

ENGLISH LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION

SECTION I

Time—1 hour

Directions: This section consists of selections from literary works and questions on their content, form, and style. After reading each passage or poem, choose the best answer to each question and then fill in the corresponding oval on the answer sheet.

Note: Pay particular attention to the requirements of questions that contain the words NOT, LEAST; or EXCEPT.

Questions 1-13. Read the following passage carefully before you choose your answers.

CYRIL. (Coming in through the open window from the terrace.) My dear Vivian, don't coop yourself up all day in the library. It is a perfectly lovely afternoon. The air is exquisite. There is a mist upon the woods, like the purple bloom upon a plum. Let us go and lie on the grass, and smoke cigarettes, and enjoy nature.

VIVIAN. Enjoy nature! I am glad to say that I have entirely lost that faculty. People tell us that art makes us love nature more than we loved her before; that it reveals her secrets to us; and that after a careful study of Corot and Constable* we see things in her that had escaped our observation. My own experience is that the more we study art, the less we care for nature. What art really reveals to us is nature's lack of design, her curious crudities, her extraordinary monotony, her absolutely unfinished condition. Nature has good intentions, of course, but, as Aristotle once said, she cannot carry them out. When I look at a landscape I cannot help seeing all its defects. It is fortunate for us, however, that nature is so imperfect, as otherwise we should have had no art at all. Art is our spirited protest, our gallant attempt to teach nature her proper place. As for the infinite variety of nature, that is a pure myth. It is not to be found in nature herself. It resides in the imagination, or fancy, or cultivated blindness of the man who looks at her.

CYRIL. Well, you need not look at the landscape. You can lie on the grass and smoke and talk.

VIVIAN. But nature is so uncomfortable. Grass is hard and lumpy and damp, and full of dreadful black insects. Why, even Morris' poorest workman could make you a more comfortable seat than the whole of

nature can. Nature pales before the furniture of "the street which from Oxford has borrowed its name," as the poet you love so much once vilely phrased it. I don't complain. If nature had been comfortable, mankind would never have invented architecture, and I prefer houses to the open air. In a house we all feel of the proper proportions. Everything is subordinated to us, fashioned for our use and our pleasure. Egotism itself, which is so necessary to a proper sense of human dignity, is entirely the result of indoor life. Out of doors one becomes abstract and impersonal. One's individuality absolutely leaves one. And then nature is so indifferent, so unappreciative. Whenever I am walking in the park here I always feel that I am no more to her than the cattle that browse on the slope, or the burdock that blooms in the ditch. Nothing is more evident than that nature hates mind. Thinking is the most unhealthy thing in the world, and people die of it just as they die of any other disease. Fortunately, in England, at any rate, thought is not catching. Our splendid physique as a people is entirely due to our national stupidity. I only hope we shall be able to keep this great historic bulwark of our happiness for many years to come; but I am afraid that we are beginning to be overeducated; at least, everybody who is incapable of learning has taken to teaching—that is really what our enthusiasm for education has come to. In the meantime, you had better go back to your wearisome uncomfortable nature, and leave me to correct my proofs.

(1889)

*Jean-Baptiste Camille Corot (1796-1875) and John Constable (1776-1837) were painters known for their landscapes.

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1. Which of the following is the primary meaning of the word “nature” as it is used in the passage?
 - (A) Kind, sort, or type
 - (B) The physical landscape
 - (C) The force controlling a person’s character
 - (D) A pristine state of existence
 - (E) The essential character of a thing

2. Vivian’s first words (“Enjoy nature! I am glad to say that I have entirely lost that faculty”) are surprising because Vivian
 - (A) prevents Cyril from finishing his thought
 - (B) claims to enjoy having lost a capacity to enjoy
 - (C) thinks he has lost something that he obviously still possesses
 - (D) implies that enjoying nature and smoking are not incongruous
 - (E) is not responding to Cyril’s remark

3. From the context, the reader can infer that “Morris’ poorest workman” (line 31) is
 - (A) a gardener
 - (B) a tailor
 - (C) a furniture craftsman
 - (D) an impoverished artist
 - (E) an agricultural laborer

4. Vivian probably calls the quotation in lines 33-34 “vilely phrased” (line 35) because he
 - (A) considers himself a poor judge of style
 - (B) knows that the street did not borrow its name from Oxford University
 - (C) believes that the furniture sold in Oxford Street stores is too shabby for his taste
 - (D) considers it a pretentious and roundabout way of saying something
 - (E) sees in it contradictions of his ideas about art and nature

5. Vivian’s view of nature might best be described as
 - (A) scientific
 - (B) antiromantic
 - (C) animistic
 - (D) quasi-religious
 - (E) circumspect

6. In lines 49-54 (“Thinking . . . stupidity”), the speaker makes use of all of the following EXCEPT
 - (A) hyperbole
 - (B) irony
 - (C) insult
 - (D) pathos
 - (E) analogy

7. The primary rhetorical function of the sentence “Fortunately, in England, at any rate, thought is not catching” (lines 51-53) is to
 - (A) introduce a digression from the central topic
 - (B) introduce an exception to a general rule
 - (C) provide supporting evidence for a previously stated thesis
 - (D) undermine a point previously made
 - (E) distinguish between two categories

