

# *The Reading Lab*



## **CPT Preparation:** **Reading**

MCC offers a **Writing Center & Reading/Study Skills Lab** at both the Bedford and Lowell campuses. Tutoring is available weekdays and some evenings, at no charge. Schedules are posted on the doors. Drop in or make an appointment.

**Bedford:** AR 212, Tel: 781-280-3727 or 3728

**Lowell:** City Campus Room 406B, Tel: 978-656-3365 or 3364.

Middlesex Community College

### **Preparing for the Computerized Placement Test (CPT)**

One of the requirements each student must meet to complete this reading course is a retake of the reading comprehension part of the Computerized Placement Test (CPT) that you took when you were admitted to Middlesex Community College.

Although the format of the CPT looks very different from the work we have done this semester, the test actually deals with the very same skills you have practiced. The purpose of this handout is to help you recognize the reading skills you have studied this semester as they are presented on this test.

Following the discussion of each of the skills and sample passages, there is a practice test. We will work together with the samples. The practice test should be done on your own at a later time. Because the CPT is “adaptive” – it chooses the questions based on your previous responses – a paper and pencil practice test cannot really duplicate the experience. Use the practice test to become comfortable with the format and style of the test.

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#### **SKILL #1: Topics or Specific Subjects**

Some of the questions on the CPT ask you to choose the *topic* or *specific subject* of the passage.

You are being asked to identify the topic of the passage when the test question begins:

- This passage is mainly about . . .
- The best title for this passage might be . . .
- The passage discusses . . .
- The topic of this passage is . . .
- The passage mainly concerns . . .
- The problem the author is discussing in this passage is . . .
- The author is explaining the concept of . . .

Remember that to identify the topic of a specific subject of a passage ask yourself “*Who or what is this passage about?*” Because the passages in this test do not include headings, titles, or bold-faced or italicized words to help you, skim through the passage and look for repeated words, or a series of pronouns that refer to the same thing.

#### **Sample Passages with Topic Questions**

Sociologists have determined that people who are addicted to shopping have a high need for excitement and low self-esteem. There seems to be two kinds of addicted shoppers. One is the daily shopper, who cannot miss a single day in the stores or malls. The other type is the binge buyer, who goes shopping weekly to buy huge amounts of things, much

of which they don't even need.

This passage is mainly about . . .

- A) shoppers who buy far more items than they have the need for.
- B) the cause of shopping addiction.
- C) categories of addicted shoppers.
- D) the need to shop every day.

Work sharing is becoming more and more popular with employees and employers. In work sharing, full-time jobs are divided into part-time jobs shared by two or more workers. Working mothers, students, and those just returning to work find these positions very appealing because they allow for greater flexibility. Many of these workers have interests to pursue and need the extra time. Employers like it too. In a two-year work-sharing project, workers had a mere 13 percent turnover rate; the usual turnover rate is 40 percent. In addition, worker productivity was greater than expected.

The best title for this passage might be . . .

- A) the world of work.
- B) work sharing and productivity.
- C) the advantages of work sharing.
- D) the flexibility of work sharing.

### **SKILL #2: Main Idea**

Another kind of question in the CPT asks you to identify the *main idea* of the passage. If this is the skill being tested, the question may be worded:

The author's main point is that . . .

The principal idea of this passage is . . .

Which of the following best expresses the main idea of the entire passage?

To find the main idea of a passage, ask yourself, "*What is the overall point the author wants me to understand about this topic?*" Search the passage for the sentence (often the first or last) that answers that question. Concluding sentences that begin with the signals "*clearly*", "*to sum up*", "*in conclusion*", "*therefore*", or "*thus*" are good bets. After you find the topic sentence, read each of the choices offered to see which says the same thing. Of course, it may be phrased differently.

