

# GRE Verbal Practice Test 28

## Reading Comprehension

### Question 1

Sanctified by remarkable natural merits, landscapes nourish the human spirit and create special memories in us. Natural parks such as Yellowstone and Kruger in the United States are large, magnificent, and wild, and some such as the Buttes-Chaumont in the neighborhood of Paris are warmly local. However, natural parks, especially those in urban environments, are fast depleting to accommodate the needs of the burgeoning population. There is no denying the fact that human needs will prevail, yet, shouldn't a line be drawn between human need and hunger for more?

**What is the main purpose of the passage?**

**Options:**

1. to convey how parks play a role in human emotions
2. to drive home the fact that human needs are inevitable
3. to emphasize the limitless nature of human greed
4. to highlight how only countries like the U.S. and France have natural parks while none others have
5. to convey the importance of preserving natural parks in urban as well as non-urban settings

### Question 2

The ability to pay attention is considered such an essential life skill that the lack of it has become a widespread medical problem. Nearly 4 to 5 percent of the American children are now diagnosed with attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). In recent years, however, the surprising benefits of not paying attention

have been found. For instance, researchers have found a surprising link between daydreaming and creativity - people who daydream more are also better at generating new ideas. Other studies have found that employees are more productive when they're allowed to engage in "Internet leisure browsing" and that people unable to concentrate due to severe brain damage actually score above average on various problem-solving tasks. According to the scientists, the inability to focus helps ensure a richer mixture of thoughts in consciousness. Because these people struggled to filter the world, they ended up letting everything in, they couldn't help but be open-minded. Such lapses in attention turn out to be a crucial creative skill. When we're faced with a difficult problem, the most obvious solution is probably wrong. At such moments, it often helps to consider far-fetched possibilities, to approach the task from an unconventional perspective. And this is why distraction is helpful: People unable to focus are more likely to consider information that might seem irrelevant but will later inspire the breakthrough.

This does not mean that attention is not an important mental skill, or that attention-deficit disorders are not a serious problem. There's clearly nothing advantageous about struggling in the classroom, or not being able to follow instructions. Nevertheless, this new research demonstrates that, for a certain segment of the population, distractibility can actually be a net positive. Although we think that more attention can solve everything, that's not the case.

**It can be inferred from the passage that the author would agree with which of the following statements?**

**Options:**

1. Neither complete attention nor attention deficit solves everything.
2. Attention deficit disorder is not a serious problem.
3. With complete attention, you can solve any problem in this world.
4. A substantial amount of office hours of all employees should be earmarked for Internet leisure browsing.

5. It is ok to have attention deficit disorder as it has brought a lot of surprising benefits.

### Question 3

There are two kinds of yawns. The first, a spontaneous yawn, occurs when someone is bored or exhausted. The second, a "contagious" yawn, does not begin until early childhood, and occurs only among humans and chimpanzees. This sort occurs in response to thinking about yawning, or, as the word contagious suggests, seeing or hearing someone else yawn.

So far, scientists have been unable to understand why contagious yawning occurs, or why some individuals are more susceptible to such yawns than others. Previous studies have suggested a link between contagious yawning and empathy, or the ability to understand another's feelings. Those who suffer from autism or schizophrenia, it has been found, both of which involve impaired social skills, have fewer contagious yawns than others. It has also been thought that tiredness can contribute to contagious yawning.

A new study suggests that contagious yawns have no link with empathy or tiredness; the only factor is age. People are less likely to yawn when others do as they get older. This study, conducted by a team of researchers from the Duke Center for Human Genome Variation and published in the journal Plos One, is the most comprehensive look so far at factors that influence contagious yawns. As many as 328 healthy volunteers, put to a cognitive test with a comprehensive questionnaire that included measures of empathy, energy levels, and sleepiness, were made to watch a three-minute video of people yawning. They had to record the number of times they yawned while watching the video.

Researchers found that some individuals were less susceptible to contagious yawns, and, with age neutralized as a factor, there was no strong connection between contagious yawning and levels of empathy or tiredness. Age, it was found, was able to explain 8 percent of the variation in contagious yawning.

The researchers are examining whether the ability to catch yawns from other people is inherited, with the hope of addressing mental health disorders. Understanding the genes that might encode susceptibility to contagious yawning, they hope, could lead them to genes (or their variants) that are associated with schizophrenia and autism.

**What is the implication of the last line?**

**Options:**

1. Understanding the mechanism of contagious yawns could lead to scientists to design cures for schizophrenia and autism
2. Identification of the genes responsible for contagious yawning leading to a better understanding of the genetics behind schizophrenia and autism
3. Understanding the susceptibility of genes to contagious diseases holds the key to cure them
4. Genes related to contagious yawning and schizophrenia have similar coding
5. People suffering from schizophrenia and autism are not susceptible to contagious yawning

**Question 4**

Reviving the practice of using elements of popular music in classical composition, an approach that had been in hibernation in the United States during the 1960s, composer Philip Glass (born 1937) embraced the ethos of popular music in his compositions. Glass based two symphonies on music by rock musicians David Bowie and Brian Eno, but the symphonies' sound is distinctively his. Popular elements do not appear out of place in Glass's classical music, which from its early days has shared certain harmonies and rhythms with rock music. Yet this use of popular elements has not made Glass a composer of popular music. His music is not a version of popular music packaged to attract classical listeners; it is high art for listeners steeped in rock rather than the classics.

