The Nelson-Denny Reading Test

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VOCABULARY
COMPREHENSION
READING RATE
PART I. VOCABULARY TEST

DIRECTIONS TO STUDENTS

A. Do not turn this page of the test booklet until directed to do so.

B. Do not make marks of any kind on this test booklet.

C. Part I, the Vocabulary Test, containing 100 items, is timed separately from Part II, Comprehension Test and Reading Rate. Work only on Part I during the 15 minutes allowed for it. Do not go on to Part II until told to do so.

D. To make sure you know how to take the test, complete the three practice exercises below.

Practice Exercises


   Which word best completes the opening statement? Yes, food is the best answer. Look at the first practice exercise answer row on the answer sheet to see how you are to mark your answer.

2. To repair is to:  A. destroy  B. finish  C. fix  D. work  E. show  ............... 2.

   Mark the space for the answer you think is correct. You should have marked space C, since fix is the correct answer.


   What is the letter of the best answer? Mark the space lettered the same as the answer you think is correct. You should have marked space B; numbers is the correct answer.

E. Wait for the signal to turn this page.

F. Now listen carefully to the examiner for further instructions.

MAKE NO MARKS ON THIS TEST BOOKLET
VOCABULARY TEST

1. Plump hands are: A. thin B. strong C. shapely D. chubby E. small  ..................................................  1.

2. If you object, you: A. oppose B. approve C. throw out D. offer E. observe ...........................................  2.

3. To get forgiveness is to get: A. praised B. blamed C. scolded D. pardoned E. helped  ....................................  3.

4. To probe is to: A. search B. protect C. cure D. reason E. prevent ..........................................................  4.


6. To maltreat is to: A. curse B. prescribe C. abuse D. pretend illness E. operate ........................................  6.


8. To launch is to: A. praise B. snack C. rinse D. anchor E. start .................................................................  8.


15. To venture is to: A. open B. watch C. write D. risk E. profit .................................................................  15.


17. To shuttle is to go: A. up B. away C. back and forth D. aside E. astray .....................................................  17.


19. A trifle is a: A. small article B. stone C. grant D. gift E. little trick .........................................................  19.

20. To negotiate terms is to: A. summarize B. break off C. ignore D. sign E. arrange .......................................  20.

21. To presume is to: A. start B. presuppose C. request D. suggest E. repeat ..................................................  21.


Do not stop here. Turn to page 2.
27. To attain success is to:  A. describe it  B. reach it  C. buy it  D. work toward it  E. expect it ..... 27.
32. To recoil is to:  A. lean forward  B. fall back  C. remember  D. stretch  E. continue ..................... 32.
33. A hacienda is a:  A. happy farewell  B. haystack  C. balcony  D. country house  E. kind of food 33.
34. Depicted means:  A. worn out  B. settled  C. lowered  D. portrayed  E. dependent on .................. 34.
36. An abhorred idea is:  A. clung to  B. hated  C. wondered at  D. given up  E. assumed ....................... 36.

40. To emit is to:  A. confess  B. send forth  C. suggest  D. enter  E. die ................................. 40.
41. A compost is a:  A. fence  B. fruit dish  C. mixture  D. stump  E. column ............................. 41.
42. Speaking vaingloriously is speaking:  A. helpfully  B. bravely  C. boastfully  D. sadly  E. openly .......................... 42.
43. A titillating movie is:  A. depressing  B. outstanding  C. exciting  D. comical  E. tasteless .................. 43.
44. To convey is to:  A. guide  B. carry  C. drive  D. charge  E. collect ............................... 44.
45. If it is obsolete, it is:  A. used  B. not clear  C. out-of-date  D. obscene  E. evident ....................... 45.
47. If you are crafty, you are:  A. sly  B. crazy  C. skillful  D. cranky  E. critical ............................. 47.
49. If there is pandemonium, there is:  A. rain  B. money  C. tumult  D. revenge  E. assistance .......................... 49.
50. To savor is to:  A. enjoy  B. keep  C. cure  D. wash  E. cook slowly ............................... 50.

Do not stop here. Turn to page 3.
51. An imperative decision is: A. improper B. urgent C. hopeless D. unnecessary E. constructive ..... 51.

52. Donned means: A. put on B. started C. taken off D. sat down E. sounded .......................... 52.


54. A vindictive person is: A. hopeful B. strong C. mild-mannered D. practical E. spiteful .......................... 54.


