

# Main Idea

## Question 1

In her 2018 book, *Feel Free*, Zadie Smith considers the role of pleasure in art. Smith argues that while art can be didactic, its primary function should be to provide enjoyment. She uses examples from various art forms—literature, music, and painting—to show how artists often prioritize aesthetic appeal over delivering explicit moral messages. Smith acknowledges the value of art that educates, but she ultimately asserts that art's capacity to offer joy is what makes it essential.

Which choice best states the main idea of the text?

- ☐ A Zadie Smith's *Feel Free* focuses on the importance of pleasure in art, arguing that art's ability to provide enjoyment is its most crucial function.
- ☐ B According to Zadie Smith, art's main goal is to teach people valuable lessons about morality.
- ☐ C Zadie Smith's book, *Feel Free*, examines literature, music, and painting to understand the explicit moral messages conveyed through art.
- ☐ D Art should not aim to be educational because its value lies solely in aesthetic appeal.

## Question 2

The soil microbiome significantly influences terrestrial carbon cycling. While heterotrophic microbes facilitate decomposition and CO<sub>2</sub> release via enzymatic processes, they also contribute to carbon sequestration by forming microbial biomass and synthesizing recalcitrant organic compounds stabilized within soil aggregates. A positive feedback loop exists, wherein increased plant-derived carbon inputs foster the growth and diversity of microbial communities, further enhancing soil organic carbon (SOC) formation. However, environmental factors such as drought can mediate microbial carbon use efficiency, potentially decoupling the diversity-carbon sequestration relationship.

Which choice best states the main idea of the text?

- A** Soil microbial communities play a dual role in carbon cycling, both releasing and sequestering carbon, with their efficiency being modulated by environmental conditions.
- B** The decomposition of organic matter by heterotrophic microbes is the primary mechanism driving the release of CO<sub>2</sub> from soils into the atmosphere.
- C** Increased plant-derived carbon inputs invariably lead to greater soil microbial diversity and enhanced long-term carbon sequestration in terrestrial ecosystems.
- D** Soil aggregates primarily function to stabilize recalcitrant organic compounds, thereby preventing the decomposition of soil organic carbon by microbial communities.

## Question 3

A recent study by psychologist Jean-François Bonnefon and colleagues investigated the psychological factors influencing individuals' acceptance of autonomous vehicles, specifically focusing on the ethical dilemma known as the "trolley problem." This thought experiment presents a scenario where a vehicle must choose between two harmful outcomes, and the study aimed to understand public perception of how an autonomous vehicle should be programmed to react. Bonnefon's research, published in a 2016 article in *Science*, utilized a series of surveys presenting different variations of this ethical quandary to a large sample of participants. The findings revealed a complex and somewhat contradictory public attitude: participants generally agreed that autonomous vehicles should be programmed to minimize harm, even if it meant sacrificing the vehicle's occupants, yet they also indicated a preference for purchasing vehicles programmed to protect their own passengers.

Which choice best states the main idea of the text?

- A** Research by Jean-François Bonnefon and colleagues demonstrates that people are uncomfortable with the idea of autonomous vehicles making life-or-death decisions in hypothetical scenarios, revealing a general distrust of artificial intelligence in complex situations.
- B** The "trolley problem" is a long-standing philosophical dilemma that has significant implications for the programming of autonomous vehicles, and Bonnefon et al.'s work is the first empirical study to explore public opinion on this specific application of the problem.
- C** A study by Jean-François Bonnefon and colleagues explored public opinion on the ethical programming of autonomous vehicles when faced with unavoidable harm, uncovering a conflict between the desire for autonomous vehicles to minimize casualties and the preference for personal safety.
- D** While Jean-François Bonnefon and colleagues' study in *Science* provides valuable insights into public attitudes toward the ethics of

autonomous vehicles, it is limited by its reliance on survey data and hypothetical scenarios rather than real-world experimental data.

## Question 4

In her 2019 book, *Wayfinding: The Science and Mystery of How We Got Here*, M.R. O'Connor explores the history and cultural significance of wayfinding—the ability to navigate unfamiliar environments. She notes that while technology like GPS has made navigation easier, it has also diminished our innate wayfinding skills. O'Connor argues that re-engaging with traditional wayfinding methods, such as observing natural patterns and using spatial reasoning, can enhance our understanding of the environment and our place within it.

Which choice best states the main idea of the text?

- ☐ A O'Connor's book examines how GPS technology has improved our spatial reasoning skills.
- ☐ B O'Connor's *Wayfinding* explores how the decline of traditional navigation skills impacts modern society.
- ☐ C O'Connor believes that learning about the history of navigation is mainly valuable to scientists.
- ☐ D O'Connor's book suggests that reviving traditional wayfinding practices could deepen our connection to our surroundings.

## Question 5

Researchers Dr. Evelyn Reed and Dr. Mary Smith investigated the long-term psychosocial developmental trajectory disparities experienced by individuals from low-socioeconomic-status backgrounds compared to their high-socioeconomic-status counterparts. Utilizing a longitudinal study design spanning three decades, they analyzed a comprehensive dataset encompassing educational attainment, occupational prestige, and mental health outcomes. Their findings, published in the *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology* in 2022, indicated a significant and persistent gap in favorable psychosocial outcomes favoring the high-socioeconomic-status group. This suggests that socioeconomic status exerts a profound and lasting influence on an individual's life course development, impacting various facets of their psychosocial well-being from childhood through adulthood.

Which choice best states the main idea of the text?

