

Answers and Explanations for Practice Test 1

Section I: Multiple-Choice Questions

First Passage

From *The Writing Life* by Annie Dillard

- D.** The figure is a metaphor, not a simile. Synesthetic imagery moves from the stimulation of one sense to a response by another sense, as a certain odor induces the visualization of a certain color. Here, the act of reading, a visual stimulus, produces sounds.
- B.** The paragraph describes a cause (the large cardboard butterfly) and its effect (“He jumps the piece of cardboard”). The paragraph does not contain any metaphors, similes, extended definitions, or concessions to an opposing view. The paragraph is used to compare the butterfly’s and the human’s response to size, but the comparison is not made in this paragraph.
- C.** The first sentence of the third paragraph makes clear the relevance of the second. As the butterfly automatically responds to size, so humans respond to the larger-than-life stimuli of films. The last sentence makes the comparison explicit with its simile. The third paragraph doesn’t qualify the second (A and D). The second paragraph doesn’t ask why butterflies behave as they do (B).
- D.** The nine-foot handsome face with its three-foot-wide smile is an image on the movie screen to which we cannot help responding. Since the point of the paragraph is the irresistible appeal of size, the reference is to the larger-than-life film rather than to the television set.
- B.** Although the author claims she can recognize and will dislike a book when written with an eye on film adaptation, she makes no comment on the quality of the films these books may become. The first four sentences of the paragraph assert the superiority of films in depicting spectacle and scenes of action. Her dissatisfaction with novels written for film adaptation is expressed twice in terms of smell: “a faint but unmistakable, and ruinous odor” and “I smelled a rat.”
- A.** The figure here is personification. The metaphor compares books to people (who can be “uneasy,” “eager,” and wear “disguises”). The figure is neither understood nor ironic. It is a metaphor, not a simile or a syllogism.
- A.** The question uses the phrase “according to the passage,” and although the writer uses colloquial language (“smell a rat”), she doesn’t call it a characteristic of literature. These qualities are cited in the first paragraph (“the imagination’s vision . . . the moral sense . . . the intellect”) and the last (“the more purely verbal, crafted sentence by sentence, the more imaginative”).
- B.** The phrase means something like “a greater waste of time.” The best of the five choices here is “poorer occupation.” “Sorry” here means “sad” or “pathetic” (a sorry excuse), and “pursuit” means “occupation,” not “chase.”
- B.** Choice A can’t be right, since “our” is the first-person plural possessive pronoun. The phrase, like most of the passage, makes only modest claims for literature, based upon the greater subtlety of the verbal appeal. The move from the first-person singular (“I”) of the fourth paragraph to the plural here seems intended to assert a solidarity with the people “who like literature.” Choice E explains the phrase “a poor thing,” but the question asks about the plural “our.” Choice D is untrue and C most unlikely. Many readers won’t notice the allusion at all, and if they do, they won’t see that it is an oblique form of self-promotion.
- A.** Throughout the passage, the author frankly admits the limitations of the written word and concedes advantages to film in certain areas. All three of these sentences admit that writing is not powerful, or not immediately so, or not as effective in some areas as other forms of expression. The first two don’t deal with film (B). Choices C, D, and E are all untrue. The passage is genuine and doesn’t employ overstatement of irony.

11. C. The first paragraph supports the idea that life is more exciting than writing. The whole passage suggests that reading is a special taste that some people have acquired, but it makes no case for forcing literature upon those who prefer film or television. In fact, the last sentence contends that the attempt to win over nonreaders is foolish (E). The third paragraph calls film “irresistible.” The passage makes no claim of universal appeal for even the best books (C). Literature, it calmly argues, will appeal to those who like literature.
12. C. The focus of the passage is on the nature of writing and film and their differences. The only mention of the novel is of the book written to be made into film (E). The passage ignores the difficulties of being a writer (B). Although the author may agree with the ideas of A and C, neither is the central concern of this passage.
13. D. The first and last paragraphs are primarily about writing. The second paragraph, about the butterfly, is an analogy for the appeal of the big—the film as opposed to literature—and the third and fourth paragraphs are about films and novels written to become films. Choice E misrepresents the first, second, and final paragraphs. Choice A misrepresents the entire passage.
14. E. The passage doesn’t employ irony. There is a personal anecdote in the description of the author’s reading novels written for film (paragraph four), an extended analogy in paragraphs two (the butterfly) and three (the film), short sentences throughout the passage, and colloquialism in a phrase like “I smelled a rat.”

