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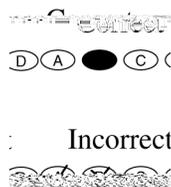
Directions

This is a test of some of the skills involved in understanding what you read. The passages in this test come from a variety of published works, both literary and informational. Each passage is followed by a number of questions.

The passages begin with an introduction presenting information that may be helpful as you read the selection. After you have read a passage, go on to the questions that follow. For each question, choose the best answer, and mark your choice on the answer sheet. You may refer to a passage as often as necessary.

Work as quickly as you can without becoming careless. Don't spend too much time on any question that is difficult for you to answer. Instead, skip it and return to it later if you have time. Try to answer every question even if you have to guess.

Mark all your answers on the answer sheet. Give only one answer to each question and make every mark heavy and dark, as in this example.



If you decide to change one of your answers, be sure to erase the first mark completely.

Be sure that the number of the question you are answering matches the number of the row of answer choices you are marking on your answer sheet.

Language Arts – Reading

Time — 25 minutes

19 Questions

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Recent animal behavior studies have found that most species appear to spend a great deal of time resting. Monkeys, for example, spend three-quarters of their waking hours just sitting, while hummingbirds perch motionless about 80 percent of every day.

5 Giving the lie to the old fables about the unflagging industriousness of ants, bees, beavers, and the like, a new specialty known as time budget analysis reveals that the great majority of creatures spend most of their time doing nothing much at all. They eat when they must or can. Some species build a makeshift shelter now and again; others fulfill the occasional social obligation, like picking out fleas from a fellow creature's fur.

10 A fair analysis of animal inactivity shows it is almost never born of aimless indolence, but instead serves a broad variety of purposes. Some animals lounge around to conserve precious calories, others to improve digestion of the calories they have consumed. Some do it to stay cool, others to keep warm. The hunted is best camouflaged when it's not fidgeting or fussing, and so too is the hunter, who wishes to remain concealed until the optimal moment for attack. Some creatures linger quietly in their territory to guard it, and others stay home to avoid being cannibalized by their neighbors.

15 Even the busy bees or worker ants dedicate only about 20 percent of the day to doing chores like gathering nectar or tidying up the nest. Otherwise, the insects stay still. The myth of the tireless social insect probably arose from observations of entire hives or anthills, which are little galaxies of ceaseless activity. But now that scientists have learned to tag individual insects to see what each does from one moment to the next, they find that any single bee or ant has a lot of surplus time.

20 Biologists studying animals at rest turn to sophisticated mathematical models, resembling those used by economists, which take into account an animal's energy demands, fertility rate, the relative abundance and location of food and water, weather conditions, and other factors. They do extensive cost-benefit analyses, asking questions like: How high is the cost of foraging compared with the potential calories that may be gained? Such a calculation involves not only a measure of how much energy an animal burns as it rummages about relative to what it would spend resting, but also a consideration of, for example, how hot it will become in motion, and thus how much of its stored water will be needed to evaporate away heat to cool the body. Once they complete their computations, the biologists usually
25 acknowledge their respect for the animal's decision to lie low.

Humans generally spend more time working than do other creatures. One reason for human diligence is that we can often override our impulses to slow down. Many humans are driven to work hard by a singular desire to gather resources far beyond what is required for survival. Squirrels collect what they need to make it through one winter; only humans worry about college bills or retirement.

Excerpt from "Busy as a Bee?" from *The Beauty of the Beast* Copyright © 1995 by Natalie Angier. Reprinted by permission of Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company. All rights reserved.

6. The passage suggests that the primary reason for animal inactivity is
- A greed.
 - B illness.
 - C boredom.
 - D self-preservation.

7. What does "indolence" (line 6) mean?
- A Dissatisfaction
 - B Exhaustion
 - C Instinct
 - D Laziness

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14. In line 1, the word “fleet” most nearly means
- A tall.
 - B swift.
 - C strong.
 - D awkward.
15. 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.
16. 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
17. 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.
18. Based on details in the poem, which of the following can be concluded about the soccer players?

Are You Ready to Take the HiSET Language Arts – Reading Test?

You can estimate how well prepared you are for the real test in the following way. First, count how many questions you answered correctly on this practice test. Do not include any questions that you did not answer or that you answered incorrectly. Then find the number of questions you answered correctly in the table below to see an estimate of how well prepared you are. How many questions did you answer correctly in the table below?