### **SKILL #2A: Unstated Main Idea**

If you do not find a topic sentence in the passage, you must first express the main idea in your own words and then look for the choice that says the same thing. It is a good idea to force yourself to create a complete sentence before you attempt to choose the one that

says the same thing. Ask yourself what is the topic (think title) and then create a complete sentence using the title to tell what the entire passage is about. If none of the choices matches what you have created reread the passage and rethink the main idea.

### Sample passages with Main Idea Questions

Half of all Americans live within fifty miles of an ocean beach. No wonder there is hardly room for a beach towel – 124 million people visit the seashore annually, and the number is growing as development booms. Unfortunately, all twenty-three coastal states lose two to four feet of beach a year to the ocean. Furthermore, private developments are restricting public access to beaches in residential communities on both coasts. Thus, more people and less beach should make for some very crowded beaches in the coming years.

The principal idea of this passage is that . . .

- A) coastal states are the most popular in the country.
  - B) it is increasingly necessary to restrict beach access.
  - C) beach overcrowding will get worse in the future.
  - D) erosion is the main reason for crowded seashores.
- 

First it was racquetball. Next it was jogging. Then it was aerobic exercises. What will the next exercise craze be? Many people are turning to walking. Walking can give the same benefits to the heart that any exercise can. And anyone can walk, regardless of age or location. Also, walking will burn off the same number of calories as aerobics or running. But perhaps the best advantage of walking is that it is almost completely injury-free.

The main point of this passage is that . . .

- A) people keep changing the exercises they do.
  - B) there are several good reasons for exercising.
  - C) walking benefits the heart and burns the same amount of calories as running.
  - D) there are several good reasons why walking may become the next exercise craze.
- 

Before the 20<sup>th</sup> century, millions of people died needlessly in hospitals. Back then, doctors didn't wash their hands between tasks. Little was known about germs and how they were spread. Doctors would finish one operation and immediately start on another. Then they would examine other patients, never realizing that they were carrying bacteria from one person to another. In many cases they seriously infected the very people they were trying to cure.

Which of the following expresses the main point of the passage?

- A) Before the 20<sup>th</sup> century, doctors knew very little about disease.
- B) When very little was known about disease, doctors unknowingly spread illness and death by spreading germs.
- C) When little was known about germs, people’s cleanliness habits were poor.
- D) Before the 20<sup>th</sup> century, doctors would finish one operation and go on to the next without washing their hands.

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### **SKILL #3: Supporting Details**

The CPT asks many questions about *supporting details*. The purpose of these questions is not to see whether or not you can outline the passage, which is often the focus of discussions about supporting details in reading courses. The purpose of supporting detail questions in standardized tests such as the CPT is to see if you can locate and comprehend specific information stated in the passage.

Questions about supporting details often begin with phrases like:

- According to this passage . . .
- According to the information in this passage . . .
- The author states that . . .

Questions may also refer to specific information in the passage, as in the following examples:

- One function of water in the body is . . .
- One reason why Feynman was a character is . . .
- The author contends that studying history is important because . . .

To answer a question about supporting details, read the question carefully to determine exactly what kind of information you need (for instance, a place, a date, or a specific example). Then skim the passage looking for that information. When you come to the part of the passage that has what you are looking for, slow down and read closely.

As in searching for a main idea – don’t assume that the information will be in exactly the same words as the choices. A “police officer” may be referred to as a “cop.” The “Vanderbilts and the Rockefellers” may be described as “two wealthy Eastern families.” Just make sure the information means the same thing, even if the words are different.

### **Sample Passages with Supporting Detail Questions**

The economy alternates between “good times” and “bad times.” Following certain financial guidelines can help people through the bad times. Drawing up a budget and sticking to it is a big help. Paying off credit cards on a monthly basis will keep debts low. Putting aside emergency cash to cover at least three months expenses will also help. This emergency money should be in a place where it can be reached quickly, like a bank

account. Finally, having a “crisis-borrowing plan” is wise. Such a plan could involve borrowing money from a relative or opening a home-equity line of credit.

