**City Olympiad 2024/2025**

# Reading Comprehension

# Test for 10th Form Students

***Directions***

***In this test you will read five texts. Each text is followed by true/false or multiple-choice questions. You should do the tasks that follow a text on the basis of what is stated or implied in that text. For each task you will choose the best possible answer.***

Text 1: Adapted from “The Creative Path” by ReadWorks

For many careers, the path to success is straightforward. Go to good schools, get degrees, work hard, and everything else will take care of itself. There's an almost alphabetical nature to the process due to the demand of most professions' skills. Do A, then B; then C, the end. Doctors, teachers, business people and scientists are always needed. There are endless amounts of sick people who need treatment, products that need to be sold, children who need to learn, and problems that need to be understood. Simply put, our society depends on these and other professionals to perform their duties, or it will stop working. Enter the artist. A person who crafts expressions that inspire others.

Feeling connected to a work of art is an incredibly personal experience. The same piece of work may affect two people in very different ways. Some works of art end up in the trash, some incite riots, and some are put on the cover of magazines. Still, the art that ends up in the trash could be discovered years later, while the art on the magazine cover can end up forgotten.

No matter what happens to the art, as long as it exists, it always has the potential to inspire others. It's all very complicated, and nobody seems to have anything more concrete to say than the tired idiom, "Beauty is in the eye of the beholder." So if you're an artist, or want to be an artist, how do you know if you're successful? How do you even know if you’re an artist? To get an insider’s perspective, I posed these questions to two very different New York City artists.

***Choreographer/Dancer, Hadar Ahuvia:***

**What makes someone an artist?**

The decision to be an artist. I believe everyone is inherently creative, some of us have a natural ability for one thing or another, but one can be artful through almost any media or activity. You decide to be part of an artistic community.

What does it mean to you to be a successful artist today?

It means I decided today to express myself to the world, and that maybe I'll choose to do the same tomorrow.

***Painter, Paul McLean:***

**How did you know you were an artist?**

The first moment came when I etched a Cyclops into the wet ink on a silkscreen. It happened very fast. I'd never seen anything quite like this. I immediately realized this was It.

What does it mean to you to be a successful artist today?

Everything. To be Nobody. One-hundred things.

**Mark the statements TRUE or FALSE**

1. Schools provide a traditional path to becoming an artist.
2. The text suggests that our society depends on artists in the same way it does doctors and scientists.
3. The primary purpose of the second paragraph is to explain how art is appreciated by artists.
4. Used in the second paragraph, the word ‘incite’ means to express.
5. According to the context, “Beauty is in the eye of the beholder” means creating art is complicated because people’s tastes differ.
6. The author interviews two artists to show what an individual experience becoming an artist is.
7. According to Hadar Ahuvia, being an artist is a choice.
8. The word ‘It’ is capitalized even though it is the last word in a sentence in order to emphasize the moment Paul McLean realized he was an artist.
9. Both Hadar Ahuvia and Paul McLean have similar ideas of what it takes to be a successful artist.
10. Both Hadar Ahuvia and Paul McLean claim they have a natural artistic ability.

**Text 2**: Adapted from “3 Reasons Why Hosting the Olympics Is a Loser’s Game” by A. Zimbalist

Glossary: **revenue** - money that is made by or paid to a business or an organization

**accrue** - to increase in value or amount gradually as time passes **congestion** - something which is too full or overcrowded **burgeoning** - growing or developing quickly

These days the summer Games might generate $5-to-6 billion in total **revenue** (nearly half of which goes to the International Olympic Committee). In contrast, the costs of the games rose to an estimated $16 billion in Athens, $40 billion in Beijing, and reportedly nearly $20 billion in London. Only some of this investment is tied up in infrastructure projects that may be useful going forward. The high costs are bound to make hosting the Olympics a bad deal in the short-run.

Promoters, however, claim that there is a strong benefit that **accrues** over time connected to the advertising effect of hosting the games. The idea is that the hundreds of hours of television exposure to hundreds of millions of viewers around the globe will generate increased tourism and business for the city. It should be added that there is little evidence that tourism increases during the Games. Rather, Olympic tourists replace normal tourists who want to stay away to avoid the **congestion** and greater expense during the Games.

Finally, it would appear that most of the positive developmental functions that could be associated with the Olympics, could also occur absent the Olympics. The needed infrastructural investments could be made, the national airline could offer reduced rates for stays of over one week, trade missions could multiply their efforts, and so on.

Of course, it is always possible that a proactive, efficient government in a potential-laden, **burgeoning** city could use the Olympics to boost its fortunes. Barcelona ran up a reported $6 billion debt to host the 1992 Games, but the city’s image gained enormously and tourism has since flourished. The stars all aligned and Barcelona is arguably a case in point for Olympics promoters. Whether or not Barcelona would have experienced its favorable development without the Games, we’ll never know.

