

ACT English Practice Test 10

For each question, choose the alternative you consider best and fill in the corresponding oval on your answer document. Read each passage through once before you begin to answer the questions that accompany it. For many of the questions, you must read several sentences beyond the question to determine the answer. Be sure that you have read far enough ahead each time you choose an alternative.

Give a Snake a Break

Throughout much of history, snakes have had a reputation for being more deadly than³¹ they actually are. Negative associations abound: a "snake in the grass" is a seemingly innocent person intent on causing harm.³² A "snake charmer" uses flattery to distract you from his shady intent. Nearly every reference to a snake that is popular³³ in modern society bears this negative connotation. Despite this perception, the snake, with its³⁴ ugly, slimy appearance, is one of the most unjustly maligned creatures on the planet.

Snakes are only rarely dangerous to humans. Their fangs³⁵ so intimidating when the snakes are hissing, are designed not to attack people but to hold small prey³⁶ small rodents, birds, insects, etc. Only exceptionally large snakes, like pythons or anacondas, pose a real threat. Most of the time, the typical snake you encounter in your backyard is more afraid of you than you are of it and will gladly avoid any contact with you.

Poisonous snakes—such as rattlesnakes, vipers, and cobras—are most frightening to people, but they attack if they are only provoked³⁷. While certainly venomous, these snakes pose a threat mainly to smaller animals. Of the 5 million snake bites that occur each year to humans around the world, only about 2.5 percent prove fatal.³⁸ Prompt treatment with one of the available antivenoms do much³⁹ to ensure the victim's survival. Although you may get an infection at the wound site, you can be effectively treated, seeing as⁴⁰ you are still shaken from the encounter, you will survive.

Why put up with snakes at all? Even if they don't normally kill humans, most people still considering them a nuisance and avoiding⁴¹ them like the plague. Individuals who dislike snakes for this reason do not appreciate the great service snakes do for humanity. The typical diet of a snake includes small rodents like rats, mice, gophers, and prairie dogs, as well as lizards, birds, fish, and insects. We may not like snakes, if they⁴² were mysteriously wiped out of existence, however, we would be virtually overrun with other vermin that would spread disease and filth.

So, next time you hear about someone putting down snakes, stand up for our legless friends. These snakes in the grass help us more than we might think⁴³.

31.

A. NO CHANGE

B. a reputation for being more deadly than

C. a reputation as the most deadly than

D. the deadliest reputation then

32. Given that all the following statements are true, which one provides the most relevant information at this point in the essay?

F. Snake oil refers to fake medicine that promises impossible results.

G. Most snakes are passive creatures that will never cause you injury.

H. Snakes are carnivorous reptiles that can be found on every continent except Antarctica.

J. Pet snakes have become increasingly common over the last decade.

33.

A. NO CHANGE

B. reference that is popular about a snake

C. famous reference they have about a snake

D. popular reference to a snake

34.

F. NO CHANGE

G. who's

H. sporting it's

J. with its'

35.

A. NO CHANGE

B. fangs being

C. fangs, so they are

D. fangs, they are

36.

F. NO CHANGE

G. prey,

H. prey:

J. prey

37.

A. NO CHANGE

B. they will provoke and attack them.

C. they will attack humans only if provoked.

D. if provoked, they will attack them.

38. The writer is considering deleting the preceding sentence from this paragraph. If the writer made this deletion, the paragraph would primarily lose:

F. scientific proof that snakes are too dangerous to coexist with humans.

G. an example of the various locations where most fatalities take place.

H. a specific statistic to support a previous claim.

J. excessive detail that distracts the reader from the broader message of the passage.

39.

A. NO CHANGE

B. can do much

C. are able to do much

D. have much ability

40.

F. NO CHANGE

G. but because

H. and even if

J. however

41.

A. NO CHANGE

B. consider them a nuisance and avoid

C. considering them a nuisance and avoid

D. considered them a nuisance to avoid

42.

F. NO CHANGE

- G. snake's if they
- H. snakes, they
- J. snakes; if they

43. The writer wants to provide a sentence here that will tie the conclusion of the essay to its beginning. Which choice does that best?

- A. NO CHANGE
- B. Snakes make excellent pets.
- C. Let's reduce the incidence of snake bites around the world.
- D. Wouldn't you rather see a snake in your yard than a rat?

44. This question asks about the preceding passage as a whole.

The writer is considering deleting the last sentence of the first paragraph of the essay. If the writer were to make this deletion, the essay would primarily lose a statement that:

- F. adds a bit of sarcasm to a rather humorous introduction.
- G. identifies the overall point of the entire passage.
- H. summarizes the list of examples previously provided by the author.
- J. provides a list of animals more useful than the snake.

45. This question asks about the preceding passage as a whole.

Suppose the writer's goal had been to write an essay focusing on the various ways in which humans were threatened by snakes. Would this essay fulfill that goal?

