



NMAT Verbal Ability Practice Questions

Set 2: Reading Comprehension

Directions: This set contains passages from various sources. It will test your ability to understand what you read. Choose the correct answer to each question asked after each passage.

For questions 1 – 8:

A Daily Record

A diary is a daily personal record. In it, the writer is free to record anything at all. This may include events, comments, ideas, reading notes, or any subject on one's mind. Diaries may be kept for various purposes – to record the experiences of one's life so as not to forget them, to record ideas that might prove useful, or simply to express oneself through the medium of the printed word. In past centuries people in public life often kept diaries. These have become valuable sources of fact and interpretation for later historians. The private candid observations set down in these personal journals often provide truer pictures of an age than do records or other books, which may have been censored during that time. For the most part, these diaries were never intended to be read by others. The entries were made simply as aids to memory or as a form of relaxation.

In modern times, however, politicians and other people realize that their diaries will likely be read by historians or, in published form, by the public. Thus, they may make entries with these readers in mind. As a result, their diaries may lose the confidential, intimate nature of the older ones. On the other hand, their entries may tend to be more complete and self-explanatory. The most famous diary ever written in English was that kept by Samuel Pepys. A civilian official of the British army, Pepys made regular entries between 1660 and 1669. His diary starts at the beginning of the Restoration period in English history and describes many of the court intrigues and scandals of his day. The diary reveals Pepys as a man with many human weaknesses but one who was honest with himself. He wrote his entries in a combined code and shorthand that was not solved until more than 100 years after his death. The most famous diary of the 20th century was published with the simple title *Diary of a Young Girl*. It was more commonly known as *The Diary of Anne Frank*. Anne was a young Jewish girl whose diary records the two years her family spent in hiding, mostly in the Netherlands, trying to escape the Nazi persecutors of the Jews. She and her family were finally caught in August 1944. She was imprisoned and died at a concentration camp in Germany in March 1945.

1. A diary is
 - A. a report on world events
 - B. a daily personal record



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- C. a documentary
D. None of the above
2. The most famous diary ever written in English was kept by
- A. Samuel Johnson
B. Samuel Pepys
C. Anne Frank
D. None of the above
3. Diary of a Young Girl was written
- A. during the civil war
B. in the 1940s
C. during the 19th century.
D. None of the above
4. Anne Frank's diary describes
- A. the years her family spent hiding from the Nazis
B. a German concentration camp
C. the life of an average young girl
D. None of the above
5. Diaries of the past may give a truer picture of an age than published books because
- A. diaries are uncensored
B. published books give only one point of view
C. amateur writers were more thorough than professional writers



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D. None of the above

6. Today's diarists may not be as confidential as those in the past because

A. they expect that their diaries will be read by others

B. they have more secrets to hide

C. people today are harsher critics

D. None of the above

7. You may conclude from the article that Samuel Pepys wrote his diary in code and shorthand because

A. he was fond of mysteries

B. he did not want his diary to be read by the wrong people

C. he could not write in proper English

D. None of the above

8. It is probable that most people keep diaries in order to

A. become famous

B. keep personal records

C. practice their writing skills

D. None of the above

For questions 9 – 10:

Many people can recite that $E=mc^2$ and some may even know the value of "c" the constant speed of light in a vacuum (299,792,458 m/s); but what does it really mean? The equation $E=mc^2$ is also known as the mass-equivalence. Simply stated it is the concept that the mass of an object is a measure of its energy content. The mass-energy equivalence arose originally from special relativity as a paradox described by Henri Poincaré. Therefore, Albert Einstein was



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not the first to propose a mass-energy relationship. However, Einstein was the first scientist to propose the $E = mc^2$ formula and the first to interpret mass-energy equivalence as a fundamental principle that follows from the relativistic symmetries of space and time.

