

Reading SAT Practice Test 18

Questions 22-31 are based on the following passage and supplementary material.

This passage is adapted from J. D. Watson and F. H. C. Crick, "Genetical Implications of the Structure of Deoxyribonucleic Acid." ©1953 by Nature Publishing Group. Watson and Crick deduced the structure of DNA using evidence from Rosalind Franklin and R. G. Gosling's X-ray crystallography diagrams of DNA and from Erwin Chargaff's data on the base composition of DNA.

The chemical formula of deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) is now well established. The molecule is a very long chain, the backbone of which consists of a regular alternation of sugar and phosphate groups.

To each sugar is attached a nitrogenous base, which can be of four different types. Two of the possible bases—adenine and guanine—are purines, and the other two—thymine and cytosine—are pyrimidines. So far as is known, the sequence of bases along the chain is irregular. The monomer unit, consisting of phosphate, sugar and base, is known as a nucleotide.

The first feature of our structure which is of biological interest is that it consists not of one chain, but of two. These two chains are both coiled around a common fiber axis. It has often been assumed that since there was only one chain in the chemical formula there would only be one in the structural unit. However, the density, taken with the X-ray evidence, suggests very strongly that there are two.

The other biologically important feature is the manner in which the two chains are held together. This is done by hydrogen bonds between the bases. The bases are joined together in pairs, a single base from one chain being hydrogen-bonded to a single base from the other. The important point is that only certain pairs of bases will fit into the structure. One member of a pair must be a purine and the other a pyrimidine in order to bridge between the two chains. If a pair consisted of two purines, for example, there would not be room for it.

We believe that the bases will be present almost entirely in their most probable forms. If this is true, the conditions for forming hydrogen bonds are more restrictive, and the only pairs of bases possible are: adenine with thymine, and guanine with cytosine. Adenine, for example, can occur on either chain; but when it does, its partner on the other chain must always be thymine.

The phosphate-sugar backbone of our model is completely regular, but any sequence of the pairs of bases can fit into the structure. It follows that in a

long molecule many different permutations are possible, and it therefore seems likely that the precise sequence of bases is the code which carries the 45 genetical information. If the actual order of the bases on one of the pair of chains were given, one could write down the exact order of the bases on the other one, because of the specific pairing. Thus one chain is, as it were, the complement of the other, and it is 50 this feature which suggests how the deoxyribonucleic acid molecule might duplicate itself.

The table shows, for various organisms, the percentage of each of the four types of nitrogenous bases in that organism's DNA.

Base Composition of DNA				
Organism	Percentage of base in organism's DNA			
	adenine (%)	guanine (%)	cytosine (%)	thymine (%)
Maize	26.8	22.8	23.2	27.2
Octopus	33.2	17.6	17.6	31.6
Chicken	28.0	22.0	21.6	28.4
Rat	28.6	21.4	20.5	28.4
Human	29.3	20.7	20.0	30.0
Grasshopper	29.3	20.5	20.7	29.3
Sea urchin	32.8	17.7	17.3	32.1
Wheat	27.3	22.7	22.8	27.1
Yeast	31.3	18.7	17.1	32.9
<i>E. coli</i>	24.7	26.0	25.7	23.6

Adapted from Manju Bansal, "DNA Structure: Revisiting the Watson-Crick Double Helix." ©2003 by Current Science Association, Bangalore.

22

The authors use the word "backbone" in lines 3 and 39 to indicate that

- A) only very long chains of DNA can be taken from an organism with a spinal column.
- B) the main structure of a chain in a DNA molecule is composed of repeating units.
- C) a chain in a DNA molecule consists entirely of phosphate groups or of sugars.
- D) nitrogenous bases form the main structural unit of DNA.

23

A student claims that nitrogenous bases pair randomly with one another. Which of the following statements in the passage contradicts the student's claim?

- A) Lines 5-6 ("To each . . . types")
- B) Lines 9-10 ("So far . . . irregular")
- C) Lines 23-25 ("The bases . . . other")
- D) Lines 27-29 ("One member . . . chains")

24

In the second paragraph (lines 12-19), what do the authors claim to be a feature of biological interest?