According to the passage, opening a home-equity line of credit would . . .

- A) provide emergency cash for three months’ expenses.
- B) be part of a “crisis-borrowing plan.”
- C) be the first step in fixing up a home.
- D) replace the need to budget.

High-tension jobs have made stress a fact of life for many Americans. People use various activities to combat stress. Some turn to alcohol, thinking that it will relax them. For others, sports like tennis and golf helps to release the tension that has built up. Still others opt for a little “quiet time,” where they can do things like meditating or taking a long, hot bath. And there are those who have found that a deep massage will relax the muscles and refresh the mind and spirit.

In this passage, the author states that . . .

- A) alcohol is a poor substitute for exercise or meditation.
- B) some people believe that drinking is a way to relieve tension.
- C) drinking is bad for your health.
- D) alcohol has caused many people to lose their high-stress jobs.

**SKILL #4: Patterns of Organization**

Please list the five patterns of organization.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

Many of the questions on the CPT can be answered using the information about *Patterns of Organization* taught in reading courses. Sometimes you will be asked directly what type of pattern is being used in the passage. Other times you will be asked about specific information in the passage and your ability to recognize patterns will help you make the correct choice.

Of course, you must be familiar with the *transition or signal words* that indicate particular patterns. You will need to recognize these words in the questions. Remember, too, that certain words in main ideas statements or topic sentences may suggest patterns – words like “ways,” “factors,” “causes,” “series,” “stages,” “differences,” and

“similarities,” etc.

Here are just a few examples of the typical wording of questions about patterns or organization. Since it is impossible to provide examples of all the different questions that might contain these transitions or signals, it is important that you review this information in your textbook and folder before the test and read the questions during the test very carefully.

In this passage the author presents . . . \_\_\_\_\_ (a comparison, a sequence of events, etc.)

This passage explains . . . \_\_\_\_\_ (the causes of . . . difference between . . . reasons for . . . effects of . . . etc.)

In this passage, \_\_\_\_\_ is contrasted with . . .

Which of the following is an effect of . . . ?

The second step in \_\_\_\_\_ is to . . .

The CPT contains some questions that relate not to complete passages but to separate sentences. These questions demand that you understand the relationship between the two sentences. Because relationships between ideas are often indicated by the same transition or signal words that indicate the patterns of a longer passage, you will need to recognize the transition/signal words to help make the correct choices. Even if there is no transition or signal used, deciding which one would make sense can help you identify the relationship between the two ideas. These kinds of questions are easy to spot because of the two-sentence structure of the passage. The questions sometimes contain specific questions “what is the relationship between these two sentences?” Other times the question is implied in the choices you are given.

### Sample passages with Patterns or Transition Questions

When you awaken in the morning, you are about one-half inch taller than when you went to bed. The reason for this change stems from the fact that you have fluid-filled discs in your spine. When you are upright – either sitting or standing – gravity squeezes down the fluid, making your back shorter. During the night when you are lying down, the discs gradually spring back to their regular “unsquished” size.

According to the passage, the cause of height loss is . . .

- A) lying down and sleeping.
- B) sitting down or lying down.
- C) gravity’s effect on spinal discs.
- D) oversleeping.

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Many people agree that economic and political misjudgment can be blamed for much of the Third World’s poverty.

Others hold the opinion that the most important factor is the population explosion in

those regions.

Which answer best describes the relationship between these two ideas?

- A) The second statement contrasts the first statement.
- B) The second statement provides an example of the first.
- C) The second statement restates the first.
- D) The second statement gives a reason for the first statement.

### **SKILL #5: Critical Reading**

Standardized tests like the CPT examine your ability to evaluate what you read as well as your ability to comprehend the meaning. There are many different kinds of questions that fall under this category.

Some questions ask you to evaluate the *author's purpose*. Although your choices may be worded in many different ways and related specifically to the topic at hand, your three choices are – *to entertain, to inform or to persuade*.