9. According to the paragraph "c" is:
- A. dangerous from a nuclear standpoint.
 - B. the constant speed of light in a vacuum.
 - C. a discovery of Henri Poincaré
 - D. the mass-energy equivalence.
10. Which word best defines the function of the passage?
- A. interrogative
 - B. exclamatory
 - C. derogative
 - D. informative

For questions 11 - 17:

In the 16th century, an age of great marine and terrestrial exploration, Ferdinand Magellan led the first expedition to sail around the world. As a young Portuguese noble, he served the king of Portugal, but he became involved in the quagmire of political intrigue at court and lost the king's favor. After he was dismissed from service by the king of Portugal, he offered to serve the future Emperor Charles V of Spain. A papal decree of 1493 had assigned all land in the New World west of 50 degrees W longitude to Spain and all the land east of that line to Portugal. Magellan offered to prove that the East Indies fell under Spanish authority. On September 20, 1519, Magellan set sail from Spain with five ships. More than a year later, one of these ships was exploring the topography of South America in search of a water route across the continent. This ship sank, but the remaining four ships searched along the southern peninsula of South America. Finally, they found the passage they sought near 50 degrees S latitude. Magellan named this passage the Strait of All Saints, but today it is known as the Strait of Magellan. One ship deserted while in this passage and returned to Spain, so fewer sailors were privileged to gaze at that first panorama of the Pacific Ocean. Those who remained crossed the meridian



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now known as the International Date Line in the early spring of 1521 after 98 days on the Pacific Ocean. During those long days at sea, many of Magellan's men died of starvation and disease.

Later, Magellan became involved in an insular conflict in the Philippines and was killed in a tribal battle. Only one ship and 17 sailors under the command of the Basque navigator Elcano survived to complete the westward journey to Spain and thus prove once and for all that the world is round, with no precipice at the edge.

11. In the spring of 1521, the ships crossed the _____ now called the International Date Line.

- A. imaginary circle passing through the poles
- B. imaginary line parallel to the equator
- C. area
- D. land mass

12. The passage was found near 50 degrees S of _____.

- A. Greenwich
- B. The equator
- C. Spain
- D. Portugal

13. Four of the ships sought a passage along a southern _____.

- A. coast
- B. inland
- C. body of land with water on three sides
- D. border

14. One of Magellan's ships explored the _____ of South America for a passage across the continent.



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- A. coastline
- B. mountain range
- C. physical features
- D. islands

15. The Pope divided New World lands between Spain and Portugal according to their location on one side or the other of an imaginary geographical line 50 degrees west of Greenwich that extends in a _____ direction.

- A. north and south
- B. crosswise
- C. easterly
- D. south east

16. Magellan lost the favor of the king of Portugal when he became involved in a political _____.

- A. entanglement
- B. discussion
- C. negotiation
- D. problem

17. The 16th century was an age of great _____ exploration.

- A. cosmic
- B. land
- C. mental
- D. common man

For questions 18 – 23:



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A soccer field is the setting in the untitled poem below, which was written by Ellen Bryant Voigt.

Muscular and fleet, he moves without thinking

among the shifting jerseys on the field.

In his wake the paler one,

through wave after wave of the enemy line,

presses the white ball forward: winded and earnest,

he has willed his body to this pitch

until the body is inside his mind

as the mind arranges pieces on the board—now

he cuts a wide angle and passes the ball

though he knows his friend will never give it back.

Ahead of him, always ahead of him:



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this is the pattern

already set in their early victories,

one at the prow, one at the wheel.

Poem from Two Trees by Ellen Bryant Voigt. Copyright © 1992 by Ellen Bryant Voigt.

18. In line 1, the word “fleet” most nearly means
- A tall.
 - B swift.
 - C strong.
 - D awkward.
19. In line 3, the phrase “In his wake” means that “the paler one” is
- A. by his side.
 - B calling to him.
 - C. close behind him.
 - D. making a final effort.
20. What is being described in lines 3–5 ?
- A. A soccer team trying to beat a much better team
 - B. A soccer player maneuvering the ball past opponents
 - C. Two friends competing in drills during soccer practice
 - D. A soccer player imagining what an opponent will do



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21. The player described in lines 5–7 is apparently
- A. pushing himself to the limit.
 - B. playing carelessly, without thinking.
 - C. slowing down the action to figure out what to do.
 - D. too tired to be able to keep the ball under control.
22. Based on details in the poem, which of the following can be concluded about the soccer players?
- A. They are engaged in an unfriendly rivalry.
 - B. They are accustomed to playing together.
 - C. They are trying to work out a new formation.
 - D. They are not very involved in the game.
23. One of the poem's main themes is
- A. the lack of team spirit exhibited by some players.
 - B. the idea that competitive sports turn friends into enemies.
 - C. the envy some players feel for the high-scoring players.
 - D. the unselfishness required to be a good team player.