Second Passage

From *The American Crisis* by Thomas Paine

15. C. It is the author’s intent that American citizens will read this essay and thus become inspired to support the revolution. There is no indication that he is speaking to the government of either Great Britain or America, choices A and D. British citizens, Choice B, is an unreasonable answer, unsupported by the essay. Choice E is far too general; the author is speaking only to the oppressed people of America, not of the entire world.
16. D. The “summer soldier” and the “sunshine patriot” serve their country only when conditions are favorable to themselves, a behavior akin to that of the proverbial “fair-weather friend.” These conditionally patriotic citizens, who want to get involved only on their own terms, are the target of the author’s criticism in this sentence. Choices A and E are unreasonable; neither army reserves nor Special Forces existed at this time. Choice B also makes no sense; while the word “infidel” is used in the second paragraph, it has nothing to do with the quotation given. Choice C is contradictory to the meaning of the quotation given; if the professional British soldiers were instead “summer soldiers,” the revolution would be easier to accomplish.
17. B. The essay is filled with aphorisms—brief, witty sayings—and emotional appeals. Examples of aphorisms here are “the harder the conflict, the more glorious the triumph” (lines 7–8) and “What we obtain too cheap, we esteem too lightly” (lines 8–9). The author appeals to emotions in his claim that a man’s children will curse his cowardice if he fails to act now. Answer A is inaccurate because, although it can be argued that parts of the essay are allegorical, it does not use didactic rhetoric. The author’s purpose is clearly to persuade, not to teach, and the rhetoric is too highly charged with emotion to be described as didactic. Choice C is only partially correct. An argument can be made that the essay uses symbolism; for example, the man who runs the tavern at Amboy may be a symbol for all that the author considers to be wrong with American citizens. But this lone example does not constitute “heavy use.” Although “God” is mentioned in three of the four paragraphs, those references are not technically biblical allusion. The author does not use paradox and invective (D) or historical background and illustration (E).
18. E. The author groups the King of Britain with murderers, highwaymen, and housebreakers (lines 30–33) but not with cowards. The line “the blood of his children will curse his cowardice” (lines 59–60) refers to Americans who fail to support the revolution, not to the king.
19. A. God, as characterized here, is a just and principled deity who will not let a people perish through military destruction because they have “earnestly and so repeatedly sought to avoid the calamities of war” (lines 24–25). Nor, the author suggests, will this God abandon humans, giving them up “to the care of devils” (line 29). None of the references to God are negative, so “vexed” (angry), “indifferent,” and “pernicious” (extremely destructive) are inappropriate answers. Choice D (“contemplative”) implies merely that God meditates, but the author suggests a more active God.

- 20. D.** The author's forceful language is nearly the opposite of understatement. He uses anecdote (the story of the tavern owner), simile (for example, "clear as a ray of light," line 69), aphorisms (for example, "What we obtain too cheap, we esteem too lightly," lines 8–9), and symbolism (for example, the story of the tavern owner).
- 21. B.** In lines 10–13, the author claims that "Heaven knows how to put a proper price upon its goods; and it would be strange indeed if so celestial an article as freedom should not be highly rated." Choice A is inaccurate because the author never addresses the relationship between freedom and cowardice. C contradicts the essay. The author states strongly that freedom does not come easily. D also contradicts the essay; the author hopes that one day Americans will know true freedom. E is not addressed in the essay.
- 22. C.** The image of the tavern owner holding the hand of his child is likely designed to increase the emotional appeal of this essay, appealing to every man's desire to protect his family, even if he has to fight in order to save it. As the author says, it is "sufficient to awaken every man to duty." Choice A is too simplistic. True, the mention of the child shows that this man has a family, but introducing that fact is not the purpose of the reference. Answer B is incorrect because it isn't the image of the child that provokes the author's anger, but the image of the child's complacent father. The author may feel that the tavern owner is "evil," but the child's image doesn't symbolically increase the evil (D). Choice E contradicts the passage. The author appeals to the traditional values of family and freedom.
- 23. D.** Since aphorisms are short, proverbial sayings of general truth, Choice D doesn't fit the definition but rather may be more accurately considered a cliché.
- 24. A.** The author states that America's "situation is remote from the entire wrangling world, and she has nothing to do but to trade with them" (lines 49–51). The author does picture America as the "conqueror" but only with regard to winning its freedom from Britain, which makes Choice B too strong a statement to be correct. The author never implies that America should be greater than Britain (C) or sanctified by God (D). Choice E contradicts the passage; if a country conducts trade, its stance is not one of "complete isolationism."
- 25. E.** The author hopes to encourage his readers to take action, and he writes persuasively to achieve that aim.
- 26. E.** There is a strong emotional appeal as the author warns American men that their children will think them cowards and, as he claims, that the heart of a reader who does not feel as he does is "dead." Choice A has no support in the essay. Choice B isn't his purpose, the outcome he desires. He wants men to join the revolution, to take action, not simply to be afraid. C is inaccurate because the sentence quoted in this question is not directed to the king, but to American citizens. There is no mention of the superiority of either American or British forces and no mention of the advisability of retreat (D).
- 27. C.** The author demonstrates no ambivalence in this paragraph. He takes a strong stand without vacillation. The paragraph does include the other devices listed. For example, aphorism ("Tis the business of little minds to shrink," lines 64–65), simile ("My own line of reasoning is . . . as straight and clear as a ray of light," lines 67–69), parallel construction ("What signifies it to me . . . an army of them?," lines 76–79), and analogy (the comparison of the king to common thieves, line 72 to end).
- 28. D.** Clearly, this author hopes his readers will feel that it is their patriotic duty toward America to join in supporting the revolution. While the author might value "peace and rational thinking," he also clearly suggests that revolution now is necessary to produce later peace. The negative "overemotional" and "unwarranted" in choices B and C should alert you to the fact that these are not likely answers. The essay contradicts Choice E. The author suggests that "Tyranny, like hell, is not easily conquered," that is, freedom will not come immediately. In addition, the essay's primary purpose is to persuade Americans to join in the struggle to win their liberty, not simply to demand that the British government grant it to them.