- A** A longitudinal study by Dr. Reed and Dr. Smith revealed that individuals from low-socioeconomic-status backgrounds consistently experience less favorable long-term psychosocial developmental trajectory disparities compared to those from high-socioeconomic-status backgrounds.
- B** The *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology* is a leading publication venue for research concerning socioeconomic influences on psychosocial development, as evidenced by its publication of Dr. Reed and Dr. Smith's significant 2022 study.
- C** Educational attainment, occupational prestige, and mental health outcomes are the primary indicators of psychosocial development and were the sole focus of Dr. Reed and Dr. Smith's extensive three-decade-long research.
- D** While socioeconomic status has some impact on individual life course development, the study by Dr. Reed and Dr. Smith suggests that this influence is not as significant or persistent as previously theorized

within the field of applied developmental psychology.

## Question 6

*Myotis lucifugus*, the little brown bat, is a bat species widely distributed across North America. A significant threat to this species is *white-nose syndrome* (WNS), caused by the fungus *Pseudogymnoascus destructans* (Pd). WNS disrupts hibernation, leading to premature arousal, depletion of fat reserves, and often death. Studies have investigated factors influencing *M. lucifugus* survival in the presence of WNS. Research by Stuckey et al. (2021) indicated that while *M. lucifugus* populations at some sites have experienced severe declines due to WNS, other populations exhibit signs of stabilization and potential resilience. The observed stabilization may be attributed to increased annual survival rates among the remaining bats rather than immigration. This suggests that some individuals within affected populations may possess traits or face environmental conditions that enhance their ability to survive exposure to *Pseudogymnoascus destructans* and the impacts of *white-nose syndrome*.

Which choice best states the main idea of the text?

- A The fungus *Pseudogymnoascus destructans* is the sole cause of *white-nose syndrome*, a devastating disease affecting *Myotis lucifugus* populations across North America.
- B Immigration from unaffected areas is the primary reason for the observed stabilization in some *Myotis lucifugus* populations despite the widespread impact of *white-nose syndrome*.
- C Although *white-nose syndrome* has severely impacted *Myotis lucifugus* populations, there is evidence suggesting that some remaining bats are exhibiting increased survival rates, potentially due to intrinsic traits or environmental factors.
- D Research into the hibernation patterns and energy reserves of *Myotis lucifugus* is the most promising avenue for mitigating the effects of *white-nose syndrome* and ensuring the species' long-term survival.

## Question 7

In a study of foraging behavior, ecologist Tadashi Inuzuka observed Japanese macaques (*Macaca fuscata*) in Jigokudani Monkey Park. He found that when faced with a novel food source, such as commercially produced cookies left by tourists, younger macaques were more likely to sample the food than older members of the troop. Inuzuka suggests this behavior may be because younger macaques have less established preferences and are more adaptable to new food options compared to older, more experienced individuals.

Which choice best states the main idea of the text?

- A** Tadashi Inuzuka's study showed that younger macaques are generally more adventurous than older macaques.
- B** A study in Jigokudani Monkey Park revealed the foraging habits of Japanese macaques in their natural habitat.
- C** Research indicates that younger macaques are more inclined to try new foods, which may be due to their less rigid dietary habits.
- D** Tourists visiting Jigokudani Monkey Park should avoid feeding the macaques commercially produced cookies.

## Question 8

*Mikania micrantha* Kunth, a rapidly spreading perennial vine native to Central and South America, has become a significant invasive species in many parts of the world, including India and Southeast Asia. Its success is attributed to several factors, including prolific seed production and vegetative reproduction. However, research also indicates that *Mikania micrantha* exhibits allelopathic effects, releasing biochemical compounds, such as flavonoids, tannins, and alkaloids, that inhibit the germination and growth of other plants. Studies have demonstrated that aqueous extracts from the leaves of *Mikania micrantha* can significantly suppress the growth of various agricultural crops, such as *Oryza sativa* and *Zea mays*, and weeds like *Amaranthus spinosus*. This allelopathic potential is considered a key factor contributing to the invasive nature and dominance of *Mikania micrantha* in invaded ecosystems.

Which choice best states the main idea of the text?

- A** Although *Mikania micrantha* is a successful invasive species due to high seed production and vegetative reproduction, the primary reason for its dominance in invaded ecosystems is its ability to release allelopathic biochemical compounds that inhibit the growth of other plants.
- B** *Mikania micrantha*, a highly invasive perennial vine, owes its success in outcompeting native flora in invaded ecosystems partly to its allelopathic properties, through which it releases inhibitory biochemical compounds that negatively affect the germination and growth of other plant species.
- C** The allelopathic effects of *Mikania micrantha*, mediated by the release of compounds such as flavonoids, tannins, and alkaloids, have been extensively studied using aqueous leaf extracts, which have shown significant suppression of seed germination and seedling growth in various plant species.

- D Research into the allelopathic potential of *Mikania micrantha* on economically important agricultural crops like *Oryza sativa* and *Zea mays* and common weeds such as *Amaranthus spinosus* highlights the potential for utilizing this invasive plant's biochemical compounds as natural herbicides.

## Question 9

In their 2013 study, "Metaphor and the Aesthetic of the Avant-Garde: Ezra Pound's *Imagisme*", scholars Robert Snell and John Smith investigate the pervasive influence of metaphorical language within the aesthetic framework of early 20th-century avant-garde literary movements, specifically focusing on Ezra Pound's articulation and promotion of *Imagisme*. Snell and Smith meticulously analyze how the core tenets of *Imagisme*, such as direct treatment of the "thing," economy of language, and the use of the "absolutely accurate" image, are intricately bound to the underlying metaphorical conceptions employed by its practitioners. Their research posits that the effectiveness and revolutionary impact of the *Imagisme* aesthetic are, to a significant extent, attributable to a deliberate and sophisticated engagement with metaphor as a primary mode of representation, challenging previous interpretations that emphasized a purely literal or denotative function of the *Imagiste* image.

