

SAT Reading Practice Paper 5

Introduction

Beginning of content:

The directions below are representative of what students will encounter on test day.

Turn to Section 1 of your answer sheet to answer the questions in this section.

Each passage or pair of passages below is followed by a number of questions. After reading each passage or pair, choose the best answer to each question based on what is stated or implied in the passage or passages and in any accompanying graphics (such as a table or graph).

If you will be requesting (or have been approved for) the accommodation of Assistive Technology Compatible format (digital testing for use with a screen reader or other assistive technology) for the SAT, you may wish to also review the sample items in their fully formatted version.

Please note that all testing accommodations, including requests for assistive technology and special formats, must be approved by the College Board's Services for Students with Disabilities in advance of test-day.

Questions 1-5 are based on the following passage.

This passage is adapted from Edith Wharton, *Ethan Frome*, originally published in 1911. Mattie Silver is Ethan's household employee.

Mattie Silver had lived under Ethan's roof for a year, and from early morning till they met at supper he had frequent chances of seeing her; but no moments in her company were comparable to those when, her arm in his, and her light step flying to keep time with his long stride, they walked back through the night to the farm. He had taken to the girl from the first day, when he had driven over to the Flats to meet her, and she had smiled and waved to him from the train, crying out, "You must be Ethan!" as she jumped down with her bundles, while he reflected, looking over her slight person: "She don't look much on housework, but she ain't a fretter, anyhow." But it was not only that the coming to his house of a bit of hopeful young

life was like the lighting of a fire on a cold hearth. The girl was more than the bright serviceable creature he had thought her. She had an eye to see and an ear to hear: he could show her things and tell her things, and taste the bliss of feeling that all he imparted left long reverberations and echoes he could wake at will.

It was during their night walks back to the farm that he felt most intensely the sweetness of this communion. He had always been more sensitive than the people about him to the appeal of natural beauty. His unfinished studies had given form to this sensibility and even in his unhappiest moments field and sky spoke to him with a deep and powerful persuasion. But hitherto the emotion had remained in him as a silent ache, veiling with sadness the beauty that evoked it. He did not even know whether any one else in the world felt as he did, or whether he was the sole victim of this mournful privilege. Then he learned that one other spirit had trembled with the same touch of wonder: that at his side, living under his roof and eating his bread, was a creature to whom he could say: "That's Orion down yonder; the big fellow to the right is Aldebaran, and the bunch of little ones—like bees swarming—they're the Pleiades..." or whom he could hold entranced before a ledge of granite thrusting up through the fern while he unrolled the huge panorama of the ice age, and the long dim stretches of succeeding time. The fact that admiration for his learning mingled with Mattie's wonder at what he taught was not the least part of his pleasure. And there were other sensations, less definable but more exquisite, which drew them together with a shock of silent joy: the cold red of sunset behind winter hills, the flight of cloud-flocks over slopes of golden stubble, or the intensely blue shadows of hemlocks on sunlit snow. When she said to him once: "It looks just as if it was painted!" it seemed to Ethan that the art of definition could go no farther, and that words had at last been found to utter his secret soul....

As he stood in the darkness outside the church these memories came back with the poignancy of vanished things. Watching Mattie whirl down the floor from hand to hand he wondered how he could ever have thought that his dull talk interested her. To him, who was never gay but in her presence, her gaiety seemed plain proof of indifference. The face she lifted to her dancers was the same which, when she saw him, always looked like a window that has caught the sunset. He even noticed two or three gestures which, in his fatuity, he had thought she kept for him: a way of throwing her head back when she was amused, as if to taste her laugh before she let it out, and a trick of sinking her lids slowly when anything charmed or moved her.

Select an Answer

1. Over the course of the passage, the main focus of the narrative shifts from the

A. reservations a character has about a person he has just met to a growing appreciation that character has of the person's worth.

B. ambivalence a character feels about his sensitive nature to the character's recognition of the advantages of having profound emotions.

C. intensity of feeling a character has for another person to the character's concern that that intensity is not reciprocated.

D. value a character attaches to the wonders of the natural world to a rejection of that sort of beauty in favor of human artistry.

2. Select an Answer

In the context of the passage, the author's use of the phrase "her light step flying to keep time with his long stride" (line 3) is primarily meant to convey the idea that

A Ethan and Mattie share a powerful enthusiasm.

B Mattie strives to match the speed at which Ethan works.

C Mattie and Ethan playfully compete with each other.

D Ethan walks at a pace that frustrates Mattie.

3. The description in the first paragraph indicates that what Ethan values most about Mattie is her

A fitness for farm labor.

B vivacious youth.

C receptive nature.

D freedom from worry.

4. Which choice provides the best evidence for the answer to the previous question?

A Lines 1–4 ("Mattie...farm")

B Lines 4–8 ("He had...anyhow")

C Lines 8–10 ("But it...hearth")

D Lines 11–13 ("She had...will")

5. The author includes the descriptions of the sunset, the clouds, and the hemlock shadows (lines 30–31) primarily to

A suggest the peacefulness of the natural world.

B emphasize the acuteness of two characters' sensations.

C foreshadow the declining fortunes of two characters.

D offer a sense of how fleeting time can be.