

ACT Reading Practice Paper 12
SET-1

DIRECTIONS: Each passage is followed by several questions. After reading a passage, choose the best answer to each question and fill in the corresponding oval on your answer document. You may refer to the passages as often as necessary.

SOCIAL SCIENCE: This passage is adapted from T. H. Watkins' *The Great Depression* (©1993, Little, Brown and Co.; Blackside Inc.).

One of the most durable and well regarded of all the New Deal's programs came from President Roosevelt himself, who had his own share of inventiveness. If the president cared about the fate of people, he also cared about the fate of trees, having
5 practiced the art of silviculture on his Hyde Park estate with such enthusiasm that on various official forms he was fond of listing his occupation as "tree farmer." It was in early March, 1933, that he proceeded to bring the two concerns together—enlisting young unemployed men in a kind of volunteer "army" to be put to
10 work in the national forests, national parks, and on other federal public lands. When he went to Congress for authorization of the program, he called the new agency the Civilian Corps Reforestation Youth Rehabilitation Movement, but before sinking under the weight of an acronym like CCRYRM, it was soon changed
15 to the Civilian Conservation Corps (known forever after as the CCC). Congress chose not to handle the details itself. It simply authorized the president to create the program and structure it as he saw fit by executive order; it was to last two years. Responsibility was divided up among the Labor Department, which was
20 to screen and select the enrollees, the War Department, which would house and feed them in their nonworking hours, and the Departments of Agriculture and Interior, which would design and supervise projects in regional and national forests, national parks, and other public lands. The men would be paid \$30 a
25 month, anywhere from \$23 to \$25 of it to be sent to their families.

The CCC officially began on April 5, 1933, calling for an enrollment of 250,000 to be housed in 1,468 camps around the

country. The cost for the first year was estimated at \$500 million. The men had to be US citizens between the ages of seventeen and twenty-seven (later, twenty-four), out of school, out of work, capable of physical labor, over 60 inches but under 78 inches in height, more than 107 pounds in weight, and had to possess no fewer than “three serviceable natural masticating teeth above and below.” They would serve terms of no more than nine months so that as many as possible could be accommodated over the course of time.

Among the earliest enrollees were some veterans who had returned to Washington, setting up camp and demanding payment of their bonuses for service during the war. While making it clear that he opposed the payments on economic grounds, FDR provided tents, showers, mess halls, and latrines, and, waiving the age restriction for them, invited the members of this new Bonus Army to join his new agency. What was more, Eleanor Roosevelt dropped by one rainy day for a visit, slogging through ankle-deep mud to meet and talk with the men. “Hoover sent the army,” said one veteran of the previous summer’s BEF disaster, “Roosevelt sent his wife.” When it became clear that no bonus would be forthcoming, about twenty-five hundred of the men took Roosevelt up on his offer and joined the CCC.

In the summer of 1934, Roosevelt expanded the size of the CCC to 350,000 and would raise it to 500,000 in 1935. Congress continued to reauthorize it faithfully over the next seven years, and by the time it was closed out in 1942, the CCC had put more than three million young “soil soldiers” to work. In the national forests alone they built 3,470 fire towers, installed 65,100 miles of telephone lines, scraped and graded thousands of fire breaks, roads, and trails, and built 97,000 miles of truck trails and roads, spent 4.1 million man-hours fighting fires, and cut down and hauled out millions of diseased trees and planted more than 1.3 billion young trees in the first major reforestation campaign in the country’s history. For the National Park Service, they built roads, campgrounds, bridges, and recreation and administration facilities; for the Biological Survey (a predecessor of today’s Fish and Wildlife Service), they conducted wildlife surveys and improved wildlife refuge lands; and for the Army Corps of Engineers, they built flood control projects in West Virginia, Vermont, and New York State.

In return, the CCC, at its best, took at least some young men out of the urban tangle of hopelessness where so many resided, introduced them to the intricacies and healing joy of the outdoors, and clothed and fed them better than many had been for years. Moreover, the program taught more than a hundred thousand to read and write, passed out twenty-five thousand eighth-grade diplomas and five thousand high-school diplomas, gave structure and discipline to lives that had experienced little of either, strengthened bodies and minds, and for many provided a dose of self-esteem they had never known.

