy Awards were nicknamed Oscars after a librarian named Herrick.
 - C Originally, the Academy Awards were solid gold statues.
 - D No one is sure who first used the nickname Oscar.
- 2 The first Academy Award for best movie of the year was probably for a film released in
 - A 1927
 - B 1929
 - C the early 1920s
 - D the 1930s

- Remind students that some questions focus on the author's tone or attitude toward his or her subject or audience.
- Point out that questions may require identifying devices used to make a point.
- Answers: 1 B, 2 D.

Critical Reading: Passage Analysis

DIRECTIONS Choose the best answer. Then, explain your choice.

Are you tired of television news making such a huge fuss about the weather? It seems as if every other thunderstorm is predicted to be the worst storm ever; many snowstorms are called the storm of the century. Modern science has made weather prediction far more accurate, and, undoubtedly, when weather forecasters warn the public about ominous weather conditions, they save lives. However, if media representatives keep exaggerating upcoming weather events simply to get more viewers and higher ratings, they will be like the boy who cried "Wolf."

You know the folk tale: Long ago there was a shepherd boy who cried "Wolf" when no wolf was around. He cried his false warning so many times that one day, when in fact there *was* a wolf endangering the community, no one paid any attention to his warning.

- 1 In this passage, the writer's attitude toward the news media's coverage of the weather is
 - A complimentary
 - B critical
 - C puzzled
 - D frightened
- 2 The writer tries to prove a point primarily by means of
 - A historical allusions
 - B personification
 - C appeal to authority
 - D argument by comparison

- Remind students that the main idea must relate to the entire passage.
- Point out that clues to the meaning of a difficult word can often be found in surrounding words or sentences.
- Answers: 1 D, 2 D.

Critical Reading: Passage Analysis

DIRECTIONS Choose the best answer. Then, explain your choice.

Emily Dickinson spent most of her life in the small town of Amherst, Massachusetts. As a young woman she socialized with friends and attended college at Mount Holyoke, but later in life she became a recluse. In fact, in the last decades of her life, she never left home except to visit her doctor in Boston. Dickinson published only a handful of poems during her lifetime. After she died, her relatives found more poems jotted down on scraps of paper, neatly bundled and tied together with ribbons. Today, Dickinson's poems appear in virtually every American poetry anthology, and she is widely regarded as a great poet.

- 1 Based on the passage, a recluse is
 - A someone who is generous with his or her possessions
 - B someone with very little money who has trouble making ends meet
 - C someone who is friendly and outgoing
 - D someone who rarely, if ever, socializes
- 2 Which sentence best states the main idea of this passage?
 - A Emily Dickinson was a celebrated poet in her lifetime but is largely forgotten today.
 - B Emily Dickinson was a celebrated poet in her lifetime and remains famous today.
 - C Emily Dickinson neatly bundled the scraps of paper on which she wrote her poems.
 - D Emily Dickinson was not well known in her lifetime but now is one of America's most famous poets.

- Remind students that questions may require them to look for specific information.
- Point out that word choice often conveys an author's tone or attitude toward his or her subject.
- Answers: 1 B, 2 C.

Critical Reading: Passage Analysis

DIRECTIONS Choose the best answer. Then, explain your choice.

Although professional baseball players originally played on grassy fields, it is difficult to grow grass in some ballparks. These include the magnificent domed stadiums built to provide temperature control in very hot or cold climates. When real grass poses a problem, some managers of baseball stadiums call for artificial turf instead. The bright green turf almost exactly matches the color of grass. Its strong, hard surface, however, does not absorb bouncing balls. Instead, it sends balls higher, making for more exciting games. This smooth, green artificial turf does not have the pits and bumps that cause baseballs to hop unpredictably as they often do on real grass. Best of all, artificial turf does not require dozens of costly workers to mow and water it. With all these advantages, it is surprising that so many baseball fans and players prefer real grass to artificial turf.

- 1 In this passage, the writer's attitude toward artificial turf is
 - A very critical
 - B highly positive
 - C completely objective
 - D one of amazement
- 2 According to the passage, artificial turf saves money because
 - A installing it costs less than seeding the ground with real grass
 - B it costs less than grass seed
 - C it is easier to maintain than real grass
 - D it cuts down on injuries to baseball players

- Remind students that the meaning of a word can change over time.
- Point out that students must sometimes focus on details in two or more sentences to answer a question.
- Answers: 1 C, 2 C.

Critical Reading: Passage Analysis

DIRECTIONS Choose the best answer. Then, explain your choice.

Many words in English come from people's names. In nineteenth-century Ireland, for example, an English estate manager named Charles Boycott treated the estate's tenant farmers so cruelly that the community decided to shun him completely. Even his servants stopped waiting on him. Eventually Boycott left Ireland, leaving behind only his name, which is preserved today in the word boycott.

Samuel Maverick, a lawyer by trade, briefly became a rancher when someone paid him with cattle instead of money. However, Maverick took little interest in ranching and did not brand his cattle properly. After Maverick sold the stock, the buyer claimed that all the unbranded cattle in the area had been Maverick's and now belonged to him. The word soon came to be applied to any unbranded range animal. Eventually, maverick also came to mean someone who refuses to follow the crowd or be labeled.

- 1 The words boycott and maverick are mentioned in the passage as
 - A evidence that heroes are often unappreciated
 - B the likely results of being on your own
 - C examples of words that originated from people's names
 - D examples of people who worked for a living
- 2 The word maverick can be applied
 - A only to a person
 - B only to an animal
 - C to both a person and an animal
 - D to neither a person nor an animal

- Remind students that some passages require them to make inferences based on the details provided.
- Point out that writers often use contrast to help students understand concepts.
- Answers: 1 D, 2 C.

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DIRECTIONS Choose the best answer. Then, explain your choice.

Most garden plants fall into two basic categories: annuals and perennials. Annuals grow, produce seed, and die all in one season. Perennials do not die at the end of the season. Instead, they go dormant, resting in the soil until they are ready to begin growing again the next year. Flowers grown from bulbs, such as tulips, are a special category of perennial. Most annual flowers have long periods of bloom, but because they are grown from seeds, it takes some time for them to reach the size where they begin blooming. In contrast, perennial flowers generally bloom earlier in the season, although their bloom period tends to be shorter. Serious flower gardeners often plant beds or borders of flowering perennials supplemented by annuals to extend the blooming season.

- 1 The author describes two basic categories of garden plants by
 - A giving examples of each type
 - B stating that tulips grow from bulbs
 - C arguing that annuals are not as valuable as perennials
 - D contrasting annuals and perennials
- 2 In areas where the growing season runs from March through October, it is logical to conclude that
 - A most perennials have more blooms in September than in June
 - B most annuals have more blooms in April than in July
 - C most annuals have more blooms in August than in May
 - D many annuals are grown from bulbs