Questions about the author's purpose may be worded:

- The author's purpose for writing this passage is . . .
- The reason the author wrote this passage is . . .
- The author wrote this passage in order to . . .
- The author's purpose in this passage is to . . .

Other critical reading questions ask you make *inferences or draw conclusions* from the information in the passage. While your choices will not be included in the passage, the information that makes them logical will.

Questions about inferences or conclusions may be worded:

- Which of the following conclusions could be made about . . .
- On the basis of the information in this passage, the reader could conclude that . . .
- It can be inferred from this passage . . .
- The passage implies . . .

Questions about the *author's tone or attitude* about the subject also may be asked on standardized tests like the CPT. In writing, tone is communicated by the choice of words and style.

Questions about tone may be worded:

- The tone of this passage is . . . (factual, ironic, etc.)
- The tone of the passage can be described as . . .
- Which of the following words (adjective) best describes the tone of the passage?

Another critical reading skill often included in these tests is determining the *author's point of view*- attitude toward, opinion about or position on his subject. While point of view is often expressed explicitly in the passage, sometimes it must be inferred from the information included.

The questions about point of view are often worded:

- The passage suggests that the author's point of view is . . .
- It is clear that the author believes . . .
- The author's opinion about . . . is . . .
- The author's attitude about . . . is . . .

### Sample Paragraphs with Critical Reading Questions

If a person who seems to be choking on food or a foreign object can speak, do not interfere with that individual's attempt to cough up that object. If the person is unable to speak, provide emergency care by using the Heimlich maneuver. If it is not effective the first time, do not be afraid to repeat the procedure.

The author wrote this passage to . . .

- A) persuade readers to learn the Heimlich maneuver.
- B) inform readers of the procedure to help choking victims.
- C) entertain readers with a humorous anecdote.
- D) convince readers to learn the Heimlich maneuver.

People who can't write their names usually sign with an "X." This substitution is recognized as being legally binding in many countries. There is a reason for this. When the "X" is tipped on its side, it forms a cross, a sacred religious symbol. The symbol once implied that the person signing could be trusted.

Based on this passage, the reader could conclude . . .

- A) an "X" is one of the easiest letters to make.
- B) more people sign their names with an "X" today than in the past.
- C) the "X" signature was supposed to make people think of the cross.
- D) "X" was only used in religious documents.

Many climatologic experts predict a grim future for mankind if we continue to heat up the earth with thermal pollution from our industries. The waste heat produced by power-hungry industrial nations could be transported to both poles by wind and air currents. Melting polar caps could raise the level of ocean by 200 feet, devastating ocean-side communities and causing untold human suffering.

The tone of this passage could best be described as . . .

- A) unconcerned.
- B) threatening.
- C) unaffected.
- D) amused.

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There is substantial evidence that legal gambling increases the respectability of gambling and increases public interest. This creates new gamblers, some of who move on to illegal gambling, which generally offers better odds. These new gamblers are generally drawn from the poorest levels of society. They have no margin for the economic losses that inevitably follow.

It is clear that the author . . .

- A) does not like poor people.
- B) does not oppose legalized gambling.
- C) is opposed to both legal and illegal gambling.
- D) thinks rich people are too smart to gamble.

### Practice Questions for the Computerized Placement Test

Before you begin taking the CPT test, you must enter some important personal information—your name, student identification number (social security number), etc. You will be given two practice questions. After you complete these questions the test will begin.

You will be asked twenty multiple-choice questions. There is **no time limit for this test**. You can take as much time as you need. It is suggested that you take your time. Chances are you will not do well if you rush.

1

Choose the best answer based on information that is stated or implied in the passage.

Words can have interesting origins. Salt, which has always been the most widely used seasoning in the world, was so important in Roman times that it was given for monthly wages to the soldiers. It was called "salt money" or, in Latin, *salarium*. This is the reason that today we used the word *salary* to mean money.