56. A credo is a: A. small opening B. clue C. ridge D. statement of belief E. tall plume .......................... 56.

57. Aeons are: A. years B. aches C. endeavors D. ages E. seeds .......................... 57.

58. To degrade is to: A. debase B. deliver C. bulldoze D. evaluate E. suspect .......................... 58.

59. Maxims are: A. crowds B. minutes C. essays D. gadgets E. sayings .......................... 59.

60. An impending crisis is: A. severe B. unexpected C. personal D. approaching E. obvious .......................... 60.

61. Facets refer to: A. causes B. groups C. aspects D. truths E. skills .......................... 61.

62. To reiterate is to: A. repeat B. reject C. trace D. destroy E. write .......................... 62.

63. To play havoc is to: A. fight B. aid C. ruin D. shelter E. acquire .......................... 63.

64. Impeccable means: A. immovable B. imminent C. subtle D. flawless E. authoritative .......................... 64.


66. To trudge is to: A. plod B. hasten C. loiter D. plunge E. walk .......................... 66.


68. A palatable dish is: A. large B. smooth C. tasty D. bland E. healthful .......................... 68.


70. To impair is to: A. match B. fix C. practice D. injure E. improve .......................... 70.


73. A terse statement is: A. wordy B. awkward C. spicy D. short E. legal .......................... 73.

74. To stymie is to: A. by-pass B. accelerate C. obstruct D. strike E. fail .......................... 74.


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Do not stop here. Turn to page 4.
76. A melancholy individual is: A. sad B. sick C. playful D. tender E. sentimental .......... 76.
77. To succumb is to: A. help B. prosper C. search D. sue E. yield ........................................... 77.
81. To conjure is to: A. join B. call up C. heal D. plot E. judge ............................................. 81.
82. A congenial person is considered: A. agreeable B. knowledgeable C. well-born D. talkative E. quiet ... 82.
83. To be impeded is to be: A. hurried B. tormented C. accused D. improved E. hindered ........ 83.
84. Kindred spirits are: A. kind B. strange C. alike D. young E. unusual .............................. 84.
85. A mire is a: A. small mirror B. farm C. sharp glance D. bog E. breed of cat .................. 85.
86. To be disparaging is to be: A. self-seeking B. controlling C. displaying D. quieting E. belittling ... 86.
89. Lucrative means: A. brilliant B. practical C. profitable D. established E. inventive ........... 89.
90. To derogate is to: A. open B. depend C. support D. detract E. tranquilize .......................... 90.
95. To be inundated is to be: A. washed B. occupied C. touched D. flooded E. discovered .......... 95.
96. To sit pensively is to sit: A. quietly B. tiredly C. thoughtfully D. restlessly E. stiffly ............ 96.
97. Tenets are: A. doctrines B. renters C. occupants D. lawyers E. structures ....................... 97.
100. Condiments are: A. conditions B. shelters C. habits D. contracts E. seasonings ................. 100.

STOP

You have completed the Vocabulary Test. You may recheck your work if time permits.
Do not go on to Part II until you are told to do so.
A few had been wise enough to see a fine poet in Browning, and Elizabeth Barrett was one of them. The young man with the lemon-colored gloves and long dark hair and high-strung, restless manner who had visited her in 1846 had been moved to write to her because she had praised his poetry. She found the man even more to her liking than the verse, and it was not so very long — only the time between May, 1845, and September, 1846 — before Robert Browning had stolen the poetess from the dour father who guarded her like a dragon (never wanting her to marry any man), and taken her with him to Italy and a new life.

One morning, soon after their marriage, Elizabeth Browning thrust a manuscript into her husband’s pocket, and then ran upstairs in a swift confusion to her room. It was a sonnet sequence on their love written during the time of their courtship and love letters. Mrs. Browning never intended these poems to be published, but her poet-husband promptly declared that they must be. He suggested calling them Sonnets from the Portuguese — a title which might hide the fact that they were personal. They were in his mind “the finest sonnets written in our language since Shakespeare’s.”

Browning’s opinion of Sonnets from the Portuguese was hardly more flattering to his wife than his opinion of most of her poetry. He thought her a better poet than he was, and the world at that time agreed with him. He called her his “moon of poets,” as she considered him her sun.

She was a pure singer with a lovely lyrical tenderness, the best poet of her sex since Sappho. Her Sonnets, in their autobiographical candor, in their fine restraint and fullness, reveal a woman’s secret soul as had no other poetry in our literature up to that time. Her lyrical mastery shines in many passages of her writings.