Which choice best states the main idea of the text?

- A** Snell and Smith's 2013 study, "Metaphor and the Aesthetic of the Avant-Garde: Ezra Pound's *Imagisme*", argues that the central principles of Ezra Pound's *Imagisme* literary movement were a radical departure from earlier poetic traditions, prioritizing unconventional forms and subjects to shock the bourgeois sensibility.
- B** The 2013 study by Robert Snell and John Smith, "Metaphor and the Aesthetic of the Avant-Garde: Ezra Pound's *Imagisme*", critically evaluates the historical trajectory of avant-garde aesthetics in the early 20th century, suggesting that Ezra Pound's contributions, while notable, were ultimately less influential than other contemporary movements.
- C** According to their 2013 study, "Metaphor and the Aesthetic of the Avant-Garde: Ezra Pound's *Imagisme*", Robert Snell and John Smith provide a detailed biographical account of Ezra Pound, tracing his intellectual development and personal relationships as key factors shaping the

emergence of *Imagisme*.

- D In their 2013 study, "Metaphor and the Aesthetic of the Avant-Garde: Ezra Pound's *Imagisme*", Robert Snell and John Smith contend that the

aesthetic impact of Ezra Pound's *Imagisme* was largely dependent on the intentional and sophisticated use of metaphor by the movement's poets, contrary to interpretations emphasizing a strictly literal approach.

## Question 10

The following text is from Louisa May Alcott's 1868 novel *Little Women*. The March sisters have formed a secret society called the Pickwick Club, where they assume the identities of male characters from a Charles Dickens novel.

On one occasion, Mr. Pickwick put on a pair of spectacles without any glasses, rapped upon the table, hemmed, and, having stared hard at Mr. Snodgrass, who was tilting back in his chair, till he arranged himself properly, began to read: —

THE PICKWICK PORTFOLIO

MAY 20, 18 —

POET'S CORNER

ANNIVERSARY ODE

Again we meet to celebrate  
With badge and solemn rite,  
Our fifty-second anniversary,  
In Pickwick Hall, tonight.

Which choice best states the main idea of the text?

- A** The club's president brings the group to attention and begins to share a commemorative poem to mark a special occasion.
- B** Mr. Pickwick is unable to read the document clearly because his glasses are broken and lack lenses.
- C** The gathering is disbanded early because Mr. Snodgrass behaves rudely by tilting back in his chair.
- D** The members of the club are saddened to discover that several of their friends are missing from the anniversary celebration.

## Question 11

In *Our Aesthetic Categories: Zany, Cute, Interesting* (2012), Sianne Ngai, a distinguished scholar in English literature and cultural theory, argues that certain aesthetic categories, traditionally considered minor or even trivial, are in fact central to understanding contemporary life under what she terms "late capitalism." Ngai proposes that the "zany," the "cute," and the "interesting" function as key aesthetic forms that reflect and help us process the prevailing conditions of production, consumption, and circulation in today's society. While these categories may seem less profound than traditional aesthetics like the beautiful or the sublime, Ngai contends that their ubiquity and the specific affects they evoke offer crucial insights into our relationship with commodities, information, and performance in a hypercommodified world.

Which choice best states the main idea of the text?

- A** Sianne Ngai's book, *Our Aesthetic Categories: Zany, Cute, Interesting*, is a groundbreaking work that redefines traditional aesthetic theory by introducing new categories like the zany, the cute, and the interesting.
- B** According to Sianne Ngai in *Our Aesthetic Categories*, the aesthetic categories of the zany, the cute, and the interesting are significant for understanding contemporary life because they reflect the pervasive influence of production, consumption, and circulation in a hypercommodified society.
- C** The aesthetic categories of the beautiful and the sublime are no longer relevant in contemporary aesthetic theory, according to Sianne Ngai's analysis in *Our Aesthetic Categories*.
- D** Sianne Ngai's work primarily focuses on the emotional responses evoked by aesthetic experiences, particularly the "ugly feelings" discussed in her earlier scholarship, which paved the way for her later analysis of the zany, the cute, and the interesting.

## Question 12

In a 2010 study, Naomi Mandel and colleagues explored consumer behavior in response to discounts framed as either percentages or absolute amounts. Participants were more likely to purchase items when the discount was presented as a percentage if the original price was low, such as “25% off.” Conversely, an absolute amount discount, like “\$5 off,” was more effective for higher-priced items. The *Prospect Theory* suggests this is because people perceive gains and losses relative to a reference point, making percentage discounts seem larger for small numbers and absolute discounts more significant for large numbers.

Which choice best states the main idea of the text?

- A** According to the *Prospect Theory*, consumers always prefer percentage discounts over absolute discounts.
- B** Mandel’s study in 2010 found that percentage discounts are more appealing for low-priced items, while absolute discounts work better for high-priced items due to how people perceive value.
- C** The researchers found that consumers generally do not understand the difference between percentage and absolute discounts.
- D** Discounts have no impact on consumer behavior; other factors such as brand loyalty are more influential.

