

GRE Verbal Practice Test 27

Reading Comprehension

Question 1

Fact and Representation by Will Floyd

Professional wrestling is frequently criticized because of its unreality. For the wrestlers, promoters, and fans who love professional wrestling, the very fact that professional wrestling is “fake” is central to their love of wrestling. This love finds its home in the concept of “kayfabe.” Kayfabe is the fabricated world of wrestling, covering every element of its storytelling, from the outlandish characters to bitter feuds, even to the specific politics about which wrestler will become champion.

Throughout the twentieth century, kayfabe was a closely guarded secret held only by those who were in the know about a wrestling company. Wrestlers could not appear out of character at any moment they were in public, for fear this revelation would give away the secrets of the wrestling promotion. A good guy wrestler could never even socialize with a bad guy wrestler, for fear that fans would see enemies together. While still quite fake, this strict adherence to the created world issued an air of believability for wrestling’s biggest fans. In recent years, wrestling’s curtain of believability has been torn apart, as the internet has allowed many personal details about wrestlers to come to light. Nonetheless, many wrestling fans still only refer to their heroes by their created names, understanding them through their invented personalities.

1. The word “socialize” in the passage most nearly means _____

select

to associate with.

select

to understand completely.

select

to fight with.

select

to argue with.

select

to dispute a challenge.

Question 2

Questions 2-3 are based on the following reading passage.

Called by some the “island that time forgot,” Madagascar is home to a vast array of unique, exotic creatures. One such animal is the aye-aye. First described by western science in 1782, it was initially categorized as a member of the order Rodentia. Further research then revealed that it was more closely related to the lemur, a member of the primate order. Since the aye-aye is so different from its fellow primates, however, it was given its own family: Daubentoniidae. The aye-aye has been listed as an endangered species and, as a result, the government of Madagascar has designated an island off the northeastern coast of Madagascar as a protected reserve for aye-ayes and other wildlife.

Long before Western science became enthralled with this nocturnal denizen of Madagascar’s jungles, the aye-aye had its own reputation with the local people. The aye-aye is perhaps best known for its large, round eyes and long, extremely thin middle finger. These adaptations are quite sensible, allowing the aye-aye to see well at night and retrieve grubs, which are one of its primary food sources, from deep within hollow branches. However, the aye-aye’s striking appearance may end up causing its extinction.

The people of Madagascar believe that the aye-aye is a type of spirit animal, and that its appearance is an omen of death. Whenever one is sighted, it is immediately killed. When combined with the loss of large swaths of jungle habitat, this practice may result in the loss of a superb example of life's variety.

2. Based on the information given in the passage, the intended audience would most likely be

- (A) visitors to a natural science museum
- (B) professors of evolutionary science
- (C) a third-grade science class
- (D) students of comparative religions
- (E) attendees at a world cultural symposium

Question 3

3. Consider each of the choices separately and select all that apply.

Which of the following statements can be logically inferred from the passage?

- (A) Taxonomic classifications are not always absolute.
- (B) The traditional religion of Madagascar involves augury.
- (C) There are no longer enough resources on the main island to support the aye-aye population.

Question 4

Adapted from "Ramblings in Cheapside" by Samuel Butler (1890)

Walking the other day in Cheapside I saw some turtles in Mr. Sweeting's window, and was tempted to stay and look at them. As I did so I was struck not more by the defenses with which they were hedged about, than by the fatuousness of trying to hedge that in at all which, if hedged thoroughly, must die of its own defensefulness. The holes for the head and feet through which the turtle leaks out, as it were, on to the exterior world, and through which it again absorbs the exterior world into itself—"catching on" through them to things that are thus both turtle and not turtle at one and the same time—these holes stultify the armor, and show it to have been designed by a creature with more of faithfulness to a fixed idea, and hence one-sidedness, than of that quick sense of relative importance and their changes, which is the main factor of good living.

The turtle obviously had no sense of proportion; it differed so widely from myself that I could not comprehend it; and as this word occurred to me, it occurred also that until my body comprehended its body in a physical material sense, neither would my mind be able to comprehend its mind with any thoroughness. For unity of mind can only be consummated by unity of body; everything, therefore, must be in some respects both knave and fool to all that which has not eaten it, or by which it has not been eaten. As long as the turtle was in the window and I in the street outside, there was no chance of our comprehending one another.

1. The author's primary purpose in discussing a turtle in a shop window is to _____.

mock shopkeepers in Cheapside

demonstrate the inability of a human to truly understand another creature

demonstrate the superiority of humanity

convince the reader to buy a turtle as a pet

mock a turtle's existence as an odd creature

Question 5

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2. The narrator's attitude toward turtles can be best summarized as _____.

cynical about a turtle's ability to live without humans

petulant and immature

jovial about their odd quirks and habits

full of wonder and intrigue

looking down on a turtle's existence

Question 6

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3. What can be known from the passage about Cheapside?

Many turtles live there.

It is a disreputable place, where no one ever goes.

It has a commercial section with various stores.

Only pet stores exist there.

The stores are markedly inexpensive.

Question 7

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4. The passage assumes all EXCEPT which of the following?

The reader has looked through a store window before.

The reader understands how a turtle can hide in its shell.

None of the other answers.

The reader has never encountered a turtle.

The reader has an understanding of how stores operate.

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5. "Fatuousness," as used in the second sentence, in context means _____.

sharpness and cleverness

excessiveness and extraneousness

solidity and perfection

uselessness and inanity

utility and purposefulness

Question 9

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6. The author's main argument in the passage is _____.

that a shop window is a useless diversion

that humans are superior to all other animals on Earth

that humans should treat other animals better

that a human and a turtle are so different that they cannot understand each other

that a shop window can hold any number of unusual creatures

Question 10

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7. The author's use of a turtle is _____.

as a scientific inquiry about the anatomy of turtles

necessary to his overall point, since no other animal could serve the same purpose in the passage

metaphorical and not dependent on the actual features of turtles

to demonstrate the difference between humans and other creatures

to mock and criticize turtles