

4 Test Content

Sample Passage I

PROSE FICTION: This passage is adapted from the short story "The Boy on the Train" by Arthur Robinson (©1988 by Arthur Robinson).

In 1891, at the age of five, Lewis Barber Fletcher traveled alone from Jacksonville, Florida, to the little town of Camden, thirty-one miles northwest of Utica, in upstate New York. Fifty years later, his wife, children, and friends heard about his trip for the first time when this item appeared on the editorial page of the *Utica Daily Press* under a standing head, "50 Years Ago Today in the Press": "Lewis B. Fletcher, 5, arrived in Utica yesterday on a New York Central train on his way to join his mother in Camden. He was traveling alone from Jacksonville, Florida." A friend spotted the item and phoned Mrs. Fletcher, who called her husband at his office and read it to him. She had to read it twice before he got it straight; he was hard of hearing and even with an amplifying device on his telephone often had trouble understanding, mostly because he became tense when he had to use it. When he understood what she had read him, he gave an embarrassed "Ha!" and said he had forgotten about the trip. There was no further discussion—he disliked talking about personal matters at his office, possibly suspecting that all work stopped while the help listened for material for gossip. When he came home that evening, he had already read the item at work, clipped it, stuck it in his billfold, and developed an attitude toward it—a sort of amused, self-conscious pride that seemed to say yes, he had traveled nearly fourteen hundred miles by himself when he was five, with two changes of train, one of them involving a ferry from Jersey City to Manhattan, and had managed the whole thing, as he had everything else in his life, by strict application to business.

The item was a sort of one-day sensation. Two clippings were put away in a photograph album, and the subject was pretty much forgotten. Sarah, the youngest child, occasionally resurrected it when the family was together at Christmas, or, in later years, during vacations at the elder Fletchers' place outside Utica. In the evening, when their parents had gone to bed and the children stayed up talking, Sarah might say in a reverential tone, "Can you imagine him traveling alone from Jacksonville to Camden when he was five?" The two others—Howard, the oldest, and Edward—would say they could imagine it, that it was the easiest thing in the world to imagine. The picture they'd then conjure up was of a five-year-old old man with white hair, steel-rimmed bifocals, and a hearing aid that he kept turned off to save the flat, half-pint-shaped battery.

Edward did wonder that his father seemed to have forgotten about a trip that should have been a momentous experience for a five-year-old. He decided that his father may have felt there was something shameful about it and the shame had caused him to repress the memory. The children were dimly aware that their paternal grandparents had separated in Jacksonville and were later divorced, and that their grandmother had

brought up Lewis and Reginald in Camden, but they didn't know any details. What Edward learned later was that right after the separation their grandmother had returned to Camden with Reginald, leaving Lewis with their grandfather. The grandfather, who wasn't much good, had apparently decided he didn't want Lewis and had put him on a train for the two-day trip to his mother's. It was not an amusing picture: a five-year-old had been left behind by his mother and then sent off alone by his father—abandoned by one, rejected by the other. Edward would try to imagine him without white hair, hearing aid, or steel-rimmed bifocals, a small boy with brown hair and a grave face, being taken to the train by his father, so dumb with misery and fright that he couldn't cry, knowing only that he was going somewhere out there into unknown space.

Edward went over the trip from time to time, adding details, trying to get inside the boy to experience his anxiety and despair and very likely his distrust of people on the train, whose brief, unctuous kindnesses betrayed their fear of ending up with him on their hands.

This was the image of his father that could move Edward, and it seemed to bear no relation to the anxiety-ridden old man in his early forties who sat all evening with a *Saturday Evening Post* in his lap, his hands clasped over his stomach and his thumbs revolving first one way and then the other while he went over and over whatever was worrying him.

1. In what year did Lewis Barber Fletcher's wife and friends first hear about his momentous train trip?
 - A. 1891
 - B. 1896
 - C. 1941
 - D. 1946
2. Lewis Barber Fletcher's children, listed from oldest to youngest, are:
 - F. Sarah, Howard, and Edward.
 - G. Sarah, Edward, and Howard.
 - H. Howard, Sarah, and Edward.
 - J. Howard, Edward, and Sarah.

3. The person responsible for informing the Fletcher family about the trip Lewis Barber Fletcher had taken in 1891 was:
 - A. an unnamed friend of the family.
 - B. a client of Lewis Barber Fletcher.
 - C. a friend's daughter by the name of Sarah.
 - D. the narrator of this story.

4. According to the passage, Lewis Barber Fletcher was:
 - F. abandoned by his mother and rejected by his father.
 - G. abandoned by his grandfather and rejected by his mother.
 - H. abandoned by his grandmother and rejected by his mother.
 - J. rejected by his grandfather and his father.

