

Reading SAT Practice Test 14

Directions: *The SAT Reading test consists of five passages on a variety of topics. Each passage is followed by a series of eleven questions. Carefully read the passage that is provided and answer the multiple choice questions based on what is stated or implied. **The answers and explanations will be provided at the end of the test***

Questions 1–10 are based on the following passage.

The following passage is adapted from, “An Introduction to the Prose and Poetical Works of John Milton” by Hiram Corson. Originally published in 2014.

John Milton’s prose works are perhaps not read, at the present day, to the extent demanded by their great and varied merits. Some of his poetical works are extensively “studied” in the schools, and a somewhat reasonable stab at the study of some of his prose works is made in departments of rhetoric, but his prose works cannot be said to be read in the best sense of the word,—that is, with all faculties focused upon the subject-matter as one of major importance, with an openness of heart, and with an accompanying interest in the general loftiness of Milton’s diction. In short, everyone should train himself or herself to read any great author with the fullest loyalty to the author — by which is not meant that all the author’s thoughts, opinions and beliefs are to be accepted, but that what they really are be adequately apprehended. In other words, loyalty to an author means that every reader fully attempt to understand and receive the work’s intended meaning and spirit.

Mark Pattison, in his *Life of Milton*, while fully recognizing the grand features of the prose works as monuments of the English language, undervalues, or rather does not value at all, Milton’s services to the cause of political and religious liberty as a polemic prose writer, and considers it a thing to be much regretted that he engaged at all in the great contest for political, religious, and other forms of liberty. This seems to be the one unacceptable feature of his very able life of the

poet. Looking upon the life of Milton the politician merely as a sad and ignominious interlude in the life of Milton the poet, Pattison cannot be expected to entertain the idea that the poem is in any sense the work of the politician. Yet we cannot help thinking that the tension and elevation which Milton's nature had undergone in the mighty struggle, together with the heroic dedication of his faculties to the most serious objects, must have had not a little to do both with the final choice of his subject and with the tone of his poems. Milton's great Puritan poetry could hardly have been written by anyone but a militant Puritan.

Milton was writing prose when, some think, he should have been writing poetry, and, as Pattison claims, these works of Milton had no influence whatsoever on current events. But they certainly had an influence, and a very great influence, on current events not many years after. The restoration of Charles II did not mean that the work of Puritanism was undone, and that Milton's pamphlets were to be of no effect. It was in a large measure due to that work and to those pamphlets that in a few years—only fourteen after Milton's death—the constitutional basis of the monarchy underwent a radical change for the better,—a change which would have been a great pleasure to Milton, if he could have lived to see it. A man constituted as Milton was could not have kept himself apart from the great conflicts of his time. Although the direct subjects of his polemic prose works may not hold a huge interest for the general reader in the present-day, they are all, independently of their subjects, charged with inherent truth and as profoundly expressive as his poetry. All of Milton's work, both poetry and prose, are full of bright gems of enduring truth.

Question 1

The main purpose of the first paragraph is

A to describe a failure to appreciate Milton's prose.

- B to explain how readers can understand what an author intends.
- C to criticize Pattison for missing the importance Milton's politics had on his poetry.
- D to explain the lasting impact and value of Milton prose.

Question 2

Why does the author use quotation marks around the word "studied" in sentence 2?

- A To show that most English teachers are not qualified for their positions.
- B To explain why Milton is little understood by the general public.
- C To indicate students rarely complete their homework on poets such as Milton.
- D To emphasize the incompleteness with which Milton is understood and examined.

Question 3

As used in the first sentence of paragraph 2, "polemic" most nearly means

- A having an intricate or exquisite quality.
- B covering many different topics.
- C socially engaged in activism.
- D incongruously political.

Question 4

Which sentence(s) best detail(s) the author's criticism of Mark Pattison's work?

- A Paragraph 2, Sentence 1 ("Mark...liberty.")
- B Paragraph 2, Sentences 2–3 ("This...politician.")

- C Paragraph 2, Sentence 4 (“Yet...poems.”)
- D Paragraph 2, Sentence 5 (“Milton’s...Puritan.”)

Question 5

The author included the sentence, “But they certainly had an influence, and a very great influence, on current events not many years after” (2nd sentence of paragraph 3) in order to

- A refute the sentence immediately before it.
- B change to a new topic before ending the essay.
- C praise the far-reaching impact of Pattison’s work.
- D introduce a criticism that has not yet been discussed.

Question 6

The primary purpose of this passage is to

- A compare Milton’s poetry to his prose works, and emphasize the latent value of the latter.
- B decry the unwarranted criticism Milton’s prose works have received.
- C recommend a reevaluation of Milton’s prose works by Pattison and similar scholars.
- D criticize Pattison’s interpretation of Milton’s motives and emphasize the true value of his prose work.

Question 7

Which of the following best summarizes the author’s interpretation of Pattison’s work on Milton?

- A It does not appreciate Milton’s writing.
- B It is regrettable and ignominious.

- C It is notable but inadequate.
- D It fails to consider both Milton's poetical and prose contributions.

Question 8

The author of the passage implies all of the following about Milton EXCEPT

- A Milton's polemical writing favored the ideals of the Puritan movement.
- B Milton's interest in polemic prose did not influence his poetry.
- C Milton was actively engaged in the politics of his day.
- D Milton likely opposed monarchism and totalitarian rule.

Question 9

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

(Use the left arrow below to go back and review the previous question.)

- A Paragraph 2, Sentence 4 ("Yet...poems.")
- B Paragraph 3, Sentences 1–2 ("Milton...after.")
- C Paragraph 3, Sentences 3–4 ("The restoration...it.")
- D Paragraph 3, Sentences 5–6 ("A man...poetry.")

Question 10

As used in paragraph 3, the word "constituted" most nearly means

- A with a repetitive behavioral pattern.
- B initiated in a particular manner.
- C with a certain predisposition.

D in a position of leadership.