

PASSAGE ONE

As fighting spread across Europe in the late 1930's, the United States remained an isolationist country. They agreed to send supplies to allies such as Great Britain, but refused direct interaction in the conflict. After the loss of lives during World War I, the United States was not willing to intervene in another of Europe's wars. It would take a catastrophic event for the U.S. to enter into a world war once again.

On December 7, 1941 the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor, an American military base on the island of Oahu, Hawaii. This was the event that forced President Franklin D. Roosevelt to declare that war on Japan, a country who was tied to Italy, Germany and Hungary and formed the Axis Powers. Many believe the only way the United States would find its way out of the Great Depression would be a war time economy; therefore, the bombing of Pearl Harbor was a blessing and a curse. When the U.S. entered the war, they joined the Allied Powers, which included the U.S.S.R., Great Britain, and France. Men were drafted, and their wives went to work in factories with those unable to serve. They built bombs, tanks, airplanes, and anything else the country needed. The entire world was now at war.

1. The United States became an isolationist country for the following reasons. *Please choose all that apply*

- A. The cut all ties with Europe after World War I.
- B. They couldn't decide whose side to join.
- C. The loss of life in World War I made them nervous to join the Allies.

2. Which of the following can a reader infer from the passage?

- A. The people of the United States were angry with Europe.
- B. The United States had already chosen a side to support.
- C. Even after the attack on Pearl Harbor, the citizens of the United States did not want to join the war.
- D. All of the above

3. Why was the bombing of Pearl Harbor so important for Europe?

- A. It wasn't important to Europe.
- B. Europe wanted to exploit the US for their natural resources.
- C. It guaranteed that the US would now join Europe in the war.
- D. It showed that the US cared more about Europe than losing men in war.

4. What can the reader conclude about the Great Depression from the passage?

- A. The Great Depression was resolved by the time WW II began.
- B. A war time economy wouldn't be enough to help the US.
- C. The programs designed to help the US out of the Great Depression were not working.
- D. President Roosevelt didn't believe a war time economy was needed.

5. One can presume which of the following?

- A. The reason the economy began to boom was because many households now had two incomes for the first time.
- B. Women were happy to go to work.
- C. Roosevelt didn't want women in the workforce.
- D. All Americans were in favor of the war effort.

PASSAGE TWO

On February 11, 1963, Sylvia Plath turned her oven on, blew out the pilot light and killed herself. This is one of the most famous suicides in the poetic world. It has been mythologized and written about for decades. To understand Plath's place in literature we need to understand everything that she missed; there is so much that would have influenced her as a writer. Plath missed The Beatles invasion of America, America's invasion of Vietnam and the surge of the Woman's Rights campaigns that took place in first world countries. These are events that shaped the women who would write after Plath's death. Not only was Plath an influence, but also world events influenced these modern poets. What is important to note is that she was brilliant even without all of the experiences those who came after lived through. Because of Sylvia Plath, women began to have a freedom in their writing. The confessional style, which is so often attributed to Robert Lowell and Anne Sexton, also has a champion in the work of Plath. To understand Plath's place in literature we need to understand everything that she missed; there is so much that would have influenced her as a writer. In it we see the confessions of a woman who was dealing with her husband's philandering, impending divorce, and the mental illness that would eventually be her downfall.

1. What is the thesis of this paragraph?

- A. On February 11, 1963, Sylvia Plath turned her oven on, blew out the pilot light and killed herself.
- B. The confessional style, which is so often attributed to Robert Lowell and Anne Sexton, also has a champion in the work of Plath.

- C. To understand Plath's place in literature we need to understand everything that she missed; there is so much that would have influenced her as a writer.
- D. To understand Plath's place in literature we need to understand everything that she missed; there is so much that would have influenced her as a writer.

2. What can the reader infer about confessional poetry from the passage above?

- A. Men are most likely to write in the confessional style.
- B. Confessional poetry deals with writers' innermost thoughts and feelings about their lives and emotional well-being.
- C. The Vietnam War is not something that can be written about in the confessional style.
- D. Plath has been mythologized because of her use of the confessional style.

3. Women who wrote poetry after Plath's death were influenced by which of the following

- A. World Events & Anne Sexton
- B. Robert Lowell & World Events
- C. Plath & Anne Sexton
- D. Plath & World Events

4. Why was Plath's suicide mythologized?

- A. Because Robert Lowell and Anne Sexton wrote about it.
- B. Plath's last book, *Ariel*, detailed her divorce and mental illness.
- C. Plath missed so much of the 1960's.
- D. Plath's husband spoke about the suicide to the press.

5. It is a credit to Plath that she was an amazing writer without living through the turbulent decade of the sixties. How does the reader know this?