5. It was Edward's father's habit, when nervous, to:
 - A. turn off his hearing aid.
 - B. be shamed by bad memories.
 - C. look at newspaper clippings.
 - D. twiddle his thumbs.

6. As it is used in lines 39–40, the word *reverential* most nearly means:
 - F. very loud.
 - G. inaudible.
 - H. amused.
 - J. awed.

7. One of the main points of the second paragraph (lines 32–47) is that:
 - A. everyone found Lewis Barber Fletcher's trip very amusing and they mentioned it frequently.
 - B. Howard and Edward found Lewis Barber Fletcher's trip to be fascinating and easy to reconstruct.
 - C. the Fletcher children found it hard to imagine their father as a little child.
 - D. Lewis Barber Fletcher looked exactly the same as an old man as he had as a child.

8. It is implied in the fourth paragraph (lines 72–77) that the people Lewis Barber Fletcher met on the train who appeared to be quite kind:
 - F. were not trustworthy at all.
 - G. were not, perhaps, as kind as they seemed.
 - H. were themselves quite sad.
 - J. actually found Lewis to be quite charming.

9. The passage implies that most of the things Lewis Barber Fletcher did in his life were:
 - A. extremely unusual and challenging.
 - B. personally quite painful for him.
 - C. done in a businesslike manner.
 - D. material for gossip at his office.

10. When Edward tried to imagine what his father had been like as a child, the most moving image depicted his father as being:
 - F. businesslike but sad.
 - G. trusting yet nervous.
 - H. untrusting and anxious.
 - J. suspicious and angry.

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Sample Passage II

PROSE FICTION: This passage is adapted from Milan Kundera's novel *The Book of Laughter and Forgetting* (©1980 by Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.). This story takes place in 1968 in what was then known as Czechoslovakia.

Soon after the Russians occupied my country in 1968, I lost the privilege of working. No one was allowed to hire me. At about that time some young friends started paying me regular visits. They were so young that the Russians did not have them on their lists yet and they could remain in editorial offices, schools, and film studios. These fine young friends, whom I will never betray, suggested I use their names as a cover for writing radio and television scripts, plays, articles, columns, film treatments—anything to earn a living. I accepted a few of their offers, but most I turned down. I couldn't have gotten to them all, for one thing, and then too, it was dangerous. Not for me, for them. The secret police wanted to starve us out, cut off all means of support, force us to capitulate and make public confessions. They kept their eyes out for all the pitiful little escape routes we used to avoid encirclement, and they meted out severe punishments to the friends who gave me their names.

One of those generous donors was a girl by the name of R. Shy, delicate, and intelligent, she was an editor of an illustrated weekly for young people with a huge circulation. Since at the time the magazine was obliged to print an incredible amount of undigested political claptrap glorifying our brothers the Russians, the editors were constantly looking for something to attract the attention of the crowd. Finally they decided to make an exception and violate the purity of Marxist ideology with an astrology column.

When R. asked me to do an astrology column for her magazine under a pseudonym, I was delighted, of course, and I instructed her to explain to the editorial board that the texts would be written by an important nuclear physicist who had requested her not to divulge his name for fear his colleagues would laugh at him. That seemed to give our undertaking a double cover: a nonexistent scientist and his pseudonym.

Which is how, under an assumed name, I came to write a fine, long introductory article on astrology and short, rather silly monthly texts for individual signs, accompanying the latter with my own drawings of Taurus, Aries, Virgo, Pisces. The pay was miserable, the job itself not particularly amusing or remarkable. The only amusing part of it was my existence, the existence of a man erased from history, literary reference books, even the telephone book, a corpse brought back to life in the amazing reincarnation of a preacher sermonizing hundreds of thousands of young socialists on the great truths of astrology.

One day R. announced to me that the editor-in-chief was all excited about his astrologer and wanted a personal horoscope from him. That fascinated me. The editor-in-chief owed his job at the magazine entirely to

the Russians. He had spent half his life taking Marxism-Leninism courses in Prague and Moscow both!

"He was a little ashamed to tell me," laughed R. "He certainly wouldn't want it to get around he believed in medieval superstitions or anything. He just can't help himself."

"Fine, fine," I said. I was happy. I knew the man well. Besides being R.'s boss, he was a member of the highest Party committee dealing with hiring and firing, and he had ruined the lives of many of my friends.

"He wants complete anonymity. All I'm supposed to give you is his date of birth. You have no idea who he is."

"Even better." That was just what I wanted to hear.

"He says he'll give you a hundred crowns."

"A hundred crowns?" I laughed. "Who does he take me for, the cheapskate!"

He sent me a thousand crowns. I filled ten pages with a description of his character and future. I spent a whole week on the opus and consulted regularly with R. After all, a horoscope can greatly influence, even dictate, the way people act. It can recommend they do certain things, warn them against doing others, and bring them to their knees by hinting at future disasters.