1. The main idea of the passage is that:

- A. the CCC forced unemployed young men to work in the national forests, national parks, and on other federal public lands for no payment or bonus.
- B. it was only after President Roosevelt created the CCC that veterans had suitable employment during the Great Depression.
- C. research into the history of the New Deal shows that the idea for the CCC came from Congress.
- D. among the programs of the New Deal, the CCC employed young men to build public works projects on public lands in return for modest wages, food, clothing, and some education.

2. The main idea of the third paragraph (lines 37-49) is that:

- F. President Hoover had dispatched the army to meet with disgruntled veterans, but President Roosevelt sent his wife, Eleanor, to meet with the Bonus Army.
- G. when they realized President Roosevelt would not pay the bonus, many veterans abandoned the Bonus Army and accepted his invitation to join the CCC.
- H. President Roosevelt supplied shelter and food to the veterans before paying the bonus the veterans demanded.
- J. many of the veterans were above the age requirement of the CCC.

3. As it is used in line 7 to describe President Roosevelt, the term *tree farmer* most nearly means that Roosevelt:

- A. had supported his family by growing trees before he entered politics.
- B. believed in an agrarian economy over urban industrialization.
- C. continued his successful business selling trees while in office.
- D. had a great interest in trees and knew a good deal about them.

4. According to the passage, which of the following was a project the CCC performed for the National Park Service?

- F. Building fire towers

G. Building campground facilities

H. Installing telephone lines

J. Conducting wildlife surveys

5. According to the passage, which of the following statements is true about the CCC?

A. The agency provided enrollees with academic instruction.

B. The agency provided enrollees with urban job training.

C. The agency accepted only men with six teeth.

D. The agency offered courses in nutrition and self-esteem.

6. Information in the fourth paragraph (lines 50-67) makes it clear that the CCC:

F. was voluntary and therefore did not pay members anything.

G. ran for more years and employed more men than was originally intended.

H. employed 4.1 million men.

J. battled fires in West Virginia, Vermont, and New York.

7. The passage most strongly suggests that before the 1930s, the national forests:

A. received no federal support or aid for projects to clear diseased trees.

B. included land reserved for wildlife refuges.

C. had never undergone a major reforestation campaign.

D. experienced more floods than forest fires.

8. According to the passage, when did the CCC change its name?

F. After President Roosevelt received authorization from Congress.

G. After Congress protested that CCRYRM was too difficult to say.

H. In the same year the size expanded to 500,000 men.

J. After the Bonus Army disbanded.

9. The passage states that the same year the CCC was authorized enrollees had to be:

A. over 78 inches in height.

B. in school.

C. between the ages of seventeen and twenty-seven.

D. between the ages of seventeen and twenty-four.

10. According to the passage, CCC programs in national parks and forests were:

F. conducted far from where the members were fed and housed.

G. under the control of the Departments of Agriculture and the Interior.

H. supervised by the Labor Department.

J. minimum-wage jobs.

SET 2

HUMANITIES: This passage is adapted from John Gattuso, ed., *Native America* (©1993, Houghton Mifflin Co.).

Northwest natives are carvers by tradition, but it was the natives of the far north, in what is now British Columbia and Alaska, who first carved totem poles. The history of these fascinating works is surprisingly brief, for it wasn't until the mid-18th century, when European explorers first encountered these remote tribes, that the unique sculptures began to appear. Although the natives were already expert carvers of canoes, tools, longhouses, and furniture, they lacked the iron tools necessary to fell a massive tree in one piece and carve its entire length.

10 With the iron axes they got in trade for their baskets, boxes, and pelts, the coastal tribes of the far north could take advantage of the trees that grew so tall and straight in their wet climate. Initially, the poles were made to stand against the front of a house, with figures facing out and a door cut through the base, so all
15 would enter the house through the pole. In this case, the totem pole functioned as a family crest, recounting genealogies, stories, or legends that in some way identified the owner. Towards the end of the 19th century, the poles stood free on the beach or in the village outside the carvers' homes. Some villages were virtual
20 forests of dozens, sometimes hundreds, of poles.