Third Passage

From *The Complete Letters of Charles Lamb*

- 29. B.** The final sentence of the first paragraph verifies that Lamb "contrived to bring together whatever can be said in praise of them, dropping all the other side of the argument. . . ." This paragraph offers no evidence of Coleridge's opinion of Lamb's recollections, or any hint of what Coleridge would have written differently.

30. E. Given that the other boys at the school did not have the special privileges that Lamb had, the best synonymous term for “invidious” is “discriminatory.” The other answer choices are all too positive or neutral.
31. C. The passage states that the “present worthy sub-treasurer to the Inner Temple can explain how that happened.” Thus, one can infer that someone had likely bribed a member of the Inner Temple to obtain Lamb’s special privileges. The passage offers no evidence that Lamb’s aunt was the one who secured the favors (Choice A). Choice E is incorrect for two reasons: No evidence is offered that his friends were the ones who gave any special treatment, and the passage does not explicitly clarify that the sub-treasurer was the one who was bribed.
32. A. The speaker extensively describes Lamb’s daily food to provide a sharp contrast to the other boys’ meals, thereby emphasizing their class differences. The idea that Lamb felt superior to the other boys (Choice D), contradicts the speaker’s claim that Lamb felt sympathy for the other boys. Choice E is incorrect because the passage reinforces common ideas about British boarding schools instead of dispelling them.
33. E. The passage contains no references to any historical events, but all other answer choices can be found. Alliteration (Choice A) appears in phrases like “rotten-roasted or rare.” Examples of complex sentences (Choice B) are present throughout the second paragraph, as are the negative descriptions of the boys’ food (Choice C). Finally, the speaker turns the food descriptions into a metaphor (Choice D) that illustrates the harsh conditions of the school.
34. D. The decision to italicize the phrase “quite fresh” emphasizes that the phrase is a tongue-in-cheek inaccurate description of the beef. In addition, comparing the beef to horseflesh (“*caro equina*”) in the same sentence reinforces the sarcastic tone and ironic negativity.
35. B. This answer choice is the only one that conveys the speaker’s negative reaction to the marigolds, emphasizing how feeble this use of flowers is with wording like “detestable” and “poison the pail.” The passage provides no evidence that the marigolds, an image of nature, offer comfort or cover for the ugliness of the world.
36. A. The descriptive phrases that accompany each meal’s presentation overstate how the food so horrified the boys’ palates. Phrases such as “blue and tasteless” and “floating in the pail to poison the broth” are surely exaggerated, making the overall experience more intense. Choice B overstates the case; only the boys’ meals are described, not all that encompasses “daily life.”
37. C. The introductory material states that Lamb wrote in the guise of Coleridge “for the sake of innocent mystification” and that he was “gentle, nervous.” Therefore, it is reasonable to infer that Lamb hoped to hide his nervousness as inoffensively as possible. Although Choice B may perhaps seem plausible, the word “yearning” in this answer choice does not really address an effect; instead, it more likely represents Lamb’s *purpose*, and hiding his stammering is an unreasonable idea. The remaining answer choices have no evidence in the passage.
38. D. The “contending passion” is the ambivalence that Lamb felt over his aunt’s actions; this is clarified in the last sentence of the passage, with the use of sharply contrasting words such as “love” and “shame.”
39. A. The passage describes Lamb’s aunt as one “in whom love forbade shame,” thus her familial love overcame any potential indignity she may have felt. Answer B is inaccurate because the phrase “school was too stingy” is too strong; the passage has no evidence to point out that this is the reason *why* his aunt brought food. Answer choices C, D, and E also have no evidence in the passage.
40. E. Lamb does not feel antipathy, an extreme hatred, toward his aunt. All the other choices, such as Choice A, ignominy, which is a synonym for embarrassment, describe emotions that Lamb *does* feel.
41. D. Note #6 clarifies that, in retrospect, Lamb views his aunt’s actions far differently from the way he did at the time; with hindsight, he understands that he was acting in a “school-boy like” manner, and he now better comprehends his mixed feelings about gaining extra food while watching his aunt lose her dignity. Choices B and E have no evidence in the passage; choices A and C are contradicted in the passage.
42. C. Note #2 states that “Lamb paid a fine tribute of praise,” Coleridge “has drawn a companion picture of the better side,” and Hunt “also described . . . the life and ideals of the school.” All incorrect answer choices have no evidence in the note.
43. B. The phrase “contrived to bring together whatever can be said in praise of them” is contradicted clearly in the passage as the speaker repeatedly describes the horribly unappetizing and inedible food. This answer opposes the rhetorical purpose of the passage as a whole.