## Question 13

Eusociality, a complex social structure observed in certain animal species, is characterized by cooperative brood care, overlapping generations, and a division of labor where some individuals forgo reproduction to support the colony. This phenomenon, well-documented in insects like ants and bees, has also been discovered in the marine realm, specifically in the snapping shrimp genus *Synalpheus*. Research, such as that by J. Emmett Duffy, has identified multiple species within this genus, including *Synalpheus regalis*, that exhibit eusocial characteristics. These shrimp form colonies within sponges, where a single female is the primary reproductive individual, and numerous non-breeding individuals, often larger males, defend the colony. This cooperative defense of the host sponge is considered a key factor contributing to their ecological success and the evolution of this advanced social system in these marine crustaceans.

Which choice best states the main idea of the text?

- A** The study of eusociality in insects like ants and bees provides a comprehensive framework for understanding similar social structures observed in marine organisms such as the snapping shrimp *Synalpheus regalis*.
- B** Eusociality, a sophisticated form of social organization previously primarily associated with terrestrial insects, has been identified in the marine snapping shrimp genus *Synalpheus*, where species like *Synalpheus regalis* exhibit cooperative colony defense and reproductive division of labor within their sponge habitats.
- C** The cooperative defense strategies employed by the non-breeding individuals, particularly the larger males, within the colonies of eusocial snapping shrimp species like *Synalpheus regalis* are the most significant factor driving their ecological success and the evolution of their complex social behavior.
- D** J. Emmett Duffy's extensive research on the *Synalpheus* genus has definitively proven that *Synalpheus regalis* is the only marine

crustacean species to have independently evolved the complex social structure of eusociality through the mechanism of cooperative brood care within a shared host sponge.

## Question 14

Research into the neurobiology of *food reward* has increasingly focused on the *mesolimbic dopaminergic system* (MDS) and its primary projection target, the *nucleus accumbens* (NAc). This pathway, originating in the ventral tegmental area (VTA), is understood to play a crucial role in processing rewarding stimuli and motivating goal-directed behaviors, such as seeking and consuming food. Studies, including those using microdialysis in animal models and imaging in humans, demonstrate that dopamine release in the NAc is associated with food ingestion and appears correlated with the hedonic properties of food, particularly palatable options. The MDS is considered a key component in the neural circuitry underlying incentive salience and reinforcement learning related to eating behavior.

Which choice best states the main idea of the text?

- A** The ventral tegmental area is the sole origin of the mesolimbic dopaminergic system, which is exclusively responsible for the hedonic experience of consuming palatable food.
- B** Microdialysis and human imaging studies have definitively proven that the *nucleus accumbens* is the single most important brain region for all aspects of *food reward* and motivated eating behaviors.
- C** The *mesolimbic dopaminergic system*, particularly the connection between the ventral tegmental area and the *nucleus accumbens*, is a central neural pathway involved in processing *food reward*, motivating eating, and influencing the perceived pleasantness of food.
- D** While the *mesolimbic dopaminergic system* is implicated in *food reward*, its influence is secondary to other, more significant brain pathways that govern essential homeostatic mechanisms related to energy balance and nutrient intake.

## Question 15

Research by sociologist Dr. Eleanor Vance in 2018 investigated the intricate relationship between socioeconomic status and childhood cognitive development trajectories. The study, utilizing a longitudinal design and a diverse cohort of participants from various geographical locations and familial structures, employed a battery of neurocognitive assessments alongside comprehensive surveys detailing parental educational attainment, occupational prestige, and household income levels. Contrary to some prevailing deficit models, the findings indicated a more nuanced interaction, suggesting that while resource availability undeniably played a significant role, the quality of the home learning environment and parental engagement in educational activities served as powerful mediating factors, often mitigating the effects of socioeconomic disparities on certain executive functions and language acquisition skills in early to middle childhood. The study underscored the multifaceted nature of this complex interplay.

Which choice best states the main idea of the text?

- A** Dr. Eleanor Vance's 2018 research conclusively proved that socioeconomic status is the sole determinant of childhood cognitive development trajectories, contradicting all previous research.
- B** A longitudinal study conducted by Dr. Eleanor Vance in 2018 on a diverse cohort demonstrated that resource availability is the only factor influencing executive functions and language acquisition skills.
- C** Dr. Eleanor Vance's 2018 study on the relationship between socioeconomic status and childhood cognitive development trajectories revealed a complex interaction where home learning environment and parental engagement act as important mitigating factors.
- D** The 2018 research by Dr. Eleanor Vance, utilizing neurocognitive assessments and comprehensive surveys, failed to identify any

significant relationship between socioeconomic disparities and cognitive development in early to middle childhood.

## Question 16

The early 20th century saw significant shifts in aesthetic philosophy, particularly concerning the perception of space and form. Maurice Merleau-Ponty, in his seminal work *Phenomenology of Perception* (1945), explored the primacy of the body in understanding the world, arguing that our lived experience of space is not merely geometric but is shaped by our bodily capabilities and intentions. This phenomenological approach contrasted with purely intellectual or representational understandings of spatiality prevalent in earlier rationalist traditions. Merleau-Ponty's emphasis on the embodied nature of perception profoundly influenced subsequent thinkers across various disciplines, including architecture and art criticism, by highlighting the dynamic and subjective interaction between an individual and their environment as a central element of aesthetic apprehension and spatial cognition.

Which choice best states the main idea of the text?

- A** Maurice Merleau-Ponty's *Phenomenology of Perception* was a groundbreaking text that introduced the concept of the primacy of the body in spatial cognition, contrasting with previous purely geometric understandings of space and influencing various fields.
- B** The shift in aesthetic philosophy during the early 20th century was primarily characterized by a move away from intellectual representations of space towards an emphasis on subjective experiences, as exemplified by Maurice Merleau-Ponty's work.
- C** Maurice Merleau-Ponty's *Phenomenology of Perception* presented a new understanding of spatiality rooted in bodily experience, which differed from earlier rationalist viewpoints and had a lasting impact on disciplines concerned with aesthetic apprehension and spatial cognition.
- D** Prior to the work of Maurice Merleau-Ponty, aesthetic philosophy and spatial cognition were dominated by rationalist traditions that exclusively focused on intellectual and representational understandings of the relationship between an individual and their environment.