R. and I had a good laugh over it later. She claimed he had improved. He yelled less. He had begun to have qualms about his hardheadedness—his horoscope warned against it. He made as much as he could out of the speck of kindness left in him, and staring out into nothingness, his eyes would show signs of sadness, the sadness of a man who has come to realize that the stars hold nothing but suffering in store for him.

11. According to the first paragraph, some of the narrator's friends were especially important to him because:

- A. the use of their names enabled the narrator to make a living.
- B. they told him all he needed to know about the editor-in-chief.
- C. they kept him informed of the clandestine movements of the secret police.
- D. they took the time to discuss events of intellectual import with the narrator.

12. It can reasonably be inferred from the passage that the narrator worked very carefully on the editor-in-chief's horoscope because the narrator:
- F. wanted to earn his thousand crowns fair and square.
 - G. hoped to affect the editor-in-chief's actions.
 - H. had always wanted to do the editor-in-chief a favor.
 - J. did not want the editor-in-chief to know he was a nuclear scientist.
13. It can reasonably be inferred from the passage that a true Marxist would view astrology as:
- A. a scientific method.
 - B. a tool for predicting events.
 - C. a foolish superstition.
 - D. an interesting ideology.
14. When the narrator asserts that "a horoscope can greatly influence, even dictate, the way people act" (lines 75-76), he means that to some people a horoscope:
- F. indicates to them how they should act.
 - G. forces them to change their personalities completely.
 - H. enables them to be more creative.
 - J. causes behavioral changes to subside.
15. According to the passage, prior to beginning his astrological column, the narrator knew that the editor-in-chief had:
- A. ruined the lives of many of his friends.
 - B. been teaching classes in Marxism in Prague.
 - C. held a deep and abiding interest in astrology.
 - D. been a member of the secret police.
16. According to the passage, the narrator's monthly articles about individual astrological signs are best characterized as:
- F. ludicrous but financially richly rewarding.
 - G. quite remarkable in terms of their literary style.
 - H. silly and insignificant yet very popular.
 - J. very popular with his audience and intellectually stimulating.
17. According to the passage, the methods employed by the secret police involved which of the following?
- I. Surveillance
 - II. Isolation
 - III. Execution
- A. I only
 - B. II only
 - C. I and II only
 - D. II and III only
18. According to the passage, including an astrology column in a Marxist magazine would be:
- F. an example of political claptrap.
 - G. in conformity with the purity of Marxist ideology.
 - H. a purification of Marxist journalistic practice.
 - J. inconsistent with pure Marxist ideology.
19. As he is depicted in the passage, the editor-in-chief is best described as a man who became:
- A. a good bit more cynical about astrological predictions.
 - B. more cheerful as he looked toward the future.
 - C. less easygoing than before but more professional overall.
 - D. much easier to work with but overall less happy.
20. The narrator was able to write a long and thorough horoscope for the editor-in-chief because he, the narrator, had:
- F. been well informed about the editor-in-chief's past.
 - G. spent a month producing that opus.
 - H. been certain that his horoscope could dictate future actions.
 - J. earned 1,000—and not 100—crowns for his work.

4 Test Content

Sample Passage III

SOCIAL SCIENCE: This passage is adapted from the article "Japan's Tansu: Cabinetry of the 18th and 19th Centuries" by Rosy Clarke (©1985 by W.R.C. Smith Publishing Company).

The Japanese, always pressed for room on their island empire, have long been masters at utilizing space. This is especially evident in the native handmade Japanese cabinetry known as *tansu*, produced from about 1750 to 1900. A prolific range of wooden *tansu* was created for a variety of needs, and a diverse group of pieces emerged, ranging from small, portable medicine chests to giant trunks on wheels.

Prior to Japan's Edo Period (1603–1867), ownership of furniture was limited to the nobility. Primarily, these were black-and-gold lacquered pieces of Chinese inspiration. But with the demise of Japan's feudal society and the rise of a moneyed merchant class by the mid-Edo Period, furniture in Japan took on its own personality, as craftsmen enjoyed the freedom to create original designs that combined function and beauty. Today, examples of these skillfully constructed chests tell us much about the lifestyle and accoutrements of people during the Edo Period and the Meiji Era (1868–1912).

The greatest demand was for clothing and merchants' chests; within these two categories, hundreds of stylistic variations occurred. Most clothing *tansu* were constructed with four long drawers for kimono storage and a small door compartment that opened to two or three tiny drawers for personal items. The chests were usually built in two pieces that stacked, a design that allowed for easy portability. A favorite wood used to build clothing *tansu* was paulownia, noted for its light weight and subtle, natural sheen. In the Edo Period, it was customary for Japanese fathers to plant a paulownia tree when a daughter was born. When she married, the tree was cut down and made into a trousseau chest.