- A. She is taught today.
- B. Modern poets have been influenced by her and have a freedom because of her.
- C. The text does not say
- D. All of the above

PASSAGE THREE

During the early 1900's, the Socialist party had a strong presence in the United States with leaders such as Eugene Debs who eventually ran for President four times. As a matter of fact, the last time Debs ran for president was from a jail cell for violating the Sedition Act of 1918. He garnered almost 1 million votes. The Sedition Act made it illegal to write or speak out against World War I or the federal government. If you did, you were jailed and fined. People such as Debs were sentenced to as much as 10 years in prison. Overall, 2,000 were arrested and 900 imprisoned for violating this act. A movie producer who produced the movie 'Spirit of '76' was charged with sedition because the enemy in the movie was England, who was our ally in World War I. He was sentenced to 10 years for doing nothing more than producing a movie based on the historical facts of the American Revolution. The question which is raised by all of this unrest is: What about the 1st Amendment? Why is this speech not protected? Debs' case did end up in front of the Supreme Court in 1919, where the Sedition Act was upheld as constitutional. Oliver Wendell Holmes said "Freedom of speech may be revoked when it presents a clear and present danger to the Nation." This statement leads to uncomfortable questions like: Who decides when free speech is a clear and present danger?

1. After reading this passage, readers can assume which of the following?
 - A. The Sedition Act was ineffective.
 - B. The United States was open to more than a two party political system
 - C. Eugene Debs was unaware of the Sedition Act and its provisions.
2. The movie, Spirit of '76 was dangerous, according to the Sedition Act, because
 - A. It made the American public distrust England
 - B. It incorrectly portrayed the factual details of the American Revolution
 - C. Movies should be uplifting during times of war and make the average citizen want to participate in the current war.
 - D. The Supreme Court decides what can and cannot be spoken of during international conflicts.
3. Based on what you've read in this passage, who was in danger of being arrested for sedition?
 - A. Anyone who wrote professionally
 - B. All those involved in making movies
 - C. Every American citizen
 - D. Only those who were not American citizens
4. The Supreme Court decided that the Sedition Act was constitutional. What can you infer about Eugene Debs' case?

- A. Debs' case was dismissed
- B. Debs' conviction was upheld
- C. The Supreme Court said Debs was not guilty
- D. Debs' conviction was cleaned from his record

5. This paragraph was written so the reader would be

- A. Persuaded
- B. Informed
- C. Sympathetic to Debs
- D. Entertained

PASSAGE FOUR

Pluto was discovered in February 1930 by the Lowell Observatory in Flagstaff, Arizona. Those at the observatory had been looking for this ninth planet for several decades. Unbeknownst to earlier researchers, Pluto had been photographed several times but not “discovered.” Its discovery was celebrated the world over, and the hunt for a name began. The naming credit goes to an eleven-year-old little girl from Oxford, England, Venetia Burney. She believed that Pluto, god of the underworld, was the only name for a planet that looked so desolate and cold. It would have been difficult for Venetia to imagine that a mere 76 years later Pluto would be downgraded from planet to dwarf-planet.

There are three criteria every scientist uses to assess whether or not a planet is truly a planet. First, the planet must revolve around the sun. Secondly, it must have enough mass to assume hydrostatic equilibrium (a round shape). Last of all, it must have cleared its surrounding orbit. In 2006, it was determined that Pluto met all of these requirements save one. Pluto had not cleared its surrounding orbit. This means that it has not become dominant and is sharing its space with other like-sized planets. Any planet sharing its orbit must now be called a dwarf planet. Of course, if Pluto were to clear its orbit in the coming years, it would then be put back into the category of planet.

1. What does it mean when the author writes: "...Pluto had been photographed several times but not 'discovered?'"
 - A. The scientists didn't know they were looking at a planet.
 - B. The photographs were not clear
 - C. No one was looking for a planet
2. Why did Venetia Burney choose the name Pluto?
 - A. She made it up
 - B. She had studied the god of the underworld, Pluto.
 - C. She believed that the planet looked cold and desolate, like the underworld.
 - D. She named it after the Greek word for desolate.
3. Hydrostatic equilibrium helps a planet in what way?
 - A. It keeps the planet in orbit.
 - B. It helps to keep the planet on its axis
 - C. It allows the planet to keep a round shape
 - D. The planet is better able to keep planets out of its orbit
4. What is the third criteria Pluto failed to meet to remain a planet?
 - A. It didn't keep two moons inside its orbit
 - B. Pluto didn't keep its orbit clear
 - C. Pluto wasn't large enough to be called a planet.
5. If Pluto were to clear its orbit, what would happen?
 - A. The designation of dwarf planet would not change.
 - B. Pluto would be renamed and given back the status of planet
 - C. Pluto would once again be designated as a planet.
 - D. There is no scientific way for Pluto to clear its orbit.