According to this passage,

- salt was used for payment because it was worth more than gold.
- the Romans used salt in their food.
- salt was very valuable because the Romans had to import it from the Far East.
- soldiers did not get enough salt in their diets.

2

Choose the best answer based on information that is stated or implied in the passage.

By the end of the nineteenth century, the American bison was almost extinct. But miraculously, it survived. It survived in part because of human laziness. As the bison grew rare, hunting them became harder and more expensive. Only very experienced hunters were willing to risk the bitter winters in the high Yellowstone valleys. The snow was deep and the temperatures often 25 degrees below zero.

According to this passage, the survival of the American bison

- has not been achieved.
- was caused in part to a human failing.
- can be attributed in part to the work of environmentalists.
- was expected.

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3

Choose the best answer based on information that this stated or implied in this passage.

Divorce or the death of a parent is bound to unsettle the children involved. Daily routines like eating meals together or doing homework may disappear at a time when children need structure the most. Many children, testing the stability or security of their new family situation, may become defiant or uncharacteristically hostile.

Which of the following statements would most clearly be supported by the passage?

Divorce or death of a parent

- is a direct cause of hostility in children.
- may have unintended effects on children's behavior.
- can be blamed for many missed homework assignments.
- always serves to split families apart.

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4

Today's teenagers spend millions of dollars on clothing, cosmetics, and other types of products.

They have grown up in a time of almost constant prosperity.

Which answer best describes the relationship between these two statements?

- The second statement contrasts with the first.
- Both statements are examples of the same concept.
- The second statement is an example of the first.
- The second statement is a cause of the first.

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5

Choose the best answer based on information stated or implied in this passage.

If the ice in Antarctica were to melt, there would be a worldwide disaster. First, the ocean level would rise by 240 feet and flood a quarter of the world. Also, with warmer temperatures in the Antarctic, the Earth could support only a limited amount of sea life. The cold water tends to fertilize the rest of the world. Cold water is rich in oxygen; because of the temperature, it travels northward at the bottom of the ocean, increasing the oxygen content of all the water. If the temperature were altered, the water would travel at a higher level, losing more oxygen and minerals. This would alter the entire ocean environment.

Which of the following statements would most clearly be supported by the passage?

- It is important that the temperature in the Antarctic not increase.
- Antarctic water is colder than Arctic water.
- Sea life from Antarctica migrates to northern waters.
- Cold water is lighter than warm water.

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6

To perform CPR correctly, open the victim's mouth and free the throat of any obstructions.

Begin artificial breathing by blowing down the victim's cleared throat while keeping the nostrils closed with your fingers.

What is the relationship between these two statements?

- The second statement is an example of the first.
- The second statement is in contrast to the first.
- The second statement describes what happens after the first.
- The second statement restates the first.

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7

The Midwest is experiencing its worst drought in fifteen years.

Corn and soybean prices are expected to be very high this year.

What does the second sentence do?

- It restates the idea found in the first.
  - It states an effect.
  - It gives an example.
  - It analyzes the statement made in the first.
- 

8

Choose the best answer based on information that is stated or implied in the passage.

Man may have always killed other species for food, but he has never exploited them so ruthlessly as he does today. Farming has succumbed to business practices and the objective is always to get the most output (meat, eggs, milk) from the least amount of animals. These new techniques almost always involve practices that cause discomfort if not harm to the poor beasts involved.

The author's chief aim in this passage is most likely

- to inform readers about modern farming practices.
  - to alert readers to the cruelty of modern farming practices.
  - to argue for stricter controls on farming practices.
  - to describe how farming practices have changed.
- 

9

Choose the best answer based on information that is stated or implied in the passage.

Abortion first became illegal in the United States in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. At that time, it was ruled dangerous to the prospective mother. Recently, courts have upheld the right of a woman to undergo abortion upon request, but the decision has caused heated debates, animosity, and even violence. Groups opposing abortion have coined the term "right to life," but others argue that abortion is a private decision belonging to the woman.

