

GRE Verbal Practice Paper 43

Question 1 is based on the following reading passage.

Centuries ago, the Maya of Central America produced elaborate, deeply cut carvings in stone. The carvings would have required a cutting tool of hard stone or metal. Iron-ore deposits exist throughout Central America, but apparently the Maya never developed the technology to use them and the metals the Maya are known to have used, copper and gold, would not have been hard enough. Therefore, the Maya must have used stone tools to make these carvings.

1. Select and indicate the best answer from among the five answer choices:

Which of the following, if true, most seriously weakens the argument?

- A. In various parts of the world, civilizations that could not make iron from ore fashioned tools out of fragments of iron from meteorites.
- B. All the metallic Mayan artifacts that have been found by archaeologists are made of metals that are too soft for carving stone.
- C. The stone out of which these carvings were made is harder than the stone used by other Central American peoples.
- D. The technique that the Maya used to smelt gold and some other metals could not have been easily applied to the task of extracting iron from iron ore.
- E. Archaeologists disagree about how certain stone tools that have been found among Mayan ruins were used.

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

(A word is boldfaced and underlined for reference in answering question 3.)

In early-twentieth-century England, it was fashionable to claim that only a completely new style of writing could address a world undergoing unprecedented transformation—just as one literary critic recently claimed that only the new “aesthetic of exploratory excess” can address a world undergoing . . . well, you know. Yet in early-twentieth-century England, T. S. Eliot, a man fascinated by the “presence” of the past, wrote the most innovative poetry of his time. The lesson for today’s literary community seems obvious: a reorientation toward tradition would benefit writers no less than readers. But if our writers and critics indeed respect the novel’s rich tradition (as they claim to), then why do they disdain the urge to tell an exciting story?

2. Select and indicate the best answer from among the five answer choices:

The author of the passage suggests that present-day readers would particularly benefit from which of the following changes on the part of present-day writers and critics?

- A. An increased focus on the importance of engaging the audience in a narrative
- B. Modernization of the traditional novelistic elements already familiar to readers
- C. Embracing aspects of fiction that are generally peripheral to the interest of readers
- D. A greater recognition of how the tradition of the novel has changed over time

E. A better understanding of how certain poets such as Eliot have influenced fiction of the present time

3. Select and indicate the best answer from among the five answer choices:

The word “address” appears underlined and in boldface twice in the first sentence of the passage (lines 2-5). In the context of the passage as a whole, “address” is closest in meaning to

- A. reveal
- B. belie
- C. speak to
- D. direct attention toward
- E. attempt to remediate

Question 4 is based on the following reading passage.

Electric washing machines, first introduced in the United States in 1925, significantly reduced the amount of time spent washing a given amount of clothes, yet the average amount of time households spent washing clothes increased after 1925. This increase is partially accounted for by the fact that many urban households had previously sent their clothes to professional laundries. But the average amount of time spent washing clothes also increased for rural households with no access to professional laundries.

4. Select and indicate the best answer from among the five answer choices:

Which of the following, if true, most helps to explain why the time spent washing clothes increased in rural areas?

- A. People with access to an electric washing machine typically wore their clothes many fewer times before washing them than did people without access to electric washing machines.
- B. Households that had sent their clothes to professional laundries before 1925 were more likely than other households to purchase an electric washing machine when they became available.
- C. People living in urban households that had previously sent their clothes to professional laundries typically owned more clothes than did people living in rural households.
- D. The earliest electric washing machines required the user to spend much more time beside the machine than do modern electric washing machines.
- E. In the 1920s and 1930s the proportion of rural households with electricity was smaller than the proportion of urban households with electricity.