PASSAGE FIVE

Anyone who has been through the American school system has learned of the Battle of Bull Run, which took place on July 21, 1861 near Manassas, Virginia. There are popular stories of

the inhabitants of Washington, D.C. riding to the west to picnic and watch the battle. The North believed the war would be won in a single day. They were sadly mistaken. While Bull Run has been called the first battle of the Civil War, there is another battle that took place on June 3, 1861 in the town of Philippi, Virginia (now West Virginia), which is designated as the first land battle even though many have never heard of it.

The battle that occurred in Philippi is considered a minor battle. So minor, in fact, that it is hardly mentioned in classrooms. Philippi was small and unimportant, but it was closely situated to the city of Grafton, Virginia which held the only continuous east-west connection for the Parkersburg-Grafton Railroad and the Baltimore & Ohio railroad. This allowed the east coast of the United States to connect to the Ohio River. It was important that the South hold this railroad and it was equally important that the North gain control of it. When the fighting began, the South, with only 800 soldiers, was overwhelmed by the North's 10,000 men. The battle only lasted for twenty minutes, and there were no fatalities. The North claimed victory and hopes were high that the war would be over in a few weeks, not years.

1. After reading the passage, what gave the North hope that it would win the war in one day?
 - A. The North believed they were superior in every way to the South.
 - B. The North won at Philippi, so it was assumed they would win at Bull Run, and the war would be finished.
 - C. The South wasn't sending as many men to battle as the North; therefore, the North outnumbered them.
2. Why have so few Americans heard of the Battle of Philippi? *Select all that apply*
 - A. The North won the battle.
 - B. It was a minor skirmish with no fatalities and few injuries.
 - C. It was fought in a little town with no major significance to the war at large.
 - D. All of the above
3. The railroad in Grafton, Virginia was important to both sides for the following reason.
 - A. Both sides need the railroad to move troops.
 - B. It was only important to the North
 - C. The railroad allowed the east coast to connect Ohio River
4. The North's victory at Philippi allowed the North to think of winning the war. Why? *Select all that apply*
 - A. The North easily won.
 - B. There were so few southern soldiers
 - C. The battle only took twenty minutes

D. All of the above

5. People came to watch the Battle of Bull Run and picnic. What can the reader infer from this scene?

- A. The North did not understand that war could be devastating.
- B. The North thought they would win that day, and the war would be over.
- C. People of the 1800's were not as sophisticated as we are today.

PASSAGE SIX

According to researchers, 90% of the world's languages will die out by the end of this century. This is largely due to migration and the world becoming "smaller" because of technology. Many will not give this a second thought, but as human beings we lose what these cultures consider relevant and important. Without a way to speak in their native tongue, many societies will not be able to communicate what is precious and distinctive about their religion, art, and mythology. The ability for a human being to speak their first language is monumentally important. What would any of us do if we were told there is no way for us to communicate in the way we first learned to converse? What would be lost? Would there be any gains?

As researchers go into other cultures and environments, they lose the ability to speak to a region's ecology and medicinal practices in a meaningful way. When that is lost, so too is the ability to arrive at solutions for problems that threaten the planet and the humans who dwell on this planet. Native speakers are grieved by their inability to connect to a past that was inhabited by parents and grandparents. There is also the realization that they will never again be able to "go home." The loss of a language is an unspeakable tragedy that hurts humanity as a whole, not just the culture losing the ability to communicate in its mother tongue.

1. Why are languages dying?

- A. More people realize the importance of having one, global language.
- B. Because the world is becoming smaller due to technology
- C. Migration plays a role in losing one's first language.
- D. Migration and technology.

2. What is lost when scientists cannot learn about ecology and medicines from native speakers?

- A. The West is so advanced it does not need old medicinal cures.
- B. Ancient cures through ecology can help modern society.

C. The ability to set up labs in foreign countries collapses without native speakers.

3. Why is the loss of a language a tragedy?

- A. Communicating about religion, art & mythology.
- B. The inability to truly go home
- C. A connection to one's elders
- D. All of the above

4. What is the thesis of this passage?

- A. What would any of us do if we were told there is no way for us to communicate in the way we first learned to converse?
- B. Many will not give this a second thought, but as human beings we lose what these cultures consider relevant and important.
- C. The loss of a language is an unspeakable tragedy that hurts humanity as a whole, not just the culture losing the ability to communicate in its mother tongue.
- D. The ability for a human being to speak their first language is monumentally important.

5. What can the reader infer about the importance of a native speaker to explaining art, religion, and mythology in their mother tongue?

- A. People find it comforting to speak their own language.
- B. It is necessary for humans to communicate in their mother tongue because it allows them to understand fully the culture of other countries.
- C. To lose a mother tongue means that all the subtle nuances found within art, religion and mythology are lost. Some words can never be fully translated into another tongue.