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Question: 1

What is the meaning of the word progressive as it is used in the second paragraph?

- A. selective
- B. gradually increasing
- C. diminishing
- D. disabling

Answer: B

Explanation:

In the second paragraph, the word progressive means "gradually increasing." The root of the word is progress, which you may know means "advancement toward a goal." With this in mind, you may be reasonably certain that answer choice B is correct. It is never a bad idea to examine the context, however. The author is describing progressive visual loss, so you might be tempted to select answer choice C or D, since they both suggest loss or diminution. Remember, however, that the adjective progressive is modifying the noun loss. Since the loss is increasing, the correct answer is B.

Question: 2

Which statement is not a detail from the passage?

- A. The use of an artificial retina requires a special pair of glasses.
- B. Retinal blindness is the inability to perceive light.
- C. Retinitis pigmentosa is curable.
- D. The artificial retina performs best in bright light.

Answer: C

Explanation:

The passage never states that retinitis pigmentosa (RP) is curable. This question may be somewhat confusing, since the passage discusses a new treatment for RP. However, the passage never declares that researchers have come up with a cure for the condition: rather, they have developed a new technology' that allows people who suffer from RP to regain some of their vision. This is not the same thing as curing RP. Kathy Blake and others like her still have RP, though they have been assisted by this new technology.

Question: 3

What is the author's intention in writing the essay?

- A. to persuade
- B. to entertain
- C. to analyze
- D. to inform

Answer: D

Explanation:

The author's intention in writing this essay is to inform. You may be tempted to answer that the author's intention is to entertain. Indeed, the author expresses his message through the story of Kathy Blake. This story, however, is not important by itself. It is clearly included as a way of explaining the new camera glasses. If the only thing the reader learned from the passage was the story of Kathy Blake, the author would probably be disappointed. At the same time, the author is not really trying to persuade the reader of anything. There is nothing controversial about these new glasses: Everyone is in favor of them. The mission of the author, then, is simply to inform the reader.

Question: 4

What is the main idea of the passage?

- A. Scientists fully understand the immune system.
- B. The immune system triggers the production of fluids.
- C. The body is under constant invasion by malicious microbes.
- D. The immune system protects the body from infection.

Answer: D

Explanation:

The main idea of the passage is that the immune system protects the body from infection. The author repeatedly alludes to the complexity and mystery of the immune system, so it cannot be true that scientists fully understand this part of the body. It is true that the immune system triggers the production of fluids, but this description misses the point. Similarly, it is true that the body is under constant invasion by malicious microbes; however, the author is much more interested in the body's response to these microbes. For this reason, the best answer choice is D.

Question: 5

Which statement is not a detail from the passage?

- A. Most invaders of the body are microbes.
- B. The immune system relies on excellent communication.
- C. Viruses are extremely sophisticated.
- D. The cells of the immune system are organized.

Answer: C

Explanation:

The passage never states that viruses are extremely sophisticated. In fact, the passage explicitly states the opposite. However, in order to know this, you need to understand the word primitive. The passage says that viruses are too primitive, or early in their development, to be classified as living organisms. A primitive organism is simple and undeveloped—exactly the opposite of sophisticated. If you do not know the word primitive, you can still answer the question by finding all three of the other answer choices in the passage.

Question: 6

What is the meaning of the word ideal as it is used in the first paragraph?

- A. thoughtful
- B. confined
- C. hostile
- D. perfect

Answer: D

Explanation:

In the first paragraph, the word ideal means "perfect." Do not be confused by the similarity of the word ideal to idea and mistakenly select answer choice A. Take a look at the context in which the word is used. The author is describing how many millions of microbes can live inside the human body. It would not make sense, then, for the author to be describing the body as a hostile environment for microbes. Moreover, whether or not the body is a confined environment would not seem to have much bearing on whether it is good for microbes. Rather, the paragraph suggests that the human body is a perfect environment for microbes.

Question: 7

Which statement is not a detail from the passage?

- A. Scientists can now see T cells.
- B. The immune system ignores tumors.
- C. The ability of the immune system to fight disease without harming the body remains mysterious.
- D. The immune system remembers millions of different invaders.

Answer: B

Explanation:

The passage never states that the immune system ignores tumors. Indeed, at the beginning of the third paragraph, the author states that scientists remain puzzled by the body's ability to fight tumors. This question is a little tricky, because it is common knowledge that many tumors prove

fatal to the human body. However, you should not take this to mean that the body does not at least try to fight tumors. In general, it is best to seek out direct evidence in the text rather than to rely on what you already know. You will have enough time on the exam to fully examine and research each question.

Question: 8

What is the meaning of the word enlist as it is used in the second paragraph?

- A. call into service
- B. write down
- C. send away
- D. put across

Answer: A

Explanation:

In the second paragraph, the word enlist means "call into service." The use of this word is an example of figurative language, the use of a known image or idea to elucidate an idea that is perhaps unfamiliar to the reader. In this case, the author is describing the efforts of the immune system as if they were a military campaign. The immune system enlists other cells, and then directs these recruits to areas where they are needed. You are probably familiar with enlistment and recruitment as they relate to describe military service. The author is trying to draw a parallel between the enlistment of young men and women and the enlistment of immune cells. For this reason, "call into service" is the best definition for enlist.

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