- A. Yes, because the author gives specific statistical evidence that proves snake bites happen around the world.
- B. Yes, because the essay focuses on many of the negative stereotypes associated with snakes.
- C. No, because the essay primarily focuses on the fact that snakes are not harmful to humans.
- D. No, because the essay points out that snakes feed primarily on rodents and other small animals.

SET 2

Zora Neale Hurston, Independent Woman

Zora Neale Hurston proves to be a study in contrasts: a black writer reaching a white audience, a woman struggling in a man's profession, an independent thinker living in a conformist era. Now⁴⁶ almost 50 years since her death, her hard work and fabulous novels still have much to teach the modern audience.

She overcame the challenges she faced and⁴⁷ demonstrated that perseverance makes anything possible.

Hurston ascribed much of her deeply individualistic⁴⁸ personality to the experience of growing up in Eatonville, Florida. The town was unique in that it was particularly hot in the summer, but mild at other times of the year.⁴⁹ Hurston always said growing up in a community totally separate from the larger white society allowed her a freedom that⁵⁰ independence not available to everyone in the south.

[1] Hurston began her undergraduate studies at Howard University, but her obvious intelligence and talent⁵¹ soon earned her a scholarship to Barnard College in New York City. [2] Moving north in the 1920s thrust⁵² her into the midst of the Harlem Renaissance, a black cultural movement that spawned exceptional achievements in literature, books, poems, and plays,⁵³ art, and music. [3] Interacting with the likes of Langston Hughes, W.E.B. DuBois, Billie Holiday, and Duke Ellington, Hurston developed⁵⁴ her skills as a writer and published numerous short stories and poems. 55 [4] The most influential work that came to define her career grew out of her attempt to capture the black experience. [5] That novel, called *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, traced three generations of a family living in Eatonville. [6] Her interesting⁵⁶ representation of the southern dialect caused her Harlem Renaissance contemporaries to belittle the work for what they saw as its propagation of inaccurate stereotypes. [7] Hurston, however, remained true to it,⁵⁷ convinced that the accuracy of her representation would ultimately prevail over the political pressures her peers sought to inflict upon her. 58

History has shown that Hurston was right. However, modern⁵⁹ critics admire her authentic and skillful representation of the language as well as her realistic portrayal of daily life in the early twentieth century. She is universally applauded, as one of the best writers of her era,⁶⁰ ranked with Toni Morrison, Maya Angelou, and Alice Walker as one of the most important African-American writers of all time.

46. Which of the following alternatives to the underlined portion would be LEAST acceptable?

- F. Presently,
- G. Currently,
- H. Instantly,
- J. At the present,

47. Which of the following alternatives to the underlined portion would be LEAST acceptable?

- A. faced, and in so doing,
- B. faced and, thus,
- C. faced that
- D. faced, an action that

48.

F. NO CHANGE

G. personally individualistic

H. freely independent

J. truly egotistical

49. Given that all the choices are true, which one most effectively identifies why Eatonville has a history unlike any other city in the United States?

A. NO CHANGE

B. a fairly representative small town, founded in the mid-nineteenth century.

C. the first all-black town to be incorporated in the country.

D. not yet in existence at the start of the Civil War.

50.

F. NO CHANGE

G. and was

H. it featured

J. and

51.

A. NO CHANGE

B. intelligence, and talent

C. intelligence, and talent,

D. intelligence and talent,

52.

F. NO CHANGE

G. 1920s, thrust

H. 1920s, thrust,

J. 1920s; thrust

53.

A. NO CHANGE

B. literature, written records of stories once transmitted orally,

C. literature, which includes all forms of written expression,

D. literature,

54.

F. NO CHANGE

G. developed up

H. develops up

J. develops

55. At this point, the writer is considering adding the following true statement:

Billie Holiday's music evokes such feeling and melancholy that it's no wonder she became so popular.

Should the writer add this sentence here?

A. Yes, because it provides an interesting detail about one of the other Harlem Renaissance artists.

B. Yes, because music was an important influence on Hurston's work.

C. No, because it doesn't clearly identify which of Billie Holiday's songs were popular.

D. No, because it distracts the reader from the main point of this paragraph.

56. Which choice would most clearly indicate that the dialect referenced in the passage was a realistic representation of the actual way language was spoken in Eatonville?

F. NO CHANGE

G. unusual

H. authentic

J. fascinating

57.

A. NO CHANGE

B. her project,

C. that thing,

D. which,

58. The writer has decided to divide this paragraph into two. The best place to add the new paragraph break would be at the beginning of Sentence:

F. 4, because it would indicate that Hurston's writing was most strongly influenced by Langston Hughes.

G. 4, because it would signal the essay's shift in focus to one of Hurston's novels.

H. 5, because all the remaining sentences in the paragraph provide a detailed summary of the plot of Hurston's novel.

J. 5, because it would indicate that the essay is now going to focus on social conditions in Eatonville.

59.

A. NO CHANGE

B. Modern

C. Thus, modern

D. In addition, modern

60.

F. NO CHANGE

G. applauded as one of the best writers of her era and

H. applauded as one of the best writers of her era

J. applauded, as one of the best writers of her era, she is