Questions 11 through 15 (circle the correct letter A, B, C, or D)

1. The main idea of the text is to
2. explain short-term costs and possible long-term benefits of hosting the Olympics.
3. criticize the Olympic committee.
4. encourage lesser known cities to host the Olympic Games.
5. discourage athletes from competing in the Olympic Games due to their costs.
6. The purpose of the first paragraph is to
7. show how much cities profit from the Olympics.
8. explain the high cost of hosting the Olympics.
9. demonstrate how competitive it is to host the Olympics.
10. convince readers that the Olympics shouldn’t take place.
11. According to the text, all of the following are benefits of hosting the Olympics, except:
12. More touristic advertising
13. A boost to business
14. Development of infrastructure
15. Congestion
16. In the last paragraph, the phrase ‘the stars all aligned’ most likely means that
17. many celebrities come to the Olympics.
18. there are many constellations visible in Spain.
19. everything was successful.
20. athletes like to stand in straight lines.
21. The tone of this text is
22. informative.
23. persuasive.
24. defensive.
25. surprising.

**Text 3**: Adapted from “Cell Phone Carrier Marketing Techniques An Invasion of Privacy?” by P. Ebben

Glossary: **impactful** - having a major effect

**to opt into** - to choose to participate in something

Your cell phone may be spying on you. Every time you download an app, search for a website, send a text, snap a QR code or drive by a store with your GPS on, you are being tracked by your cell phone company.

“They know you were playing Angry Birds. They know that you drove by Sears. They know you drove by Domino’s Pizza. They can take that and take a very unique algorithm that can focus on your behavior,” explained marketing expert Mark Johnson. “It’s very **impactful**.” According to Johnson, your data trail is worth big money to the cell phone companies. Details about your habits, your age and gender are compiled and can be sold to third parties. The information is predominantly used as a marketing tool so advertisers can target you with products or services that you are more likely to use or want.

All of the major cell phone carriers admit to collecting information about its customers. Some in the industry argue it benefits consumers because they get ads that are relevant to them. Cell phone companies do notify customers about the data they collect, but critics say the notices are often hard to understand and written in fine print.

Rainey Reitman of the Electronic Frontier Foundation doesn’t like the fact that those who don’t want to be tracked have to go out of their way to get the company to stop. “This is something that consumers are automatically **opted into**,” Reitman said. To find out how your cell phone company might be monitoring you, be sure to carefully read the privacy policy. Also, make sure you read all of the updates your carrier might send you because this tracking technology keeps changing.

Questions 16 through 20 (circle the correct letter A, B, C, or D)

1. The author’s purpose in this text is to show that
2. cell phone companies are concerned with the privacy of its customers.
3. customer rights should be carefully considered given today’s marketing tactics.
4. online marketing to cell phone customers can be improved.
5. data collection benefits customers more than it harms them.
6. In the context of the text, the word “compiled” most closely corresponds to which of the following words:
7. Collected
8. Discarded
9. Seen
10. Purchased
11. The text states that cell phone data collection happens because
12. cell phone companies are spying on their customers.
13. privacy laws are too relaxed.
14. marketers want to do a better job advertising to their customers.
15. customers like to spend money.
16. According to the text, cell phone companies collect all of the following kinds of data except
17. text messages.
18. locations visited.
19. phone applications used.
20. food preferences.
21. The author probably includes quotes from Mark Johnson and Rainey Reitman in order to
22. explain how data is tracked.
23. support cell phone companies.
24. convince readers of the seriousness of this issue.
25. promote online shopping.

**Text 4:** Adapted from “Passage I”

Glossary: **deprivation** - the state of not having something that people need

**to bury** - to cover (someone or something) with something else **to loose a torrent** - to cry uncontrollably **to sniffle** - to inhale short, quick breaths through your nose, often due to crying **humiliation** - the state of feeling significant shame **backbreaking** - involving difficult physical work or effort

In one simple sentence, the letter informed me that I had been admitted into Beijing Language Institute’s English department, and that I was expected to report on campus within a month

Mom, Dad, and the whole family were at hand to congratulate me. We studied the letter and the information they had sent about the department and the college.

My dream had come true. I would be off to Beijing to study English. I would be the first one in the history of Yellow Stone High [Yellow Stone, China] to do so. Now I had a future, a bright one. In a few years, I would be fluent in English, could go to work for the Foreign Ministry and would converse in that fine language with fine people in an elegant international setting. Other things would follow, and I would be able to take care of my wonderful family and give them all that had been denied them.