The family that carved the pole gave a potlatch with feasting, games, and much gift-giving. The guests, in return, raised the pole. These gatherings were costly and required a great deal of preparation and participation. The custom frustrated whites
25 trying to "civilize" the Indians, especially missionaries who solved the problem by knocking the poles down. Employers, too, complained that their Indian workers were unreliable when a pole was being carved or a potlatch planned. Eventually, both the Canadian and United States governments banned potlatches,
30 and pole carving nearly died out. The ban was lifted in the 1950s.

The Tlingit, on the southeastern coast of Alaska, and the Haidas and Tsimshian of western Canada are known for their pole carving. On a tour in 1899, a group of Seattle businessmen visited the Tlingit village of Tongas and, finding no one there, took
35 one of the poles. They erected it in Seattle where, at a towering 50 ft., it became one of the city's most distinctive monuments. In 1938, Tlingit carvers copied the pole after the original was destroyed by fire, and it remains in Pioneer Square today.

Poles serve the important purpose of recording the lore of
40 a clan, much as a book would. The top figure on the pole identifies the owner's clan, and succeeding characters (read from top to bottom) tell their stories. Raven, the trickster, might tell the story of how he fooled the Creator into giving him the sun, or Frog might tell how he wooed a human woman. With slight
45 variations between villages, everyone knew these stories, and

potlatch guests dramatized them at the pole-raising with masks, drumming, and songs. And so the legends were preserved from one generation to the next.

There is a story behind almost every image on the pole. For
50 example, if an animal had the power to transform itself into other beings, the carver would portray it in all its forms. If Raven were sometimes bird, sometimes human, he would be carved with both wings and limbs, or have a human face with a raven's beak. Other images are used to describe the spirits' special abilities.
55 Eyes are frequently used to suggest acuteness or skill. So, for example, if an eye appears in an animal's ear, it might indicate that that animal has a sharp sense of hearing. And human figures in unexpected places, like an ear or nose, might mean that the animal has great powers.

60 Learning to read totem poles is like learning to read a language. They speak of history, mythology, social structure, and spirituality. They serve many purposes and continue to be carved by the descendants of the original carvers.

Today, Haida, Tlingit, Tsimshian, Kwakiutl and other na-
65 tive craftsmen carve, predominantly for the tourist trade, small "souvenir" totem poles in wood and black slate (or argillite). They also carve extraordinarily beautiful masks, effigies, boxes, house posts, and fixtures...

1. Which of the following statements best expresses the main idea of the passage?

A. Many Native American tribes created totem poles with meaningful symbols, but these poles were less important than the canoes carved before the mid-18th century.

B. Although the Tlingit village was deserted, the Seattle businessmen who took the totem pole were not right to take it without permission.

C. The history of totem pole carving dates back to only the mid-18th-century, but these poles have played an important role in Native American culture since that time.

D. The ban issued by the Canadian and United States governments against potlatches was lifted in the 1950s, but interest in totem-pole carving had diminished by that time.

2. Which of the following questions is NOT answered in the passage?

F. In terms of geographical region, which were the first groups to carve totem poles?

G. What is the tallest totem pole in North America?

H. What is the predominant use of the small totem poles carved today?

J. What prevented Native American tribes from carving totem poles before the 18th century?

3. The passage suggests that one of the main purposes of totem poles is the way in which they:

A. demonstrate the artistic skill of the carvers.

B. function as landmarks in major North American cities.

C. document the history and mythology of various clans.

D. complement the festivities of the potlatch.

4. The main function of the sixth paragraph (lines 49-59) is to:

F. identify the origins of the stories behind every image on a totem pole.

G. describe and explain some of the images that might appear on a totem pole.

H. contrast the images on the totem poles of the Northwest natives with those of British Columbia and Alaska.

J. explain the role of the Raven in Native American mythology.

5. All of the following are used in the passage as illustrations of the role totem poles play in Native American culture EXCEPT the:

A. function of the top figure on the pole.

B. descriptions of the Raven and Frog as characters on the pole.

C. reference to the popularity of totem poles in the tourist industries of many tribes.

D. placement of the Tlingit totem pole in Seattle's Pioneer Square.

6. The second paragraph (lines 10-20) establishes all of the following about the totem poles carved by the coastal tribes of the far north EXCEPT that they were:

F. initially used as the entryways of houses.

G. fashioned from tall, straight trees.

H. used to identify the owners of the poles.

J. produced only by clans with family crests.

7. One of the main points of the fifth paragraph (lines 39-48) is that the various characters on a totem pole are meant to represent:

A. the owner of the totem pole.

B. the lore of the owner's clan.

C. Raven, the trickster, fooling the Creator.

D. Frog wooing a human woman.

8. According to the passage, which of the following places is home to the Tlingit?

F. Seattle

G. Western Canada

H. Pioneer Square

J. Alaska

9. The author most likely includes the information in lines 60-63 to suggest that:

A. totem poles are notable for reasons beyond physical beauty.

B. totem poles have replaced books for Native American tribes.

C. Native American tribes have no spoken or written language.

D. the descendants of the original carvers of totem poles carve copies of older poles.

10. Which of the following words best describes the attitude of the employers referred to in the third paragraph (lines 21-30) in reaction to potlatches?

F. Patient

G. Accepting

H. Irritated

J. Civilized

SET 3

NATURAL SCIENCE: This passage is adapted from the article "The Pioneer Mission to Venus" by Janet G. Luhmann, James B. Pollack, and Lawrence Colin (©1994, Scientific American).

Venus is sometimes referred to as the Earth's "twin" because it resembles the Earth in size and in distance from the sun. Over its 14 years of operation, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's *Pioneer Venus* mission revealed that the relation between the two worlds is more analogous to Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. The surface of Venus bakes under a dense carbon dioxide atmosphere, the overlying clouds consist of noxious sulfuric acid, and the planet's lack of a magnetic field exposes the upper atmosphere to the continuous hail of charged particles from the sun. Our opportunity to explore the hostile Venusian environment came to an abrupt close in October 1992, when the *Pioneer Venus Orbiter* burned up like a meteor in the thick Venusian atmosphere. The craft's demise marked the end of an era for the U.S. space program; in the present climate of fiscal austerity, there is no telling when humans will next get a good look at the earth's nearest planetary neighbor.

The information gleaned by *Pioneer Venus* complements the well-publicized radar images recently sent back by the *Magellan* spacecraft. *Magellan* concentrated on studies of Venus's surface geology and interior structure. *Pioneer Venus*, in comparison, gathered data on the composition and dynamics of the planet's atmosphere and interplanetary surroundings. These findings illustrate how seemingly small differences in physical conditions have sent Venus and the Earth hurtling down very different evolutionary paths. Such knowledge will help scientists intelligently evaluate how human activity may be changing the environment on the Earth.

Well before the arrival of *Pioneer Venus*, astronomers had learned that Venus does not live up to its image as Earth's near-twin. Whereas Earth maintains conditions ideal for liquid water and life, Venus's surface temperature of 450 degrees Celsius is hotter than the melting point of lead. Atmospheric pressure at the ground is some 93 times that at sea level on Earth.

Even aside from the heat and the pressure, the air on Venus
35 would be utterly unbreathable to humans. The Earth's atmosphere
is about 78 percent nitrogen and 21 percent oxygen. Venus's much
thicker atmosphere, in contrast, is composed almost entirely of
carbon dioxide. Nitrogen, the next most abundant gas makes
up only about 3.5 percent of the gas molecules. Both planets
40 possess about the same amount of gaseous nitrogen, but Venus's
atmosphere contains some 30,000 times as much carbon dioxide
as does Earth's. In fact, Earth does hold a quantity of carbon
dioxide comparable to that in the Venusian atmosphere. On
Earth, however, the carbon dioxide is locked away in carbonate
45 rocks, not in gaseous form in the air. The crucial distinction is
responsible for many of the drastic environmental differences
that exist between the two planets.

The large *Pioneer Venus* atmospheric probe carried a mass
spectrometer and gas chromatograph, devices that measured
50 the exact composition of the atmosphere of Venus. One of the
most stunning aspects of the Venusian atmosphere is that it is
extremely dry. It possesses only a hundred thousandth as much
water as Earth has in its oceans. If all of Venus's water could
somehow be condensed onto the surface, it would make a global
55 puddle only a couple of centimeters deep.