The author's purpose in this passage is

- to persuade readers that abortion is murder.
- to inform readers about the background of the abortion controversy in America.
- to define the term "right to life."
- to argue that abortion is a choice that must be available to women.

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10

Choose the best answer based on information that is stated or implied in the passage.

Backaches hinder, disable, and even cripple millions of American people every year. Backaches affect not just the elderly—they plague young and old alike. Although there are drugs to relieve the pain of backache, they are not a cure; they can only relieve the symptoms. Every year, in the hope of a cure, 200,000 people in America undergo back surgery. In 20% of the cases, the surgery fails, and patients are left with their symptoms intact.

According to this passage, drugs

- \_\_\_\_\_ are better than surgery to cure backaches.
- \_\_\_\_\_ cannot treat the symptoms of backaches.
- \_\_\_\_\_ should not be used to treat backaches.
- \_\_\_\_\_ are not strong enough to cure backaches.

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11

Choose the best answer based on the information that is stated or implied in the passage.

Carmelite nuns must be cloistered from the world. Visitors to the convent are not permitted and conversation is forbidden, even at mealtimes. On those rare occasions when nuns are allowed to speak to visitors, they must speak through an iron rail. Of course, letters and phone conversation are not permitted. They spend their days doing chores or saying prayers.

The main point of this paragraph is

- \_\_\_\_\_ that the rules of the Carmelite order are far too strict.
- \_\_\_\_\_ that Carmelite nuns lead lives of isolation and silence.
- \_\_\_\_\_ that the rules of the Carmelite order imply that speech is a sin.
- \_\_\_\_\_ that Carmelites should not live such isolated lives.

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12

Choose the best answer based on information that is stated or implied in the passage.

Cheapness and portability only partly accounted for the popularity of paperbacks when they were first manufactured. Readers could purchase them in drugstores, bus terminals, and department stores, as well as bookstores. Teachers were delighted to see out-of-print volumes become available and assigned them to classes. There was also a psychological factor—paperbacks became fashionable.

In this passage, the author explains the popularity of paperbacks by

- contrasting it to the popularity of hardcover books.
- listing a variety of reasons.
- suggesting that the main cause is psychological.
- describing the history of paperback books.

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13

The U.S.—in a change with wide social and economic implications—may soon have more single adults than at any time in its history.

This is due to women's increased education, expanded career opportunities, and improved birth control options.

What is the relationship between these two statements?

- The second statement provides a contrast to the first.
- The second statement offers an illustration of the first.
- The second statement describes the causes of the first.
- The second statement summarizes the first.

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14

Choose the best answer based on the information that is stated or implied in the passage.

Jazz is a peculiarly American contribution to Western culture. It was born out of the unique experience of American blacks. Although its history is not entirely clear, jazz obviously has roots in the rhythm patterns and melodic lines of Africa, the tradition of Christian spirituals as sung by slave communities, the music of the blues as developed in the Deep South, and ragtime.

Which of the following statements would most clearly be supported by the passage?

- Jazz is the only black contribution to Western culture.
- There is some difficulty tracing the origin of jazz.
- Jazz is most closely related to spiritual music.
- Jazz is not a complex musical form.

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15

Choose the best answer based on information that is stated or implied in the passage.

As we investigate the limitations and advantages of computers and the human decision-making process, we discover some startling facts. There are computers that are capable of processing one billion computations per second. That is to say that these computers can accept and process data and produce the results of the operation one billion times every second. A human is frequently slow and inaccurate when solving one arithmetic problem. A computer can work tirelessly twenty-four hours a day and never rest except for maintenance. People often become bored and tired when doing the same thing over and over again. Computers have total recall. Humans are slow to remember and frequently forget.

In this passage, the author demonstrates the superiority of computers by

- describing the reasons they work so well.
- contrasting them to human beings.
- listing examples of their achievements.
- explaining their effects on society.