For questions 24 – 26:

The entire year of 1989 marked the grand return of the restored steam locomotive to northern Vermont; but people especially loved attending the Steam Train festival during autumn best. During that festival, when the train arrived at the station, the 150 ticketed passengers were transported back in time and treated to the sound of a strong welcoming whistle and the blast of heat from the boiler (if you were standing close enough on the platform) which was very



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welcome in the crisp cool air. A thrilling tour awaited them. Once everyone boarded the train; the opened windows in the passenger cars afforded passengers an exquisite fragrance of fall leaves and a coal burning steam engine would delight your nostrils in a way that no diesel engine could. If the passengers were not excited enough at this point, they certainly were when they experienced the power of the train reaching its leisurely cruising speed of 40 mph and time seemed to slow down. Of note were the six passenger cars that were restored to exhibit the craftsmanship of 1918. Even the seats displayed the time honored and historically accurate period details of the early twentieth century. If the fortunate riders could manage to take their eyes away from this wonder of engineering and craftsmanship; the breathtakingly beautiful natural view of 30 miles of Vermont's fall foliage was theirs to behold, just a glance away out the window. At the furthest destination, an apple orchard awaited guests who disembarked. Here they could purchase the very apples that they hand-picked from the trees. It is no wonder that this steam train tour sold out quicker during the autumn than at any other time of the year. The only downside was that it was only a 3-hour round-trip excursion.

24. What is the main idea of this passage?

- A. People enjoy smelling leaves.
- B. Why especially people loved to ride this steam train in the fall.
- C. Coal pollutes the environment.
- D. This steam train tour would be better if it were shorter.

25. Which word best defines the function of the passage?

- A. interrogative
- B. exclamatory
- C. descriptive
- D. defaming

26. It can be implied by the passage that:

- A. after 1989 people got tired of riding the steam train.
- B. the apples were less expensive when you handpicked them.

- C. the author recommends taking this ride in the Fall.
- D. 3 hours on the steam train tour was too long.

For questions 27 – 30:

In a director's effort to produce movies on time and under budget, the quality of said movie is sometimes lacking. Imagine watching a movie 10 times or more with a specific purpose. That purpose is not to memorize the lines or to relive the dazzling special effects. Instead, the goal is to find movie mistakes. This is exactly what Jon Sandys began doing in 1996 after watching the Steven Spielberg film entitled Jurassic Park and James Cameron's movie called True Lies while still in grammar school in England. He noticed several glaring errors in both. When he pointed them out to other people, he found that the subject was of interest to many. People found it fascinating that even with the best of editors, mistakes make it to the final movie. Sandys eventually authored books and made regular appearances on a television show's segment that highlighted these movie mistakes. Currently, Sandys focuses primarily on the following types of cinema errors: ones that reveal the movie making process, audio problems, continuity problems, visible crew members, visible equipment, factual errors, plot holes, and character mistakes. He has built this interest into a profitable and very popular internet website. A good example of a movie mistake in Jurassic Park is evident when the T-rex does not leave or make any footprints in the soft mud during his attack on a car. Be observant the next time you watch a movie, perhaps you might spot a mistake!

27. Which of the following describe the Author's view?

- A. Film makers are not professionals.
- B. Rushing to meet production deadlines can produce movie errors that you can find.
- C. Editors need to return to film maker's college to learn new techniques.
- D. It is better to just enjoy a movie the way it is presented.

28. It can be inferred from the passage, Jon Sandys acknowledged that most movies are not perfect and

- A. found ways to turn his interest in those mistakes into a career.



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- B. made satirical short movies to ridicule the directors.
- C. tried to improve movies.
- D. was bitter about the mistakes.
29. According to the passage Steven Spielberg:
- A. has made some of the best action movies of all time.
- B. fired his editors to improve his films.
- C. made some errors in his film Jurassic Park.
- D. consulted with James Cameron to make perfect movies
30. Which of the following is not considered a movie mistake?
- A. When an actor's lips do not move when he is heard speaking a line.
- B. If a microphone is seen above an actor's head in a movie set in 1776.
- C. During one scene, the hair style of a character mysteriously goes from combed to uncombed repeatedly.
- D. A boring plotline.



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