Unlike the Earth, Venus harbors little if any molecular
oxygen in its lower atmosphere. The abundant oxygen in the
earth's atmosphere is a by-product of photosynthesis by plants;
if not for the activity of living things, Earth's atmosphere also
60 would be oxygen poor. The atmosphere of Venus is far richer
than the earth's in sulfur-containing gases, primarily sulfur
dioxide. On Earth, rain efficiently removes similar sulfur gases
from the atmosphere.

Pioneer Venus revealed other ways in which Venus is more
65 primordial than Earth. Venus's atmosphere contains higher
concentrations of inert, or noble, gases—especially neon and
isotopes of argon—that have been present since the time the
planets were born. This difference suggests that Venus has held
on to a far greater fraction of its earliest atmosphere. Much of
70 Earth's primitive atmosphere may have been stripped away and
lost into space when our world was struck by a Mars-size body.
Many planetary scientists now think the moon formed out of
the cloud of debris that resulted from such a gigantic impact.

1. With regard to the possibility of returning to the planet Venus, information presented in the passage makes it clear that the author is:

- A. cheerful and optimistic.
- B. sarcastic and contentious.
- C. doubtful and pragmatic.
- D. uncertain and withdrawn.

2. Which of the following statements most accurately summarizes how the passage characterizes the state of scientific knowledge about Venus before the *Pioneer* mission?

- F. The scientific community was hesitant to return to Venus after an earlier mission had ended in disaster.
- G. Scientists saw Earth and Venus as near polar opposites in atmospheric conditions.
- H. The common belief that Earth and Venus were "twins" had been eroding under the weight of scientific evidence.
- J. Scientists knew little about the planet Venus because they were more interested in other planets.

3. Based on the passage, discoveries made in which two areas of study have caused scientists to re-evaluate their theories about Earth and Venus?

- A. Water content and bedrock composition
- B. Sulfuric gases and photosynthesis
- C. Carbon dioxide and climate change
- D. Atmosphere and surface temperature

4. The main point of the second paragraph (lines 17-27) is to:

- F. account for the failure of the *Magellan* mission and to show the superiority of the *Pioneer* mission.
- G. suggest that information from both the *Magellan* and *Pioneer* missions can bring the scientific community to a deeper understanding of Venus.
- H. show that the *Magellan* had sent back information regarding the physical characteristics while the *Pioneer* had not.
- J. hypothesize that the findings of the *Pioneer* mission will help scientists to approach problems more intelligently.

5. The passage indicates that if humans were to attempt to live on the planet Venus, survival would not be possible because:

- A. of the mistaken belief that Venus and Earth are "twin" planets.
- B. carbon dioxide is locked away in bicarbonate rocks, not in gaseous form.
- C. the atmospheric pressure, heat, and air are not suitable for human life.
- D. all of the water on Venus is condensed onto the surface.

6. According to the passage, some evidence gained before the *Pioneer Venus* mission suggesting that Earth and Venus are not near-twins stated that:

- F. Venus produces no lead on or underneath its surface.
- G. Earth was found to be much farther from the sun than was previously thought.
- H. the atmosphere of Venus contains 78 percent nitrogen and 21 percent oxygen.
- J. the surface temperature of Venus is 450 degrees Celsius and thus unlivable for humans.

7. As it is used in line 56, the word *harbors* most nearly means:

- A. sails.
- B. hides.
- C. holds.
- D. soaks.

8. According to the passage, "primordial" describes planets that:

- F. are oxygen-poor due to a lack of activity by living things.
- G. are not hospitable to humans because they have thick atmospheres and high surface temperatures.
- H. have preserved many of the characteristics present when the planets were formed.
- J. have been struck by large bodies which have altered the planets' atmospheres.

9. It can reasonably be inferred that the "activity of living things" described in line 59 directly refers to organisms on Earth that:

- A. produce oxygen by their own natural processes and influence the contents of Earth's atmosphere.
- B. remove sulfur gases from the atmosphere during heavy rainfall.
- C. lock away carbon dioxide in carbonate rocks and maintain a reserve of the gas.
- D. could easily live in oppressive atmospheres similar to the atmosphere of Venus.

10. According to the passage, the *Pioneer Venus* mission to Venus involved investigating details relating to the planet's:

- F. surface geology and interior structure.
- G. atmosphere as it has been changed by the influence of photosynthesis.
- H. similarities to the planet Earth.
- J. atmospheric contents.