Italy was a kind of promised land for Elizabeth Browning. Living in Florence or in little villages in the summers, she drank in the sun of the south and warmth of her husband’s love, and blossomed in a life of precarious happiness for fifteen years. In Italy she found friends, most of them cultured Americans. Hawthorne saw the Brownings there; the New England thinker and essayist Margaret Fuller visited them. The painter Story came, and the young sculptress Harriet Hosmer. One caller records that Robert Browning was “simple, natural, and playful,” and that Mrs. Browning was all “genius and sensibility.”

Daytimes Browning walked forth with Elizabeth’s little dog Flush, but he seldom could be lured from his home evenings. One privileged intruder, coming frequently at night to join the poets over hot chestnuts and mulled wine, found talk good and laughter plentiful. During the third year of their stay in Italy, a son, Robert Weidemann Browning, was born.

But through this happy life a strain of dark foreboding began to creep. Elizabeth Browning’s father died unrelenting in his disapproval of her marriage, refusing to see her or to allow any of his family to see her. A dearly loved sister died and left three children all younger than her own boy. She drooped and pined a little and Browning shielded her from ordinary visitors. She had a sudden and alarming attack of sickness but was not considered in any danger. One night, soon after, she awoke from a troubled sleep and, apparently with no idea that she was about to leave him, spoke in the tenderest fashion of her love for him, and in his arms, her head drooped as though in a faint, but it was the end.

Profound and lasting was Browning’s grief. “Looking back,” he said, “I see that we have been all the time walking over a torrent on a straw.”

1. Flush was the name of the Brownings’
   A. cat.
   B. dog.
   C. canary.
   D. turtle.
   E. thrush.

2. At night the Brownings often enjoyed
   A. hot chestnuts.
   B. a tart with clotted cream.
   C. strawberries and cream.
   D. café au lait.
   E. cheese soufflé.

3. The Brownings saw
   A. Coleridge.
   B. Byron.
   C. Walt Whitman.
   D. Poe.
   E. Hawthorne.

4. Browning wrote to Miss Barrett because she had
   A. invited him to visit.
   B. written him for advice.
   C. praised his poetry.
   D. sent him one of her own poems.
   E. sent a friend to meet him.

5. The authors of this passage placed most attention on the Brownings’
   A. literary efforts.
   B. personal relationship.
   C. social contacts.
   D. problems.
   E. early meeting.

6. What best describes the Brownings’ early days abroad?
   A. Travel
   B. Relaxation
   C. Creative activity
   D. Intellectual stimulation
   E. Happiness

7. You would assume that Browning
   A. found it easy to see Elizabeth.
   B. carefully avoided Mr. Barrett.
   C. begged Mr. Barrett’s consent to marry.
   D. understood Mr. Barrett.
   E. got Elizabeth to ask her father’s consent.

8. In the “torrent on a straw” quotation, the word straw probably refers to
   A. the frailty of life.
   B. weakness of character.
   C. sorrow.
   D. happiness.
   E. the fleeting nature of fame.

Do not stop here. Turn to page 6.
Marketing is the performance of those business activities that direct the flow of goods and services from producer to consumer or user. Marketing is the connecting link between the producer and the consumer or user. The marketing system brings production and consumption together.

Approximately one in every six gainfully employed persons is engaged directly in wholesaling or retailing activities. This ratio does not take into account other persons who are serving marketing through transportation, communication, and office jobs.

Marketing provides opportunities for many kinds of jobs requiring a wide range of skills and abilities. Although we naturally think of selling as being the primary occupation in marketing, there are opportunities in management, advertising, market and product research, and buying.

The economic well-being of our country is determined largely by productivity, consumption, and employment. The efficiency of the marketing process affects all three. If marketing stimulates demand, people will consume goods at a high rate. High consumption requires high productivity to meet the wants of people, and high productivity and high-level activity in marketing combined result in high employment. Indirectly, marketing is a key to a high level of economic living for the people.

9. Our economic well-being is determined largely by how many factors?
   A. One
   B. Two
   C. Three
   D. Four
   E. Five

10. One major factor mentioned as affecting our economic well-being was
    A. high wages.
    B. low interest rates.
    C. technology.
    D. employment.
    E. foreign trade.

11. The purpose of this passage is to
    A. persuade.
    B. guide.
    C. evaluate.
    D. inform.
    E. interest.

12. The chief emphasis is on
    A. defining marketing.
    B. principles of marketing.
    C. opportunities in marketing.
    D. kinds of jobs in marketing.
    E. the economic significance of marketing.