- A) The chemical formula of DNA
- B) The common fiber axis
- C) The X-ray evidence
- D) DNA consisting of two chains

25

The authors' main purpose of including the information about X-ray evidence and density is to

- A) establish that DNA is the molecule that carries the genetic information.
- B) present an alternate hypothesis about the composition of a nucleotide.
- C) provide support for the authors' claim about the number of chains in a molecule of DNA.
- D) confirm the relationship between the density of DNA and the known chemical formula of DNA.

26

Based on the passage, the authors' statement "If a pair consisted of two purines, for example, there would not be room for it" (lines 29-30) implies that a pair

- A) of purines would be larger than the space between a sugar and a phosphate group.
- B) of purines would be larger than a pair consisting of a purine and a pyrimidine.
- C) of pyrimidines would be larger than a pair of purines.
- D) consisting of a purine and a pyrimidine would be larger than a pair of pyrimidines.

27

The authors' use of the words "exact," "specific," and "complement" in lines 47-49 in the final paragraph functions mainly to

- A) confirm that the nucleotide sequences are known for most molecules of DNA.
- B) counter the claim that the sequences of bases along a chain can occur in any order.
- C) support the claim that the phosphate-sugar backbone of the authors' model is completely regular.
- D) emphasize how one chain of DNA may serve as a template to be copied during DNA replication.

28

Based on the table and passage, which choice gives the correct percentages of the purines in yeast DNA?

- A) 17.1% and 18.7%
- B) 17.1% and 32.9%
- C) 18.7% and 31.3%
- D) 31.3% and 32.9%

29

Do the data in the table support the authors' proposed pairing of bases in DNA?

- A) Yes, because for each given organism, the percentage of adenine is closest to the percentage of thymine, and the percentage of guanine is closest to the percentage of cytosine.
- B) Yes, because for each given organism, the percentage of adenine is closest to the percentage of guanine, and the percentage of cytosine is closest to the percentage of thymine.
- C) No, because for each given organism, the percentage of adenine is closest to the percentage of thymine, and the percentage of guanine is closest to the percentage of cytosine.
- D) No, because for each given organism, the percentage of adenine is closest to the percentage of guanine, and the percentage of cytosine is closest to the percentage of thymine.

30

According to the table, which of the following pairs of base percentages in sea urchin DNA provides evidence in support of the answer to the previous question?

- A) 17.3% and 17.7%
- B) 17.3% and 32.1%
- C) 17.3% and 32.8%
- D) 17.7% and 32.8%

31

Based on the table, is the percentage of adenine in each organism's DNA the same or does it vary, and which statement made by the authors is most consistent with that data?

- A) The same; "Two of . . . pyrimidines" (lines 6-8)
- B) The same; "The important . . . structure" (lines 25-26)
- C) It varies; "Adenine . . . thymine" (lines 36-38)
- D) It varies; "It follows . . . information" (lines 41-45)

Questions 32-41 are based on the following passage.

This passage is adapted from Virginia Woolf, *Three Guineas*. ©1938 by Harcourt, Inc. Here, Woolf considers the situation of women in English society.

Close at hand is a bridge over the River Thames, an admirable vantage ground for us to make a survey. The river flows beneath; barges pass, laden with timber, bursting with corn; there on one side are the domes and spires of the city; on the other, Westminster and the Houses of Parliament. It is a place to stand on by the hour, dreaming. But not now. Now we are pressed for time. Now we are here to consider facts; now we must fix our eyes upon the procession—the procession of the sons of educated men.

There they go, our brothers who have been educated at public schools and universities, mounting those steps, passing in and out of those doors, ascending those pulpits, preaching, teaching, administering justice, practising medicine, transacting business, making money. It is a solemn sight always—a procession, like a caravanserai crossing a desert. . . . But now, for the past twenty years or so, it is no longer a sight merely, a photograph, or fresco scrawled upon the walls of time, at which we can look with merely an esthetic appreciation. For there, trapesing along at the tail end of the procession, we go ourselves. And that makes a difference. We who have looked so long at the pageant in books, or from a curtained window watched educated men leaving the house at about nine-thirty to go to an office, returning to the house at about six-thirty from an office, need look passively no longer. We too can leave the house, can mount those steps, pass in and out of those doors, . . . make money, administer justice. . . . We who now agitate these humble pens may in another century or two speak from a pulpit. Nobody will dare contradict us then; we shall be the mouthpieces of the divine spirit—a solemn thought, is it not? Who can say whether, as time goes on, we may not dress in military uniform, with gold lace on our breasts, swords at our sides, and something like the old family coal-scuttle on our heads, save that that venerable object was never decorated with plumes of white horsehair. You laugh—indeed the shadow of the private house still makes those dresses look a little queer. We have worn private clothes so long. . . . But we have not come here to laugh, or to

talk of fashions—men's and women's. We are here, on the bridge, to ask ourselves certain questions. And they are very important questions; and we have very little time in which to answer them. The