## Question 17

Meredith E. Protas and colleagues have explored how convergent evolution—a phenomenon that occurs when the same trait evolves independently in two reproductively separate lineages—can result from a genetic mechanism shared by both lineages. Meanwhile, Bas J. Zwaan and colleagues have investigated how convergence occurs through different genetic mechanisms, but the relative prevalence of convergence through shared and different genetic processes is still poorly understood. This motivated biologist Delbert A. Green II and Cassandra G. Extavour to evaluate both types of convergence in a single study for their 2012 paper.

Which choice best states the main idea of the text?

- A** Before Green and Extavour's study, convergence evolution was assumed to require a shared genetic mechanism between two lineages that shared the trait.
- B** Green and Extavour's study was conducted using data from the studies by Protas and colleagues and Zwaan and colleagues.
- C** Green and Extavour's study addresses convergent evolution more comprehensively than the studies by Protas and colleagues and Zwaan and colleagues do.
- D** Both the study by Protas and colleagues and that by Green and Extavour compare convergence through shared genetic mechanism to convergence through different genetic mechanisms.

## Question 18

Franz Kafka's posthumously published novel, *Das Schloss* (The Castle), centers on the enigmatic struggles of a protagonist known only as K. who arrives in a village with the stated intention of working as a land surveyor for the authorities residing in the eponymous castle. Despite K.'s persistent and increasingly desperate efforts, he is continually obstructed from gaining access to the castle and its elusive bureaucracy. The novel's fragmented and surreal narrative highlights the pervasive themes of alienation, the frustrating and impenetrable nature of bureaucratic systems, and the seemingly futile human pursuit of an unobtainable goal or acceptance. Literary analyses frequently focus on the symbolic representation of the castle and the village, and K.'s interactions with the inscrutable villagers and minor officials, as reflections of existential angst and the individual's struggle against overwhelming, arbitrary authority.

Which choice best states the main idea of the text?

- A** Kafka's novel *Das Schloss* utilizes the character of K. and his interactions to critique the inefficiencies and illogical nature of bureaucratic systems that cause alienation and frustration.
- B** The central conflict in Franz Kafka's *Das Schloss* arises from the protagonist K.'s inability to fulfill his appointed role as a land surveyor due to the physical and social barriers imposed by the mysterious castle and its inhabitants.
- C** Literary interpretations of Franz Kafka's unfinished novel *Das Schloss* primarily focus on the symbolic significance of the castle and the village as representations of societal structures that isolate the individual.
- D** Franz Kafka's novel *Das Schloss* depicts the protagonist K.'s persistent yet unsuccessful attempts to gain access to the castle and its authorities, thereby exploring themes of alienation, bureaucratic frustration, and the futility of seeking an unattainable objective.

## Question 19

The cyanobacterium *Cylindrospermopsis raciborskii* is a freshwater organism that has garnered significant attention due to its increasing prevalence worldwide and its capacity to produce potent toxins, including saxitoxins, which are a type of paralytic shellfish poisoning (PSP) toxin. Although primarily associated with marine environments, saxitoxins produced by *C. raciborskii* in freshwater sources pose a potential risk to human health through contaminated drinking water and the consumption of affected freshwater organisms, such as fish, molluscs, and crayfish, which can bioaccumulate the toxins. Research indicates that the distribution and toxicity of *C. raciborskii*, including its saxitoxin production, are influenced by various environmental factors such as temperature, light intensity, and nutrient availability.

Which choice best states the main idea of the text?

- A** The cyanobacterium *Cylindrospermopsis raciborskii* is an invasive species whose worldwide spread is primarily driven by its tolerance to a wide range of environmental conditions, such as temperature and light.
- B** The freshwater cyanobacterium *Cylindrospermopsis raciborskii* is a growing concern because it produces saxitoxins, a type of paralytic shellfish poisoning toxin, which can contaminate freshwater sources and organisms, potentially impacting human health.
- C** Saxitoxins, potent neurotoxins typically associated with marine dinoflagellates and paralytic shellfish poisoning, have been detected in freshwater environments due to the increasing prevalence of the cyanobacterium *Cylindrospermopsis raciborskii*.
- D** Research into the environmental factors influencing the distribution and toxicity of *Cylindrospermopsis raciborskii*, such as temperature, light intensity, and nutrient availability, is crucial for understanding and mitigating the risks associated with this bloom-forming cyanobacterium.

## Question 20

The following text is from Emily Dickinson's poem *I never lost as much but twice*. The poem describes the speaker's emotional state following profound personal losses.

I never lost as much but twice,  
And that was in the sod.  
Twice have I stood a beggar  
Before the door of God!  
Angels -- twice descending  
Reimbursed my store --  
Burglar! Banker -- Father!  
I am poor once more!

Which choice best states the main idea of the text?

- A** The speaker believes that material wealth is fleeting and ultimately insignificant compared to spiritual devotion.
- B** The speaker is grateful to God for restoring what was lost and feels permanently comforted by faith.
- C** The speaker resents the fact that God has taken away loved ones without offering any form of consolation.
- D** The speaker reflects on past losses and spiritual restoration but now feels bereft after experiencing a new loss.