13. How much sea water was mentioned?
    A. One ton
    B. A cubic acre
    C. A cubic mile
    D. A thousand gallons
    E. A hundred tons

14. The quantity of energy released in an atomic reaction is spoken of as how much greater than with other types of reactions?
    A. Far greater
    B. Unbelievably greater
    C. A thousand times greater
    D. Inconceivably greater
    E. Tremendously greater

15. The primary focus is on
    A. how energy is released.
    B. where energy is found.
    C. the energy from atomic reactions.
    D. what happens in an atomic explosion.
    E. the energy present in sunshine.

16. This passage is best described as
    A. objective.
    B. skeptical.
    C. cautious.
    D. conservative.
    E. optimistic.
PASSAGE FOUR

Even most skeptics, because they seem to share the hope that there is life on Mars, try hard not to discount the possibility. But it was a comedown in the mid-1960's when scientists involved in the Mars exploration studied photos taken by some of the early Mariner space flights. No canals. No seas. No busy Martian engineers. No menacing warlike Martians as huge as skyscrapers. Just mountains, craters, cold winds, and dust storms. It was almost as if scouts for Columbus had returned to Isabella's court with the news that the world had turned out to be flat after all.

Hopeful astronomers reminded us that the Mariner IV had photographed a mere one percent of the Martian surface from 2,000 miles away. And they pointed out that the Earth-orbiting Tiros weather satellite shot over 20,000 pictures before uncovering any evidence of life on Earth. But still, public enthusiasm for Martian exploration wilted.

By the time Viking I touched down on the Plain of Chryse in August, few seemed to care at all. J. Richard Keefe, one of the Viking scientists, declared himself "disgusted" at what he called the "blase . . . apathetic" public response and the skimpy television coverage of what was certainly one of the magnificent scientific and technical accomplishments in human history.

17. One weather satellite was named
A. Latos.
B. Tiros.
C. Prometheus.
D. Sonar.
E. Satelos.

18. One of the Mariners photographed how much of the surface of Mars?
A. One percent
B. Two percent
C. Three percent
D. Four percent
E. Five percent

19. Interest in Mars diminished largely because
A. no Martians were found.
B. the TV coverage was poor.
C. the photos were all black and white.
D. nothing was brought back to earth.
E. the media did not appreciate the accomplishment.

20. Mention of the flat world was used to point up
A. the flatness of Mars.
B. the lack of canals.
C. the lack of seas.
D. the lack of Martians.
E. the lack of mountains.

PASSAGE FIVE

Fungi give cheese the flavor, odor, and character so highly prized by the gourmet. One such mold was first found in caves near the French village of Roquefort. Legend has it that a peasant boy left his lunch, a mild fresh piece of goat cheese, in one of these caves and on returning found it marbled, tart, and redolent. Only cheeses from the area around these particular caves are permitted to bear the name of Roquefort.

As early as the seventeenth century, ergot, the fungus of rye, was used to facilitate childbirth. One of its effects is the contraction of the involuntary muscles, particularly of the uterus. In the twentieth century, ergot has once more attracted interest as the source of the chemical from which the hallucinogenic drug LSD is derived. Most of the modern antibiotics are produced by fungi. The first of these was discovered by Alexander Fleming, who noted that a mold of the genus Penicillium which had contaminated a culture of staphylococcus growing on a nutrient agar plate had completely halted the growth of the bacteria. Antibiotics, of which many hundreds have now been discovered, are substances produced by a living organism that injure another living organism.

21. A fungus was used as medicine as early as what century?
A. Sixteenth
B. Seventeenth
C. Eighteenth
D. Nineteenth
E. Twentieth

22. How many antibiotics have been discovered?
A. Ninety-six
B. Many hundreds
C. Thousands
D. Millions
E. An unspecified number

23. This passage is mainly about
A. ergot.
B. drugs.
C. fungi.
D. antibiotics.
E. cheese.

24. LSD is specifically mentioned to show that ergot
A. needs to be further controlled.
B. needs further research.
C. has medicinal value.
D. is of current interest.
E. is dangerous.

Do not stop here. Turn to page 8.
Local governments were our first governments. The primitive tribe that chose the strongest man to be its chief and the oldest men to form a council was establishing local government. It was seeking a better, safer life.

In the same way, the first English settlers who landed at Jamestown, Virginia, in 1607 soon realized that they needed rules and leaders. At first, the settlers at Jamestown had to look out for themselves. They searched for gold, and had to find their own food and provide their own shelter. As food supplies began to run low, and as the colonists faced hunger and disease, they saw that they needed to work together if the colony was to survive. The colonists formed a council to make laws for the colony. They chose Captain John Smith as president of the council to see that the laws were carried out. This government at Jamestown was the first local government in America.