8. In line 55, the “great historic bulwark of our happiness” refers to English
 - (A) art
 - (B) strength
 - (C) stupidity
 - (D) education
 - (E) dislike of nature

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9. The second of Vivian's two speeches repeats the argument of the first that
- (A) nature is uncomfortable
 - (B) nature is the primary source of human unhappiness
 - (C) art has much to learn from nature
 - (D) nature is anti-intellectual
 - (E) the failures of nature inspire people to create
10. Which of the following does Vivian explicitly endorse?
- (A) Egotism
 - (B) Thoughtfulness
 - (C) Education
 - (D) Smoking
 - (E) Poetry
11. From the passage, we can infer that the art Vivian would most value would be characterized by all of the following EXCEPT
- (A) inventiveness
 - (B) intellectual rigor
 - (C) careful design
 - (D) cultivated taste
 - (E) moral purpose
12. In the passage, Vivian ridicules all of the following commonly accepted ideas about nature EXCEPT:
- (A) Nature is enjoyable.
 - (B) Nature is indifferent to human life.
 - (C) The study of art increases our appreciation of nature.
 - (D) Nature has variety and design.
 - (E) Art reflects the beauty of nature.
13. The comedy of the passage derives chiefly from
- (A) the triviality of the subject discussed
 - (B) the superficiality of Vivian's analysis
 - (C) paradoxical inversions of conventional viewpoints
 - (D) the use of sarcasm
 - (E) witty repartee between the two speakers

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Questions 14-25. Read the following poem carefully before you choose your answers.

I dreaded that first Robin, so,
But He is mastered, now,
I'm some accustomed to Him grown,
He hurts a little, though—

Line

(5) I thought if I could only live
Till that first Shout got by—
Not all Pianos in the Woods
Had power to mangle me—

I dared not meet the Daffodils—
(10) For fear their Yellow Gown
Would pierce me with a fashion
So foreign to my own—

I wished the Grass would hurry—
So—when 'twas time to see—
(15) He'd be so tall, the tallest one
Could stretch—to look at me—

I could not bear the Bees should come,
I wished they'd stay away
In those dim countries where they go,
(20) What word had they, for me?

They're here, though; not a creature failed—
No Blossom stayed away
In gentle deference to me—
The Queen of Calvary—

(25) Each one salutes me, as he goes,
And I, my childish Plumes
Lift, in bereaved acknowledgment
Of their unthinking Drums—

—Emily Dickinson
(c. 1862)

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14. The central opposition in the poem is between
- (A) the birds and the flowers
 - (B) God and nature
 - (C) childhood and adulthood
 - (D) the speaker and spring
 - (E) reason and imagination
15. The speaker views the coming of the robin, the daffodils, and the bees as
- (A) welcome arrivals
 - (B) inexplicable events
 - (C) painful experiences
 - (D) unexpected diversions
 - (E) inspiring occurrences
16. The “first Shout” (line 6) most probably refers to
- (A) a cry made by the speaker
 - (B) the robin’s song
 - (C) a baby’s first cry
 - (D) the dawn of a new day
 - (E) the sprouting of a flower
17. In line 7, “Pianos” most probably refers metaphorically to
- (A) birds
 - (B) flowers
 - (C) bees
 - (D) poetry
 - (E) musical instruments
18. For the speaker, the robin and the daffodils have which of the following in common?
- (A) An aura of the divine
 - (B) The power to intoxicate
 - (C) The power to wound
 - (D) A clear and useful purpose
 - (E) A sense of timeliness and peace

19. One effect of “They’re here, though” (line 21) is to emphasize the speaker’s feeling of
- (A) hopefulness
 - (B) contentment
 - (C) justification
 - (D) guilt
 - (E) powerlessness
20. In line 21, “failed” is best understood to mean
- (A) died
 - (B) faded
 - (C) sickened
 - (D) was unhappy
 - (E) was absent
21. Grammatically, the word “Plumes” (line 26) functions as
- (A) the direct object of “goes” (line 25)
 - (B) an appositive for “I” (line 26)
 - (C) the subject of “Lift” (line 27)
 - (D) the direct object of “Lift” (line 27)
 - (E) the indirect object of “Lift” (line 27)
22. The speaker perceives the coming of spring chiefly in terms of
- (A) sounds and colors
 - (B) odors and tastes
 - (C) shapes and textures
 - (D) music and poetry
 - (E) love and youth
23. Which of the following is a subject treated in the poem?
- (A) The relationship between nature and human beings
 - (B) Belief in the power of religion
 - (C) The innocence of childhood
 - (D) The power of the imagination to provide comfort
 - (E) Fear of death
24. The most conventional, least idiosyncratic aspect of the poem is its
- (A) tone
 - (B) diction
 - (C) rhymes
 - (D) capitalization
 - (E) meter
25. The sentiments expressed in the poem are closest to those expressed in which of the following quotations from other poets?
- (A) “The poetry of earth is never dead” (John Keats)
 - (B) “April is the cruellest month” (T. S. Eliot)
 - (C) “Fair daffodils, we weep to see/You haste away so soon” (Robert Herrick)
 - (D) “And then my heart with pleasure fills/And dances with the daffodils” (William Wordsworth)
 - (E) “Nothing is so beautiful as spring—/When weeds, in wheels, shoot long and lovely and lush” (Gerard Manley Hopkins)

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