# Answers

## Question 1

**Correct Answer: A**

The passage discusses Zadie Smith's view on art. Smith believes that the most important part of art is that it brings people joy.<br><br>The main idea would be something like "Zadie Smith thinks art is important because it brings people joy".<br><br>(A) matches this idea.<br><br>(B) goes against what the passage says. Smith says art can be didactic, but it shouldn't be.<br>(C) is off-topic. The passage says that Smith uses examples to show how artists focus on making art enjoyable instead of didactic.<br>(D) is too extreme. Smith acknowledges that art that educates has value.

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## Question 2

**Correct Answer: A**

The passage explains that soil microbes have two opposite effects in the carbon cycle, and environmental factors can affect the carbon use efficiency.<br>Here's why each choice is right or wrong:<br>- (A) Correct. It summarizes the dual role of microbes and influence of environmental factors mentioned in the passage.<br>- (B) Incorrect. It only mentions one part of the carbon cycling, making the scope too narrow.<br>- (C) Incorrect. The passage only states that carbon input 'fosters' microbial communities, not necessarily leads to greater carbon sequestration. The word 'invariably' also makes the choice too extreme.<br>- (D) Incorrect. It only describes the function of soil aggregates and does not refer to the role of soil microbial communities.

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## Question 3

**Correct Answer: C**

The passage talks about a study by Jean-François Bonnefon and colleagues about how people think autonomous vehicles should act in tough ethical situations. The study found that people want the vehicles to save the most lives, but they also want their own car to protect them. This shows a conflict in what people want. **(A)** is wrong because the study focused on specific ethical choices, not a general discomfort with AI. **(B)** is wrong because the passage doesn't say this was the *first* study on this topic. **(D)** is wrong because the passage describes the study's findings, not a critique of its methods. **(C)** accurately captures the main point that the study found conflicting public opinions on how autonomous vehicles should be programmed in ethical dilemmas.

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## Question 4

**Correct Answer: D**

The passage is about O'Connor's book *Wayfinding* and how it discusses the importance of traditional navigation skills.  
  
We can predict that the main idea would be about O'Connor's argument on the importance of traditional wayfinding methods. **(D)** matches this prediction. It says that bringing back old navigation methods can help us better understand our environment, which is what O'Connor argues in her book.  
  
**(A)** contradicts the passage because the passage states that GPS has diminished our spatial reasoning skills, not improved them. **(B)** is off-topic because the passage is about reviving traditional wayfinding methods, not how the decline of these skills impacts society. **(C)** is too narrow because the passage implies that knowing the history of navigation is valuable to everyone, not just scientists.

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## Question 5

**Correct Answer: A**

The passage describes a study by Dr. Reed and Dr. Smith that looked at how a person's family money situation affects their life as they grow up. They found that people from families with less money had worse results in life over a long time compared to people from families with more money. This means the study showed that having less money affects a person's life path in a negative way for a long time. **(A)** says exactly this: the study showed that people with less money had worse outcomes over a long time. **(B)** talks about the journal where the study was published, which is just a detail, not the main point. **(C)** focuses only on the things they measured, not the overall finding about socioeconomic status. **(D)** says the study showed the influence of socioeconomic status was *not* as significant, which is the opposite of what the passage says.

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## Question 6

**Correct Answer: C**

The passage introduces *Myotis lucifugus* and the threat of *white-nose syndrome*. It then discusses research indicating that while some populations have declined, others show signs of stabilization, possibly due to increased survival rates among remaining bats, suggesting certain factors might enhance their ability to survive the disease. Therefore, the main idea is that despite the negative impact of WNS, some *Myotis lucifugus* are surviving at higher rates, pointing to potential resilience.<br><br>**(A)** is too narrow as it focuses only on the cause of WNS and its general impact, not the nuanced survival patterns discussed.<br>**(B)** is contradicted by the passage, which states stabilization may be due to increased survival, not immigration.<br>**(D)** is too specific, focusing on research avenues rather than the observed phenomenon of potential resilience in some bat populations.

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## Question 7

**Correct Answer: C**

The passage talks about a study by Tadashi Inuzuka on Japanese macaques. This study found that younger macaques are more likely to try new foods. This might be because they don't have strong food preferences like older macaques. So, the main idea should be about this finding.<br><br>(A) is incorrect because it's too broad. The passage is specifically about food, not general adventurousness.<br>(B) is incorrect because it's too broad. The passage mainly focuses on the difference in foraging behavior between young and old macaques when presented with a novel food.<br>(D) is incorrect because it's off-topic. The passage doesn't talk about what tourists should or shouldn't do.<br>(C) is the correct answer because it directly reflects the study's finding about younger macaques being more open to new foods because of their adaptable eating habits.

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## Question 8

**Correct Answer: B**

The passage discusses the invasive nature of *Mikania micrantha* and attributes its success in part to its allelopathic effects. It explains that the plant releases biochemical compounds that hinder the growth of other plants. Therefore, the main idea is that *Mikania micrantha*'s invasiveness is partly due to its allelopathic properties.<br><br>(A) is incorrect because the passage does not state that allelopathy is the *primary* reason for its dominance, only that it is a contributing factor.<br>(C) is incorrect because it focuses too narrowly on the studies using aqueous leaf extracts and the specific compounds, rather than the overall contribution of allelopathy to the plant's invasiveness.<br>(D) is incorrect because while the passage mentions studies on agricultural crops and weeds, it does not focus on the potential for using *Mikania micrantha*'s compounds as herbicides.

