

**Directions:** This test consists of selections from literary works and questions on their content, form, and style. After each passage or poem, choose the best answer to each question. Now try applying what you've learned so far to the opening of this short story.

The year was 2081, and everybody was finally equal. They weren't only equal before God and the law. They were equal every which way. Nobody was smarter than anybody else. Nobody was better looking  
*Line* 5 than anybody else. Nobody was stronger or quicker than anybody else. All this equality was due to the 211th, 212th, and 213th Amendments to the Constitution, and to the unceasing vigilance of agents of the U. S. Handicapper General.  
10 Some things about living still weren't quite right, though. April, for instance, still drove people crazy by not being springtime. And it was in that clammy month that the H-G men took George and Hazel Bergeron's fourteen-year-old son, Harrison, away.

(1950)

This passage is from "Harrison Bergeron," a short story in Kurt Vonnegut's collection of short stories *Welcome to the Monkey House*.

1. The narrator's tone can best be described as

- A. satirical
- B. harshly critical
- C. wholly frustrated
- D. mildly emotional
- E. excessively casual

2. The effect of the repetition of the phrase "nobody was" is to

- A. introduce theme
- B. underscore a point
- C. instill a sense of loneliness
- D. refute a commonly held assumption
- E. present three contradictory elements

3. In the first paragraph, the author employs which of the following?

- A. Internal rhymes
- B. Mimicry of the speech of the lower class
- C. General comparison

- D. Parallel construction
- E. Introduction of the protagonist

Take a look at the following passage and questions that follow.

My name had lost its ring of familiarity and I had  
to be nudged to go and receive my diploma. All my  
preparations had fled. I neither marched up to the  
*Line* stage like a conquering Amazon, nor did I look in the  
5 audience for Bailey's nod of approval. Marguerite  
Johnson, I heard the name again, my honors were read,  
there were noises in the audience of appreciation, and  
I took my place on the stage as rehearsed.

I thought about colors I hated: ecru, puce, lavender,  
10 beige, and black.

(1969)

This selection is from the autobiography of Maya Angelou, *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*.

4. From the passage, it is reasonable to infer that

- A. The audience was more interested in Marguerite's graduation than she was
- B. Marguerite was surprised that her name was called
- C. The experience of graduating was more overwhelming than Marguerite had imagined
- D. Marguerite was unable to get her diploma
- E. Marguerite had tried to make a painting of the scene before it happened

5. The sentence "I neither marched up to the stage like a conquering Amazon, nor did I look in the audience for Bailey's nod of approval" (lines 3-5) contains an example of

- A. authorial intrusion
- B. startling anachronism
- C. complicated syntax
- D. anthropomorphism
- E. classical allusion

Now put it all together with this excerpt and accompanying drill questions.

Their adobe house was the same as two de-  
cades before, four large rooms under a thatched  
roof and three square windows facing south with  
*Line* their frames painted sky blue. Lin stood in the  
5 yard facing the front wall while flipping over a

dozen mildewed books he had left to be sunned on a stack of firewood. Sure thing, he thought, Shuyu doesn't know how to take care of books. Maybe I should give them to my nephews. These  
10 books are of no use to me anymore.

Beside him chickens were strutting and geese waddling. A few little chicks were passing back and forth through the narrow gaps in the paling that fenced a small vegetable garden. In the  
15 garden pole beans and long cucumbers hung on trellises, eggplants curved like ox horns, and lettuce heads were so robust that they covered up the furrows. In addition to the poultry, his wife kept two pigs and a goat for milk. Their sow was  
20 oinking from the pigpen, which was adjacent to the western end of the vegetable garden. Against the wall of the pigpen a pile of manure waited to be carted to their family plot, where it would go through high-temperature composting in a pit  
25 for two months before being put into the field.

The air reeked of distillers' grains mixed in the pig feed. Lin disliked the sour smell, which was the only uncomfortable thing to him here. From the kitchen, where Shuyu was cooking, came the  
30 coughing of the bellows. In the south, elm and birch crowns shaded their neighbors' straw and tiled roofs. Now and then a dog barked from one of these homes.

Having turned over all the books, Lin went  
35 out of the front wall, which was three feet high and topped with thorny jujube branches. In one hand he held a dog-eared Russian dictionary he had used in high school. Having nothing to do, he sat on their grinding stone, thumbing through  
40 the old dictionary. He still remembered some

Russian vocabulary and even tried to form a few short sentences in his mind with some words. But he couldn't recall the grammatical rules for the case changes exactly, so he gave up and  
45 let the book lie on his lap. Its pages fluttered a little as a breeze blew across. He raised his eyes to watch the villagers hoeing potatoes in a distant field, which was so vast that a red flag was planted in the middle of it as a marker, so  
50 that they could take a break when they reached the flag. Lin was fascinated by the sight, but he knew little about farm work.

(1999)

The excerpt above is from Ha Jin's *Waiting*.

6. The passage as a whole can be said to be a contrast of

- A. center and periphery
- B. corruption and honesty
- C. intellect and physicality
- D. heaven and earth
- E. secular and divine

7. Lin's attitude could best be described as

- A. haughty
- B. indifferent
- C. excited
- D. thoughtful
- E. enthralled

8. It is reasonable to infer that

- A. Lin is a professor in the city
- B. Lin is returning home after a long time away
- C. Lin is on vacation
- D. Lin is not used to the country
- E. Lin is blind to the beauty of the country

9. Which of the following is an example of personification?

- A. Long cucumbers hung on trellises (lines 15)
- B. Chickens were strutting and geese waddling (lines 11-12)

C. The air reeked of distillers' grains mixed in the pig feed (lines 26-27) From the kitchen, where Shuyu was cooking, came the coughing of the bellows" (lines 28-30)

D. Their sow was oinking from the pigpen (lines 19-20)

E.

**10.** The lines "Sure thing, he thought, Shuyu doesn't know how to take care of books. Maybe I should give them to my nephews. These books are of no use to me anymore" (lines 7-10)

I. are an example of indirect dialogue

II. signify a shift in the narrator's focus

III. represent a relinquishing of Lin's pastoral life

A. I only

B. II only

C. III only

D. I, II, and III

E. I and II

**11.** The "sour smell" (line 27) refers to

A. Shuyu's cooking

B. the manure near the pigpen

C. the pig feed

D. the mildewed books

E. the nearby field

**12.** The passage as a whole is best described as

A. a paeon to rural life

B. an elegy for a lost time

C. a detailed description of a place

D. an epiphanic moment in a young man's life

E. an allegory of a homeward journey