

## SAT Reading Test 7

### Questions 11-20 are based on the following passage and supplementary material.

This passage is adapted from Taras Grescoe, *Straphanger: Saving Our Cities and Ourselves from the Automobile*. ©2012 by Taras Grescoe.

Though there are 600 million cars on the planet, and counting, there are also seven billion people, which means that for the vast majority of us getting  
Line around involves taking buses, ferryboats, commuter  
5 trains, streetcars, and subways. In other words, traveling to work, school, or the market means being a straphanger: somebody who, by choice or necessity, relies on public transport, rather than a privately owned automobile.

10 Half the population of New York, Toronto, and London do not own cars. Public transport is how most of the people of Asia and Africa, the world's most populous continents, travel. Every day, subway systems carry 155 million passengers, thirty-four  
15 times the number carried by all the world's airplanes, and the global public transport market is now valued at \$428 billion annually. A century and a half after the invention of the internal combustion engine, private car ownership is still an anomaly.

20 And yet public transportation, in many minds, is the opposite of glamour—a squalid last resort for those with one too many impaired driving charges, too poor to afford insurance, or too decrepit to get behind the wheel of a car. In much of North  
25 America, they are right: taking transit is a depressing experience. Anybody who has waited far too long on a street corner for the privilege of boarding a lurching, overcrowded bus, or wrestled luggage onto subways and shuttles to get to a big city airport,  
30 knows that transit on this continent tends to be underfunded, ill-maintained, and ill-planned. Given the opportunity, who wouldn't drive? Hopping in a car almost always gets you to your destination more quickly.

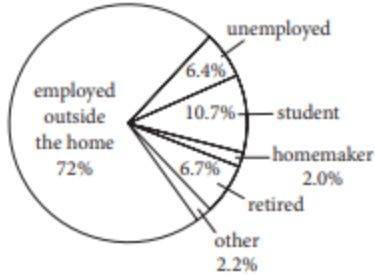
35 It doesn't have to be like this. Done right, public transport can be faster, more comfortable, and cheaper than the private automobile. In Shanghai, German-made magnetic levitation trains skim over elevated tracks at 266 miles an hour, whisking people  
40 to the airport at a third of the speed of sound. In provincial French towns, electric-powered streetcars run silently on rubber tires, sliding through narrow streets along a single guide rail set into cobblestones. From Spain to Sweden, Wi-Fi equipped high-speed  
45 trains seamlessly connect with highly ramified metro

networks, allowing commuters to work on laptops as they prepare for same-day meetings in once distant capital cities. In Latin America, China, and India, working people board fast-loading buses that move  
50 like subway trains along dedicated busways, leaving the sedans and SUVs of the rich mired in dawn-to-dusk traffic jams. And some cities have transformed their streets into cycle-path freeways, making giant strides in public health and safety and  
55 the sheer livability of their neighborhoods—in the process turning the workaday bicycle into a viable form of mass transit.

If you credit the demographers, this transit trend has legs. The "Millenials," who reached adulthood  
60 around the turn of the century and now outnumber baby boomers, tend to favor cities over suburbs, and are far more willing than their parents to ride buses and subways. Part of the reason is their ease with iPads, MP3 players, Kindles, and smartphones: you  
65 can get some serious texting done when you're not driving, and earbuds offer effective insulation from all but the most extreme commuting annoyances. Even though there are more teenagers in the country than ever, only ten million have a driver's license  
70 (versus twelve million a generation ago). Baby boomers may have been raised in Leave It to Beaver suburbs, but as they retire, a significant contingent is favoring older cities and compact towns where they have the option of walking and riding bikes. Seniors,  
75 too, are more likely to use transit, and by 2025, there will be 64 million Americans over the age of sixty-five. Already, dwellings in older neighborhoods in Washington, D.C., Atlanta, and Denver, especially those near light-rail or subway stations, are  
80 commanding enormous price premiums over suburban homes. The experience of European and Asian cities shows that if you make buses, subways, and trains convenient, comfortable, fast, and safe, a surprisingly large percentage of citizens will opt to  
85 ride rather than drive.

**Figure 1**

Primary Occupation of Public Transportation Passengers in US Cities



**Figure 2**

Purpose of Public Transportation Trips in US Cities

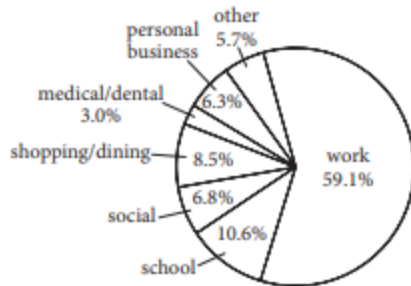


Figure 1 and figure 2 are adapted from the American Public Transportation Association, "A Profile of Public Transportation Passenger Demographics and Travel Characteristics Reported in On-Board Surveys." ©2007 by American Public Transportation Association.

**11**

What function does the third paragraph (lines 20-34) serve in the passage as a whole?

- A) It acknowledges that a practice favored by the author of the passage has some limitations.
- B) It illustrates with detail the arguments made in the first two paragraphs of the passage.
- C) It gives an overview of a problem that has not been sufficiently addressed by the experts mentioned in the passage.
- D) It advocates for abandoning a practice for which the passage as a whole provides mostly favorable data.

**12**

Which choice does the author explicitly cite as an advantage of automobile travel in North America?

- A) Environmental impact
- B) Convenience
- C) Speed
- D) Cost

**13**

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

- A) Lines 5-9 ("In . . . automobile")
- B) Lines 20-24 ("And . . . car")
- C) Lines 24-26 ("In . . . experience")
- D) Lines 32-34 ("Hopping . . . quickly")

14

The central idea of the fourth paragraph (lines 35-57) is that

- A) European countries excel at public transportation.
- B) some public transportation systems are superior to travel by private automobile.
- C) Americans should mimic foreign public transportation systems when possible.
- D) much international public transportation is engineered for passengers to work while on board.

15

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

- A) Line 35 ("It . . . this")
- B) Lines 35-37 ("Done . . . automobile")
- C) Lines 37-40 ("In . . . sound")
- D) Lines 44-48 ("From . . . cities")

16

As used in line 58, "credit" most nearly means

- A) endow.
- B) attribute.
- C) believe.
- D) honor.

17

As used in line 61, "favor" most nearly means

- A) indulge.
- B) prefer.
- C) resemble.
- D) serve.

18

Which choice best supports the conclusion that public transportation is compatible with the use of personal electronic devices?

- A) Lines 59-63 ("The . . . subways")
- B) Lines 63-67 ("Part . . . annoyances")
- C) Lines 68-70 ("Even . . . ago")
- D) Lines 77-81 ("Already . . . homes")

19

Which choice is supported by the data in the first figure?

- A) The number of students using public transportation is greater than the number of retirees using public transportation.
- B) The number of employed people using public transportation and the number of unemployed people using public transportation is roughly the same.
- C) People employed outside the home are less likely to use public transportation than are homemakers.
- D) Unemployed people use public transportation less often than do people employed outside the home.

20

Taken together, the two figures suggest that most people who use public transportation

- A) are employed outside the home and take public transportation to work.
- B) are employed outside the home but take public transportation primarily in order to run errands.
- C) use public transportation during the week but use their private cars on weekends.
- D) use public transportation only until they are able to afford to buy a car.