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## Question 9

**Correct Answer: D**

The passage is about a study by Snell and Smith that looks at how metaphor is used in Ezra Pound's *Imagisme*. The study says that the power of *Imagisme* comes from using metaphor in a smart way, even though some people thought it was just about literal images. The main idea is that the study found metaphor was very important to *Imagisme*.<br><br>Choice **(A)** is wrong because the passage doesn't talk about *Imagisme* shocking people or being a radical departure from older poetry styles.<br>Choice **(B)** is wrong because the passage focuses only on *Imagisme* and doesn't compare its influence to other art movements.<br>Choice **(C)** is wrong because the passage is about the aesthetic of *Imagisme* and the use of metaphor, not a biography of Ezra Pound.<br>Choice **(D)** correctly states that the study argues for the importance of metaphor in *Imagisme*, which is the main point of the passage.

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## Question 10

**Correct Answer: A**

The text describes a scene where the leader, acting as "Mr. Pickwick," gets the room quiet by knocking on the table and staring at a member who is leaning back. Once everyone is ready, he starts reading a poem called an "Anniversary Ode" to celebrate their meeting. <br><br>Therefore, the main idea is that the leader establishes order and then reads a poem to celebrate. Choice **(A)** matches this perfectly.<br><br>Choice **(B)** is incorrect because the text says Mr. Pickwick "began to read," so the lack of glass in the spectacles did not stop him from reading.<br><br>Choice **(C)** is incorrect because the meeting is not disbanded; Mr. Snodgrass fixes his chair, and the reading begins.<br><br>Choice **(D)** is incorrect because the poem states they are there to "celebrate," and later lines in the original text (not shown here but implied by the celebratory tone) suggest everyone is present and happy, not sad.

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## Question 11

**Correct Answer: B**

The passage discusses Sianne Ngai's book and its main argument. It states that Ngai argues that the aesthetic categories of the zany, the cute, and the interesting are important for understanding contemporary life because they reflect production, consumption, and circulation in today's society. This matches choice **(B)**.  
  
Choice **(A)** is too narrow because it only mentions that the book introduces new categories, but not *why* those categories are important according to Ngai.  
  
Choice **(C)** is incorrect because the passage does not state that the beautiful and the sublime are no longer relevant; it only says that Ngai focuses on categories *other* than these traditional ones.  
  
Choice **(D)** is incorrect because while Ngai did write about "ugly feelings" in another work, the passage focuses on the argument presented in *Our Aesthetic Categories* about the zany, cute, and interesting, not her earlier scholarship.

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## Question 12

**Correct Answer: B**

The passage is about how people react to different kinds of discounts. It says that percentage discounts work better for cheap stuff, while dollar discounts work better for expensive stuff. This is because of how our brains see the value of things.  
  
The correct answer should talk about this main idea.  
  
**(A)** is wrong because it says people *always* prefer percentage discounts, but the passage says it depends on the price of the item. This contradicts what the passage says.  
  
**(B)** is correct because it accurately summarizes the main idea: Mandel's study showed that people prefer percentage discounts for low-priced items and absolute discounts for high-priced items, because of the way they view value.  
  
**(C)** is wrong because it says people don't understand the discounts, which is not mentioned in the passage. This is off-topic.  
  
**(D)** is wrong because it says discounts don't matter, but the passage is all about how they *do* matter. This

contradicts the passage.

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## Question 13

**Correct Answer: B**

The passage defines eusociality and then states that this social structure has been found in the marine snapping shrimp genus *Synalpheus*, giving *Synalpheus regalis* as an example. It mentions that these shrimp live in colonies in sponges with a reproductive female and non-breeding defenders. The main idea is that eusociality exists in these marine shrimp, similar to how it is found in insects.<br><br>Choice **(A)** is too narrow because it focuses on the framework provided by insect study, which is not the main point. The main point is the discovery of eusociality in shrimp.<br><br>Choice **(C)** is too narrow because it focuses only on cooperative defense as the most significant factor, while the passage presents a broader picture of eusociality in these shrimp.<br><br>Choice **(D)** is incorrect because the passage mentions multiple species within *Synalpheus* exhibit eusociality, not just *Synalpheus regalis*, and it does not state that *Synalpheus regalis* is the *only* marine crustacean with this trait.

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## Question 14

**Correct Answer: C**

The passage talks about how the brain's mesolimbic dopaminergic system and the nucleus accumbens are important for feeling rewarded by food and wanting to eat. Studies show that a chemical called dopamine is released in the nucleus accumbens when people eat, especially tasty food. This system helps the brain understand that food is rewarding and encourages eating. So the main idea is that this specific brain pathway is key to how we experience food as rewarding and how it makes us want to eat.<br><br>Choice A is incorrect because the passage says the mesolimbic dopaminergic system *originates* in the ventral tegmental area but doesn't say it's the *sole* origin or that it's *exclusively* responsible for the

hedonic experience.<br><br>Choice B is incorrect because the passage says the nucleus accumbens is a *primary target* and *plays a crucial role*, not that it's the *single most important* region for *all aspects* of food reward.<br><br>Choice D is incorrect because the passage describes the mesolimbic dopaminergic system as a *central* pathway in food reward, not secondary to other pathways.

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## Question 15

**Correct Answer: C**

The passage discusses Dr. Eleanor Vance's 2018 study on how money and family background affect how children's thinking skills grow. It says the study found that it's not just about how much money a family has, but also how good the learning environment is at home and how much parents help with schoolwork. These things can lessen the impact of not having much money on certain thinking and language skills in young children. So, the main idea is about the complex relationship and the factors that help.<br><br>Choice **(A)** is wrong because the passage says socioeconomic status is important but not the only factor, and it doesn't say it contradicted all previous research.<br>Choice **(B)** is wrong because the passage says resource availability is important, but it also highlights the role of the home learning environment and parental engagement, indicating resource availability is not the only factor.<br>Choice **(D)** is wrong because the passage states that the study *did* find a relationship between socioeconomic disparities and cognitive development, and that other factors can lessen this effect.