**Select only one answer choice.**

1. The passage addresses which of the following issues related to Glass's use of popular elements in his classical compositions?
  - A. How it is regarded by listeners who prefer rock to the classics
  - B. How it has affected the commercial success of Glass's music
  - C. Whether it has contributed to a revival of interest among other composers in using popular elements in their compositions
  - D. Whether it has had a detrimental effect on Glass's reputation as a composer of classical music
  - E. Whether it has caused certain of Glass's works to be derivative in quality

### Question 5

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

2. The passage suggests that Glass's work displays which of the following qualities?
  - A. A return to the use of popular music in classical compositions
  - B. An attempt to elevate rock music to an artistic status more closely approximating that of classical music
  - C. A long-standing tendency to incorporate elements from two apparently disparate musical styles

### Question 6

3. Select the sentence that distinguishes two ways of integrating rock and classical music.

In the United States the per capita costs of schooling have risen almost as fast as the cost of medical treatment. But increased treatment by both doctors and teachers has shown steadily declining results. Medical expenses concentrated on those above forty-five have doubled several times over a period of forty years with a resulting 3 percent increase in the life expectancy of men. The increase in educational expenditures has produced even stranger results; otherwise President Nixon could not have been moved this spring to promise that every child shall soon have the "Right to Read" before leaving school.

In the United States it would take eighty billion dollars per year to provide what educators regard as equal treatment for all in grammar and high school. This is well over twice the \$36 billion now being spent. Independent cost projections prepared at HEW and at the University of Florida indicate that by 1974 the comparable figures will be \$107 billion as against the \$45 billion now projected, and these figures wholly omit the enormous costs of what is called "higher education," for which demand is growing even faster. The United States, which spent nearly eighty billion dollars in 1969 for "defense," including its deployment in Vietnam, is obviously too poor to provide equal schooling. The President's committee for the study of school finance should ask not how to support or how to trim such increasing costs, but how they can be avoided.

Equal obligatory schooling must be recognized as at least economically unfeasible. In Latin America the amount of public money spent on each graduate student is between 350 and 1,500 times the amount spent on the median citizen (that is, the citizen who holds the middle ground between the poorest and the richest). In the United States the discrepancy is smaller, but the discrimination is keener. The richest parents, some 10 percent, can afford private education for their children and help them to benefit from foundation grants. But in addition they obtain ten times the per capita amount of public funds if this is compared with the per capita expenditure made on the children of the 10 percent who are poorest. The principal reasons for this are that rich children stay longer in school, that a year in a university is disproportionately more expensive than a year in high school, and that most private universities depend—at least indirectly—on tax-derived finances.

Obligatory schooling inevitably polarizes a society; it also grades the nations of the world according to an international caste system. Countries are rated like castes whose educational dignity is determined by the average years of schooling of its citizens, a rating which is closely related to per capita gross national product, and much more painful.

7. Which one of the following best expresses the main idea of the passage?
- (A) The educational shortcomings of the United States, in contrast to those of Latin America, are merely the result of poor allocation of available resources.
  - (B) Both education and medical care are severely underfunded.
  - (C) Defense spending is sapping funds which would be better spent in education.
  - (D) Obligatory schooling must be scrapped if the goal of educational equality is to be realized.
  - (E) Obligatory education does not and cannot provide equal education.

8. Consider each of the three choices and select all that apply.  
The author most likely would agree with which one of the following solutions to the problems presented by obligatory education?

- (A) Education should not be obligatory at all.
- (B) Education should not be obligatory for those who cannot afford it.
- (C) More money should be diverted to education for the poorest.

9. According to the passage, education is like health care in all of the following ways EXCEPT:

- (A) It has reached a point of diminishing returns, increased spending no longer results in significant improvement.
- (B) It has an inappropriate "more is better" philosophy.
- (C) It is unfairly distributed between rich and poor.
- (D) The amount of money being spent on older students is increasing.
- (E) Its cost has increased nearly as fast.

10. Why does the author consider the results from increased educational expenditures to be "even stranger" than those from increased medical expenditures?

- (A) The aging of the population should have had an impact only on medical care, not on education.
- (B) The "Right to Read" should be a bare minimum, not a Presidential ideal.
- (C) Educational spending has shown even poorer results than spending on health care, despite greater increases.
- (D) Education has become even more discriminatory than health care.
- (E) It inevitably polarizes society.

11. Which one of the following most accurately characterizes the author's attitude with respect to obligatory schooling?

- (A) qualified admiration
- (B) critical
- (C) neutral
- (D) ambivalent
- (E) resentful

12. The highlighted portions of the passage imply that

- (A) equal education is possible in the United States but not in Latin America.
- (B) equal education for all at the graduate level is an unrealistic ideal.
- (C) educational spending is more efficient in the United States.
- (D) higher education is more expensive than lower education both in Latin America and in the United States, but more so in Latin America.
- (E) underfunding of lower education is a worldwide problem.