Merchants' chests, used to store documents, writing brushes, inkstones and money, were usually constructed of thick zelkova or chestnut. Unlike clothing *tansu*, which were kept inside a sliding door closet in a home, a merchant's chest was in full view of customers. Thus, shop *tansu* was an important indicator of a shopkeeper's prosperity.

Some styles were surprisingly large, an example being the staircase *tansu*. Japanese homes and shops were often built with lofts, and for easy access from the ground floor, a freestanding staircase was designed by clever craftsmen who incorporated compartments and drawers throughout for maximum utility. Around six feet high, most staircase chests were made in two sections that stacked, though many one-piece chests were also produced. Because of the great amount of wood needed to build a staircase *tansu*, steps, risers and case were made of softwood, and hardwood was used for doors and drawer fronts.

Many households, especially rural homes, kept large kitchen *tansu* to store food and crockery. The wood of these practical kitchen chests was rarely finished, and those in original condition show a lovely natural patina developed from years of exposure to the smoke and heat of the cooking area. Kitchen *tansu* were designed strictly for utility with sliding door compartments, inner shelves and numerous small drawers. Like staircase *tansu*, they display a minimum of ironwork and rarely show locking drawers or doors.

After 1900, modern techniques replaced the original handcrafted construction methods. Sand-cast iron handles, for example, are common on furniture made from about 1890 to 1920. Traditional designs—dragons, cherry blossoms and mythical personalities—that were once etched by hand onto lock plates became simplified as machine-pressed patterns appeared. Thick pieces of wood originally used became thinner around 1900, when improved wood planing techniques resulted in mass-produced *tansu* of diminished quality. And the amazing range of handproduced, naturally pigmented lacquer finishes that hallmarked earlier *tansu* all but disappeared by about 1920. With rapid industrialization at hand, many of Japan's artisans abandoned their traditional crafts.

Appreciated today for their beauty, simplicity and functionality, *tansu* are now showing up in homes in America and Europe. But relatively few exceptional examples of the thousands produced now remain. Those pieces available document a special part of Japanese history and culture as well as the remarkable sense of space and design of Japan's unknown craftsmen.

21. The author states that the result of mass production techniques on the *tansu* was:
- A. diminished quality.
 - B. thicker pieces of wood.
 - C. renewed popularity.
 - D. greater variety.
22. The passage states that although handmade *tansu* were designed and used for many purposes, most were:
- F. fancy black-and-gold finished pieces.
 - G. kitchen cabinets.
 - H. clothing and merchants' chests.
 - J. staircase chests.

23. According to the passage, the original popularity of tansu resulted primarily from the:
- A. desire to display clothing and other personal items.
 - B. need to make good use of space.
 - C. need to disguise a merchant's wealth.
 - D. desire to be different from the Chinese.
24. According to the passage, modern production methods caused which of the following changes in the tansu?
- I. Sand-cast iron handles
 - II. Simplification of traditional designs
 - III. Thinner wood
- F. II only
 - G. III only
 - H. I and II only
 - J. I, II, and III
25. As it is used in the passage, the word *patina* (line 58) most nearly means the:
- A. design carved in the wood of the chests.
 - B. original finish applied to the chest.
 - C. destruction of the wood by smoke and heat.
 - D. surface appearance of the wood.
26. The author claims that by studying examples of hand-crafted Japanese tansu that are still available today, scholars can learn about which of the following?
- I. How mass production first began in Japan
 - II. How Japanese industrialists developed short-cuts in building furniture
 - III. How the Japanese lived during the Edo Period and the Meiji Era
- F. II only
 - G. III only
 - H. I and II only
 - J. I, II, and III
27. According to the account of tansu-making in the passage, improved wood-planing techniques resulted in:
- A. a need to change the types of wood used.
 - B. the need to apply thicker wood finishes.
 - C. the use of thinner wood.
 - D. a renewed interest in black-and-gold lacquered finishes.
28. The passage suggests that the Japanese tansu had changed by the mid-Edo Period in which of the following ways?
- F. It reflected increased creative freedom of the craftsmen.
 - G. It became a symbol of status and wealth for the nobility.
 - H. It became less important to the merchant class.
 - J. It became much larger.
29. According to the passage, the Chinese influence on Japanese furniture-making is reflected in which of the following characteristics of some Japanese furniture?
- I. The use of space
 - II. The black and gold lacquer
 - III. The use of paulownia wood
- A. II only
 - B. III only
 - C. I and II only
 - D. I, II, and III
30. The passage indicates about tansu that they were:
- I. used for aesthetic purposes only.
 - II. indicative of financial status.
 - III. hidden from view because they held important documents.
- F. I only
 - G. II only
 - H. I and II only
 - J. II and III only