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## Question 16

**Correct Answer: C**

The passage introduces Maurice Merleau-Ponty and his book *Phenomenology of Perception*. It explains that his main idea was about how our bodies are most important in understanding space, which was different from older ideas that only focused on thinking. The passage also says his

ideas changed how people thought in areas like architecture and art. So, the main idea is about Merleau-Ponty's new idea about space, how it was different from old ideas, and how it was important later.<br><br>(A) is close but uses the phrase "spatial cognition" as something introduced by Merleau-Ponty, when the passage implies it was a pre-existing field that he influenced.<br>(B) is too broad, talking about a general shift in aesthetic philosophy without clearly centering it on Merleau-Ponty's specific contribution as the main point of the passage.<br>(D) makes an extreme claim by saying rationalist traditions "exclusively" focused on intellectual understandings, which the passage does not fully support; it only states that this was "prevalent."<br>(C) accurately captures Merleau-Ponty's main idea about the body and space, its difference from previous ideas, and its influence on other fields mentioned in the passage.

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## Question 17

**Correct Answer: C**

This is a **Main Idea** question, asking for the central point of the passage.<br><br>The passage introduces two different approaches to studying convergent evolution. The first, by *Protas and colleagues*, explored convergence resulting from a **shared genetic mechanism**. The second, by *Zwaan and colleagues*, investigated convergence occurring through **different genetic mechanisms**. The last sentence states that the work of *Green and Extavour* was motivated by a need to understand the prevalence of both types, so they decided to "evaluate both types of convergence in a single study." This shows that Green and Extavour's study was more comprehensive because it combined the two separate lines of inquiry into one.<br><br>(A) is incorrect because the passage mentions Zwaan and colleagues studied convergence through different mechanisms, showing this wasn't the assumption before Green and Extavour's work. (B) is incorrect because the passage says Green and Extavour were "motivated" by the prior studies, not that they used their data. (D) is incorrect because the text clearly states that the study by Protas and colleagues focused only on convergence through shared genetic mechanisms.

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## Question 18

**Correct Answer: D**

The passage introduces Kafka's novel *Das Schloss* and explains that it is about the main character, K., trying and failing to reach the castle. It also states that the novel explores themes like feeling alone, dealing with frustrating rules, and trying to reach goals that are impossible. This means the main idea is about K.'s struggle to get to the castle and the feelings and ideas this struggle represents. **(A)** is incorrect because while the novel does touch on bureaucracy, the passage highlights a broader set of themes beyond just the critique of bureaucratic systems. **(B)** is incorrect because while K.'s role as a land surveyor is mentioned, the passage emphasizes his struggle to reach the castle and the themes this represents, not just his failure to do his job. **(C)** is incorrect because while symbolic interpretations exist and are mentioned, the passage focuses more on the narrative of K.'s struggle and the themes that emerge from it, rather than solely on the symbolic analysis of settings. **(D)** is correct because it accurately summarizes the passage's main points: K.'s struggle to reach the castle, his failure to do so, and the themes of alienation, bureaucracy, and unattainable goals that are explored through this narrative.

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## Question 19

**Correct Answer: B**

The passage states that *Cylindrospermopsis raciborskii* is a freshwater organism that is becoming more common and can produce saxitoxins, which are toxins usually found in shellfish. It also mentions that these toxins in freshwater can be harmful to people if they drink contaminated water or eat fish, molluscs, or crayfish from affected areas. This means the main point is that this cyanobacterium and the toxins it makes are a problem because they can affect human health through freshwater. **(B)** says the cyanobacterium is a concern because it makes saxitoxins that can get into freshwater and organisms, which can hurt people. This matches the

information in the passage.  
(A) is too narrow. While the passage mentions environmental factors influencing the cyanobacterium, it doesn't say its spread is *primarily* due to its tolerance to temperature and light, nor is its invasiveness the main point. (C) is also too narrow; it focuses on the presence of saxitoxins in freshwater but doesn't fully capture the role of the cyanobacterium as the source of the toxins and the potential impact on human health as the central idea. (D) describes the importance of research but the passage's main point is about the threat posed by the cyanobacterium and its toxins, not the research itself.

## Question 20

**Correct Answer: D**

The text tells us about a person who lost something very important two times before. The line "in the sod" suggests these losses were deaths (people buried in the ground). After these losses, the speaker felt like a beggar asking God for help. Angels came down and "reimbursed" (paid back) the speaker, meaning they felt better or spiritually restored for a while. However, the poem ends by calling God a "Burglar" and a "Banker" and saying "I am poor once more!" This means the speaker has lost something again and feels empty.  
The main idea is that the speaker has gone through a cycle of losing things, feeling better, and now losing something again. Choice (D) captures this perfectly because it mentions the past losses, the restoration (feeling better), and the current feeling of being "poor" (bereft) again.  
Choice (A) is incorrect because the poem isn't really about money or material wealth. When the speaker says "poor," they mean emotionally poor or empty from loss, not lacking money.  
Choice (B) is incorrect because although the speaker mentions being "reimbursed" (comforted) in the past, the end of the poem says "I am poor once more," which means the comfort didn't last forever. They are not permanently comforted.  
Choice (C) is incorrect because the poem actually says God (or angels) did offer consolation before ("Reimbursed my store"). The speaker is struggling with a new loss now, but it's not true that there was never any consolation.