Today, local government is still the first and most important government in our lives. It protects our lives, our safety, and our homes, and it helps to keep our environment clean. Local government provides us with schools, libraries, and other important services.

25. The first colonial government was
   A. tribal.
   B. city.
   C. county.
   D. local.
   E. federal.

26. The Jamestown colonists formed a government because of
   A. pride.
   B. greed.
   C. necessity.
   D. togetherness.
   E. public spirit.

27. The best title for this selection would be
   A. John Smith.
   B. The First Government.
   C. Jamestown.
   D. Local Government.
   E. American Government.

28. The overall goal of local government seems to be public
   A. regulation.
   B. wealth.
   C. growth.
   D. welfare.
   E. protection.

29. In his paintings, Caravaggio included
   A. common people.
   B. strange landscapes.
   C. eerie, silvery buildings.
   D. ghosts.
   E. corpses.

30. El Greco pursued his early career in
   A. Italy.
   B. Greece.
   C. Lombardy.
   D. Rome.
   E. Toledo.

31. Apparently a major technique of Caravaggio’s was
   A. using exalted religious subjects.
   B. using stark contrasts.
   C. using cadavers.
   D. using ghostlike stillness.
   E. none of the above.

32. The principal idea discussed in this passage concerns
   A. El Greco.
   B. Caravaggio.
   C. contemporary approval of artists.
   D. the travels of painters.
   E. the prosperity of artists.

Do not stop here. Turn to page 9.
PASSAGE EIGHT

The key to the design called experimental is random assignment of subjects to conditions. By random assignment we insure against the influence on the results of some extraneous variable that is tied to or correlated with the variable under investigation. By contrast with experimental designs, correlational designs allow subjects, in a sense, to assign themselves to conditions. Thus, in the cancer studies as they have been done, only people who are four-pack-a-day smokers — by their own "choice" — get into a four-pack-a-day condition. Whatever the factors are that contribute to a person's being a heavy smoker surely must also make him different from the typical nonsmoker in other ways. Hence the ambiguity of interpretation in correlational designs, and hence the virtue of experimental designs. In the latter case, if assignment to conditions is truly random then prevailing differences among individual subjects cannot systematically confound the results. Put another way, the experimenter has under his control all the variables that can influence the results. Whether he can exactly identify these variables is another question. Thus, experimental designs do not yield entirely unambiguous results, merely results that are less ambiguous than those associated with correlational designs.

33. Specific mention is made of
   A. psychogenesis.
   B. psychodynamics.
   C. psychobiology.
   D. psychotherapy.
   E. none of the above.

34. How many research design patterns were discussed?
   A. One only
   B. Two
   C. Three
   D. Four
   E. Five

35. As used in this passage, the phrase put another way means
   A. rephrasing.
   B. enumeration.
   C. using details.
   D. reasoning.
   E. illustration.

36. In this passage the authors imply that heavy smoking is probably caused by
   A. tension.
   B. nervousness.
   C. habit.
   D. social pressure.
   E. all the above and more.

STOP

End of test. If time permits, you may recheck this part of the test. Do not go back to the Vocabulary test.
PART II. COMPREHENSION TEST AND READING RATE

DIRECTIONS TO STUDENTS

A. Do not turn this page of the test booklet until directed to do so.

B. There are eight reading passages in the Comprehension Test. Read completely through a passage; then answer the questions following that passage. You may look back at the material you have read, but do not puzzle too long over any one question. When you have completed the questions for one passage, go immediately to the next one. Continue working until you have answered all of the questions or until you are told to stop.

C. You will have 20 minutes to work on this part of the test. The first minute will be used to determine your Reading Rate. The examiner will call "Mark" when one minute has elapsed. At that time you are to record on your answer sheet the number printed to the right of the line you are reading. If, as in the example below, you were reading the line with the number 076 printed next to it, you would record that number in the appropriate place on your answer sheet.

Sample Reading Selection

One of the most important jobs of the priests in Babylonia and in Egypt was watching the sun and the moon. These ancient astronomers regularly observed the visible heavenly bodies in their daily movements across the sky. Both of these groups had written languages by 3500 B.C., and they very carefully recorded the actions of these "gods." They were especially interested in eclipses, which they interpreted as one god devouring the other. We owe much to these scientists of the past for their careful observations and accurate record keeping.

D. Wait for the signal to turn this page.

E. Now listen carefully to the examiner for further instructions.

MAKE NO MARKS ON THIS TEST BOOKLET