50 questions that we have to ask and to answer about that procession during this moment of transition are so important that they may well change the lives of all men and women for ever. For we have to ask ourselves, here and now, do we wish to join that procession, or don't we? On what terms shall we join that procession? Above all, where is it leading us, the procession of educated men? The moment is short; it may last five years; ten years, or perhaps only a matter of a few months longer. . . . But, you will object, you have no time to think; you have your battles to fight, your rent to pay, your bazaars to organize. That excuse shall not serve you, Madam. As you know from your own experience, and there are facts that prove it, the daughters of educated men 65 have always done their thinking from hand to mouth; not under green lamps at study tables in the cloisters of secluded colleges. They have thought while they stirred the pot, while they rocked the cradle. It was thus that they won us the right to our brand-new sixpence. It falls to us now to go on thinking; how are we to spend that sixpence? Think we must. Let us think in offices; in omnibuses; while we are standing in the crowd watching Coronations and Lord Mayor's Shows; let us think . . . in the 75 gallery of the House of Commons; in the Law Courts; let us think at baptisms and marriages and funerals. Let us never cease from thinking—what is this "civilization" in which we find ourselves? What are these ceremonies and why should we take part in them? What are these professions and why should we make money out of them? Where in short is it leading us, the procession of the sons of educated men?

32

The main purpose of the passage is to

- A) emphasize the value of a tradition.
- B) stress the urgency of an issue.
- C) highlight the severity of social divisions.
- D) question the feasibility of an undertaking.

33

The central claim of the passage is that

- A) educated women face a decision about how to engage with existing institutions.
- B) women can have positions of influence in English society only if they give up some of their traditional roles.
- C) the male monopoly on power in English society has had grave and continuing effects.
- D) the entry of educated women into positions of power traditionally held by men will transform those positions.

34

Woolf uses the word "we" throughout the passage mainly to

- A) reflect the growing friendliness among a group of people.
- B) advance the need for candor among a group of people.
- C) establish a sense of solidarity among a group of people.
- D) reinforce the need for respect among a group of people.

35

According to the passage, Woolf chooses the setting of the bridge because it

- A) is conducive to a mood of fanciful reflection.
- B) provides a good view of the procession of the sons of educated men.
- C) is within sight of historic episodes to which she alludes.
- D) is symbolic of the legacy of past and present sons of educated men.

36

Woolf indicates that the procession she describes in the passage

- A) has come to have more practical influence in recent years.
- B) has become a celebrated feature of English public life.
- C) includes all of the richest and most powerful men in England.
- D) has become less exclusionary in its membership in recent years.

37

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

- A) Lines 12-17 ("There . . . money")
- B) Lines 17-19 ("It . . . desert")
- C) Lines 23-24 ("For . . . ourselves")
- D) Lines 30-34 ("We . . . pulpit")

38

Woolf characterizes the questions in lines 53-57 ("For we . . . men") as both

- A) controversial and threatening.
- B) weighty and unanswerable.
- C) momentous and pressing.
- D) provocative and mysterious.

39

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

- A) Lines 46-47 ("We . . . questions")
- B) Lines 48-49 ("And . . . them")
- C) Line 57 ("The moment . . . short")
- D) Line 62 ("That . . . Madam")

40

Which choice most closely captures the meaning of the figurative "sixpence" referred to in lines 70 and 71?

- A) Tolerance
- B) Knowledge
- C) Opportunity
- D) Perspective

41

The range of places and occasions listed in lines 72-76 ("Let us . . . funerals") mainly serves to emphasize how

- A) novel the challenge faced by women is.
- B) pervasive the need for critical reflection is.
- C) complex the political and social issues of the day are.
- D) enjoyable the career possibilities for women are.