

Writing and Language SAT Practice Test 31

Out with the Old and the New

Modernism can be characterized by its complete rejection of 19th-century traditions and values of prudish and proper etiquette. F. Scott Fitzgerald's "Bernice Bobs Her Hair" was written in 1920 and reflects this 1 embrace of conventional morality most effectively through the character of Marjorie Harvey. Marjorie, an immensely popular and desirable young woman, is plagued by Bernice, her dull cousin who fails to entertain 2 or be entertained by Marjorie's many social environments. In a desperate attempt to make Bernice more popular and therefore, more bearable, Marjorie teaches Bernice to appear beautifully at ease with 3 itself in order to gain social favor. Fitzgerald uses Bernice's transformation to embody Modernist ideals of moral relativism and 4 the implementation of mockery of former Victorian standards of custom.

Marjorie, a quintessential modern girl, represents the destruction of conventional norms and former ideas of femininity. Young and beautiful, she is interested only in having a good time and being good company to the many suitors 5 whom flock to her. Despite her good looks and family wealth, Bernice is disliked for her stifling and overly formal Victorian propriety. 6 On the other hand, Bernice is old-fashioned, outdated, and unpopular.

The "new," modern woman is best denoted by her wit, carelessness, and lack of emotion. Where the dignified nature of Bernice is seen as snobbish and out of style, Marjorie's sardonic and indifferent manner is fresh and exciting. The stark contrast 7 between the Victorian and Modernist eras is even depicted in the girls' taste in literature: Marjorie casts off Bernice's reference to *Little Women* in exchange for the more recent Oscar Wilde.

Still, Modernism isn't let off easy in Fitzgerald's well-liked short story. 8 When Marjorie is preferred socially, she is flagrantly rude and always needing to be entertained. She instructs Bernice in social protocol in a 9 few short sentences, causing the reader to question the frivolous hedonism that dominates the early 20th century. Once Bernice adopts her cousin's apathy, she easily falls into the world of dancing, dating, and laughing. In fact, never being serious happens to come quite easy.

The equally 10 kind-hearted natures of both of Fitzgerald's characters come crashing down when Marjorie tricks Bernice into getting her hair bobbed—a style so rebellious that it causes Bernice to faint. Bernice finds revenge in severing off a golden lock of Marjorie's hair while she sleeps. While using Bernice and Marjorie to model both eras, Fitzgerald finds flaws in 11 both: the old manner is a lifeless forgery, while the new approach is only relaxed on the surface.

1. Which wording is most consistent with the paragraph as a whole?

- A. NO CHANGE
- B. ignorance
- C. rebuff
- D. significance

2.

- A. NO CHANGE
 - B. and entertainment
 - C. with the entertaining of
 - D. of the entertaining for
- 3.

- A. NO CHANGE
 - B. oneself
 - C. themselves
 - D. herself
- 4.

- A. NO CHANGE
 - B. for the mocking of
 - C. to mock
 - D. mocking
- 5.

- A. NO CHANGE
- B. who
- C. whose
- D. who's

6. Where in this paragraph should the underlined sentence be placed?

- A. where it is now
 - B. before the first sentence
 - C. before the second sentence
 - D. before the third sentence
- 7.

- A. NO CHANGE
 - B. among
 - C. for
 - D. on
- 8.

- A. NO CHANGE
 - B. While
 - C. Because
 - D. Since
- 9.

- A. NO CHANGE
- B. short few
- C. few, short
- D. short, few

10. Which choice would best be logically placed here to represent the characterizations of Marjorie and Bernice in the passage?

- A. NO CHANGE
 - B. revolutionary dogmatism
 - C. false facades
 - D. frivolous piety
- 11.

- A. NO CHANGE
- B. both, the old manner is a lifeless forgery while
- C. both-the old manner is a lifeless, forgery, while
- D. both; the old manner, is a lifeless forgery while