It was a moment of great happiness for all of us. Mom and Dad, who were hardened by many years of suffering and **deprivation**, rarely revealed their emotions, but now I saw Dad collapse into a chair, **bury** his face in his shaking hands, and weep. Mom sat down also and let **loose a torrent**.

Everyone was **sniffling**. Thirty years of **humiliation** had suddenly come to an end. Two sons had been accepted into leading universities within the same year.

Mom and Dad had never dreamed of such a day. They had thought we were finished. Kicked around in school, I had almost dropped out many times. Jin had been forced to quit school at the age of twelve to become a farmer with nothing to look forward to but blisters on his tender hands, being spit upon by the older farmers, and **backbreaking** work that had taken away ten prime years of his life. There had been years of no hope, no dreams, only tears, hunger, shame, and darkness.

Questions 21 through 25 (circle the correct letter A, B, C, or D)

1. The events depicted in the third paragraph indicate that
2. life has been difficult.
3. the family is respected.
4. farming has been profitable.
5. the brothers are not close to each other.
6. The text suggests the following is true:
7. Education is highly valued in China.
8. The narrator’s parents are ashamed of their sons’ achievements.
9. Farming is a difficult but well respected profession in China.
10. The brothers speak English at home.
11. The author’s motivation to share this story is to
12. honor his parents.
13. explain an important moment in his life’s journey.
14. boast about his intelligence.
15. make new friends.
16. Choose the description that most logically continues the author’s story.
17. The author shares how his education led to his success.
18. The author’s parents win the lottery and become millionaires.
19. Jin finds love and drops out of school.
20. The author fails to follow his dream.
21. The author describes his future as “bright” to mean
22. successful.
23. wealthy.
24. promising.
25. full of light.

**Text 5:** Adapted from “Fire” by S. Junger

Glossary: **intermittent** - not constant, not steady

**apprenticeship** - the period of time when a person is gaining a skill **chainsaw -** a mechanical, power-driven tool used to cut wood **to clip** - to fasten or be attached with a clip or clips **to rappel** - to move down an incline by pushing your feet on it and sliding on a rope **to limb** - to remove branches from a tree

In 1989, when I was in my late twenties, I saw a magazine photo of half a dozen forest fire fighters taking a break on the fire line. They wore yellow Nomex shirts and hard hats and had line packs on their backs and were leaning on their tools in a little meadow, watching the forest burn. In front of them was a wall of flame three hundred feet high. There was something about the men in that photo—their awe, their exhaustion, their sense of purpose—that I wanted in my life.

The only good thing I had going on was an **intermittent** job—more of an **apprenticeship**, really— working as a climber for a tree company. I’d met a guy in a bar who showed me an enormous scar across his knee from a **chainsaw** accident, and offered me a job. He said he’d teach me to climb if I worked for him whenever he needed someone. I agreed.

My experience as a climber culminated one clear, cold November day, when the owner of a tree company asked me to give him a price on a very dangerous job. A large tree had split down the middle, and the bulk of the tree was still balanced in a tiny piece of trunk. Working in a tree like that would be risky because it was unstable, and if it came down unexpectedly, the climber would almost certainly be killed. I walked around the property, looked at the tree from various angles, and told him, “Five hundred dollars.” He shrugged and agreed. It wasn’t worth five hundred dollars to go up into that tree—it wasn’t worth any amount—but I saw another way to do it.

On either side of the property were two taller trees that were roughly lined up with the one in question. I climbed both of the taller trees, set up a tension line between them, **clipped** into it, and pulled myself hand over hand until I was directly over the tree that had to come down. I **rappelled** down into it and began working. If it fell out from under me, I was still safe. I **limbed** the tree out and then dropped the trunk in sections. It took two hours. At the time it felt like the best thing I’d ever done.

Questions 26 through 30 (circle the correct letter A, B, C, or D)

1. Which of the following is true of the author according to the text?
2. He is bored and reckless.
3. He approaches his work in a creative way.
4. He is desperate for work.
5. He is afraid of heights.
6. The author most likely shares this story in order to
7. describe a defining moment on his path to becoming a firefighter.
8. show how easy it is to get a job as a tree climber.
9. demonstrate his love of trees and the outdoors.
10. describe a time when he almost died.
11. The first paragraph of this text demonstrates
12. the dangers of firefighting.
13. what firefighters always wear while working.
14. the source of the author’s inspiration.
15. how old the author is.
16. “An enormous scar across his knee from a chainsaw accident” suggests that A. tree climbing is dangerous.
17. the guy with the scar is clumsy.
18. the guy with the scar no longer works with chainsaws.
19. the author will acquire a similar scar in his career.
20. The author’s tone throughout the text can best be described as
21. determined.
22. defeated.
23. dark.
24. doubtful.