Fourth Passage

From “Of Studies” by Francis Bacon

- 44. B.** Most of these comments explain the benefits of studies (for pleasure, discussion, business, and so forth). Thus, the audience that would most benefit from this essay’s message is likely to be those who think they don’t need studies. Choices A, D, and E name audiences who are probably already aware of the benefits of studies. Poor readers (Choice C) don’t necessarily need to be convinced of the benefits of studies but rather may need to improve their reading skills.
- 45. E.** The author explains how students may focus on their studies incorrectly. One may spend too much time in studies and thus be guilty of sloth, or one may use them only to impress others (displaying affectation). Also, one may make judgments based solely upon studies, failing to consider real-life experience. The author uses the term “humor,” while modern writers might label the scholars’ tendency as temperament, or disposition.
- 46. C.** The author claims, in line 12, that studies “are perfected by experience” and in line 16, that they are “bounded in by experience.”
- 47. D.** Parallel construction is evident—“to contradict and confute,” “to believe and take,” “to find talk and discourse,” “to weigh and consider.”
- 48. E.** The author, in this sentence, discusses how people need to “prune” their natural abilities by study. At the same time, however, studies need to be “bounded in by experience.” The message is one of moderation and inclusion—neither studies nor experiences should be relied on exclusively or predominantly.
- 49. A.** The wisdom “won by observation” (lines 19–20) is analogous to that “perfected by experience” (line 12). In both instances, the author recommends reading to gain knowledge but also incorporating life’s observations and experiences to obtain wisdom.
- 50. E.** The author suggests all three of these uses in the second sentence. Personal reading brings “delight” (enjoyment), contributes to “discourse” (intelligent conversation), and aids in the “disposition of business” (sound judgment).
- 51. B.** “To spend too much time in studies is sloth” (lines 8–9) paradoxically suggests that too much work on studies can lead to laziness and lack of work. In other words, overemphasis on studies avoids work in the outside world. Choices A, D, and E are not paradoxes. Although Choice C might have paradoxical elements, it is not mentioned in the essay.
- 52. D.** In lines 20–22, the author claims that one should read “not to contradict and confute, nor to believe and take for granted, nor to find talk and discourse, but to weigh and consider.” A reader should *think*. Reading voraciously or only for pleasure, choices A and E, are not necessarily “errors.” Choices B and C are perhaps reading mistakes, but the non-thinking reader is presented as the greater problem.
- 53. D.** The sentence in this question uses analogy, comparing reading to eating. In I, reading is compared to pruning a plant. In III, a third analogy compares “impediments” in understanding to physical diseases of the body. There is no analogy in II.
- 54. C.** This sentence discusses how readers might adapt their reading style to the subject matter and their purpose. By reading “not curiously,” the author means reading without great care or scrutiny, reading cursorily. Choices A, B, and E directly contradict the idea of reading without considerable scrutiny.
- 55. A.** The sentence in the question contains parallel construction in which three ideas make up the sentence. Choice A uses the same structure, presenting three similarly phrased ideas that make up the sentence.