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16

The number of young, unmarried people has grown dramatically in the last decade.

Business people, politicians, and advertisers now recognize the power of the incomes and interests, of the young, unmarried people.

These sentences go together because

- the first statement is the cause of the second.
  - the first statement contradicts the second.
  - the second statement defines the first.
  - the second statement illustrates the first.
-

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17

Choose the best answer based on information stated or implied in this passage.

Some actors and rock stars are paid almost 100 times as much per year as schoolteachers. Not to downgrade the role of entertainment in our lives, but these people are not the valuable social resource that educators are. As another example, professional athletes earn vastly more than the nation's firefighters. Again, there is little doubt that the lower paid group contributes a more vital function to communities. Finally, dress designers, who can make up to \$50,000 dollars for a gown, far out-earn police officers, whose very presence makes our cities and towns livable.

It can be inferred from this passage that the author believes the earning power in our society

- \_\_\_\_\_ is subject to staggering inflation.
- \_\_\_\_\_ does not relate to one's usefulness in society.
- \_\_\_\_\_ is highest among those whose achievements are the greatest.
- \_\_\_\_\_ should be highest among actors and rock stars.

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18

The matter that makes up the substance of living things is composed of chemicals, and chemicals are made of atoms. The word atom is a term meaning the smallest unit of matter, not divisible by chemical means. While it is possible to split an atom by physical means, an atom is the smallest unit to enter into chemical properties.

On this passage, the author uses the following pattern

- \_\_\_\_\_ definition and example
  - \_\_\_\_\_ time/sequence
  - \_\_\_\_\_ cause and effect
  - \_\_\_\_\_ list
-

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19

Choose the best answer based on information stated or implied in this passage.

Scientists have been able to accurately reconstruct the scene during the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in southwestern Italy in the summer of A.D. 79. They believe that the 20,000 inhabitants in the city of Pompeii were caught unawares by the eruption. People were choked to death by the poisonous fumes. The cinders from the volcano set much of the city on fire. About 2,000 people were buried alive in the crush of volcanic ash. Now, nearly 1,800 years later, scientists have poured plaster of Paris into the hollows left in the hardened ash by the bodies. Incredibly, the scientists have been able to get such perfect casts of the victims that the terrified and pained facial expressions of the people are clear.

According to the passage

- hardened ash makes an excellent mold for statues.
- most of the people escaped the volcano.
- there are many volcanoes in the southwestern part of Italy.
- Mount Vesuvius had erupted many times before.

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20

Choose the best answer based on information stated or implied in this passage.

Many white Southerners regarded Reconstruction as a more grievous wound than the war itself. It left an angry scar that would take generations to heal. They resented the upending of their social and racial system, the humiliation of being ruled by blacks, and the insult of federal intervention in their local affairs. Yet few rebellions have ended with the victors sitting down to a love feast with the vanquished. Given the explosiveness of the issues that had caused the war, and the bitterness of the fighting, the wonder is that the Reconstruction was not far harsher than it was.

According to the passage,

- all white Southerners hated Northerners and blacks.
  - the anger of the white Northerners would not easily disappear.
  - southern whites would forget the problems quickly.
  - the Reconstruction period was very difficult for white Southerners.
-

21

Our country has lost its head when it comes to gun control. When the framers of the United States Constitution said that people have the right to bear arms, they did not mean high powered automatic rifles and assault weapons. Such guns are designed to kill not defend. The long range and high power of these weapons jeopardize the safety of people miles away from where the gun is fired. No one is safe as long as these guns are available. And each time another one is manufactured and brought into a neighborhood, America's streets become more dangerous. We have a right to be safe at home, but these weapons do not guarantee safety. They prevent it. Until we outlaw them once and for all, we will have to live like prisoners in our own homes.

The primary purpose of this passage is to

- inform.
  - persuade
  - entertain
-