



Reading Comprehension Sample Test

Brandman University



Read the selection and answer the question.

The Lost Colony

Long before Jamestown, the first (and ever famous) permanent colony, there was another "first" settlement in North America: Roanoke Island. In July of 1585, a group of more than one hundred English colonists arrived on the land that sits near the present-day town of Manteo, North Carolina (then considered to be Virginia). Roanoke Island quickly became known among enterprising colonists for its nutrient-rich soil and fragrant fields. Native Americans who already inhabited the island were friendly and welcoming at first, but over the next year, tensions between the newcomers and Native Americans heightened. Supply ships that had been expected to arrive from England did not come, and food became scarce. The colony's commander, long known for his harsh tactics, began to wear on the patience of Native American neighbors. When Native Americans charged the settlement, the few English colonists who remained fled in their boat and were never seen again.

One vanishing act, as it turns out, was not enough to deter future colonists. The following year, in 1587, England commissioned another group of men, women, and children to settle the land known as Roanoke Island. By this time, tensions between the English and Native Americans had eased. John White, an artist who had been a participant in the earlier settlement, was installed as governor of the new colony. He soon left the island to return to England for more supplies. The outbreak of war between England and Spain delayed his return to the island until 1590. When he set foot on the island for the first time in nearly three years, he found the island deserted. Not a soul remained.

The only clue to the colony's disappearance was a single word, "Croatoan," which had been carved into a tree. The word refers to a tribe of Native Americans, known to be friendly, that lived south of Roanoke Island. Today, many historians believe that the colonists may have joined the Croatoan tribe in the intervening years between John White's departure and return. Others believe that the colonists were attacked by neighboring Native Americans or simply died off due to starvation or exposure. Some experts believe that the land itself has literally disappeared—now submerged, after more than four hundred years of erosion, under water. In recent years, new archaeological investigations have begun in the hopes of solving the mystery of the disappearance of those first English settlers, now known as "The Lost Colony." Yet even as archeologists and historians search for answers, many say that they would rather not know. The mystery, they say, is what draws us to probe our history in the first place. And while the first Americans settled Roanoke Island in the hopes of establishing future generations on the land, their efforts could hardly be called a failure. After all, many of those "future" generations return to Roanoke Island time and again to explore a shared story that is—like all good stories—part history, part mystery.

1. Which of the following statements supports the idea that the story of "The Lost Colony" should remain a mystery?
 - A. The mystery is what draws modern-day people to explore the colony's history.
 - B. Experts have different and contradicting ideas about what happened to the colony.
 - C. New archaeological investigations are underway to try to solve the mystery of the colonists.
 - D. A single word, carved into a tree, provided the only possible clue to the colony's disappearance.

2. According to the selection, England continued to send colonists to settle Roanoke Island because —
 - A. the island was known for its nutrient-rich soil and vegetation.
 - B. the country was determined to succeed where others had failed.
 - C. they could keep the island well-stocked with supplies and provisions.
 - D. they knew they would be welcomed by friendly Native American tribes.

3. The main idea of the selection is that the —
 - A. island should be commemorated as the first real colony.
 - B. colonists were a foolhardy group that lacked survival skills.
 - C. exploration of our shared history is a right and a responsibility.
 - D. circumstances of the first colony's disappearance remain a mystery.

Read the selection and answer the question.

A Homegrown Human Windpipe—in Flight

In 2008, a thirty-year-old mother of two living in Barcelona developed a cough. This was not unusual, of course. Everybody coughs from time to time. But this cough was no ordinary, run-of-the-mill cough. It left her out of breath and tired, unable to carry out her work or take care of her children. When she had to be hospitalized, the doctors finally discovered what ailed her: tuberculosis. The woman had two choices: she could have her left lung removed or have a trachea transplant. The transplant would allow her to keep both lungs, but there was a catch. The transplant, they told her, had never actually been done before. She would be the first—a medical guinea pig of sorts. The woman consented.

Rather than go the typical route of transplanting a trachea, or windpipe, from a donor, doctors decided to try something radically different. They still secured a windpipe from a donor, but before transplanting it into the woman's body, as would usually be done, they scrubbed it clean of all the original donor's cells. Then they soaked the windpipe in a bath of the woman's own cells, which adhered to the structure of the donor windpipe. After a sufficient length of time, the donor windpipe was completely covered—and made up of—the woman's own cells. Doctors hoped that this newly constructed windpipe would decrease the possibility that her body would reject the new organ. Only time would tell whether or not the groundbreaking technique would be a success.

Sixteen hours before the operation was scheduled to begin, doctors arrived at an airport in Bristol, England—where the windpipe had been grown—just in time for their flight to Barcelona. There was only one "small" glitch: in spite of the doctors' written request for approval beforehand, the organ was stopped for inspection and prohibited from being brought on the flight. The doctors tried explaining the extenuating circumstances.

We are medical professionals, they said. Airport security did not budge.

We have a homegrown human windpipe that must be transplanted into a living human being within the next sixteen hours. Still, airport security did not relent.

We wrote to you and secured permission for this organ to be brought onboard, they said. Airport security checked their documents. We have no such paperwork on file, the guards said.

The doctors looked at one another in disbelief.

They tried again: We have a homegrown human windpipe in this box. It has to be transplanted within the next sixteen hours. We need to board this flight so we can save this woman's life and make medical history.

Airport security threatened the doctors with arrest if they tried to board the flight.

That was when one of the doctors—a doctor-to-be, in fact, as he was a medical student—spoke up. I have a friend, he said, who is a pilot.

In a matter of minutes, plans were made for the pilot-friend, who was in Germany, to fly immediately to Bristol, England, pick up the container with the windpipe, and take it straight to Barcelona.

Hours later, the doctors found themselves exactly where they should have been: transplanting the windpipe into the young woman's body.

Ten days later, she was discharged from the hospital with a fully functioning set of lungs and two small, overjoyed children.

A lifesaving, revolutionary medical procedure had been carried out with the best kind of success possible, all without a single hitch—save for airport security, of course.

4. In the selection, figurative language like "medical guinea pig" and "homegrown human windpipe" helps convey a tone that is —
- A. serious and reverent.
 - B. hilarious and whimsical.
 - C. disrespectful and cavalier.
 - D. lighthearted and entertaining.
5. This selection seems to argue that —
- A. medical breakthroughs are less important than airport security.
 - B. growing the first human windpipe is nothing short of a miracle.
 - C. airport security, while necessary, can pose unreasonable challenges.
 - D. transplanting human organs is an endeavor that carries too much risk.

Question	Key	Competency
1	A	Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence to support conclusions drawn from the text.
2	A	Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence to support conclusions drawn from the text.
3	D	Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.
4	D	Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text, including determining technical, connotative, and figurative meanings, and analyze how specific word choices shape meaning or tone.
5	C	Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.



Sentence Skills Sample Test

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1. Select the option that best combines the sentences.

In 1769, Nicolas Joseph Cugnot created the first mechanical car. It relied on a steam engine and could reach a speed of 2.5 miles per hour.

- A. In 1769, Nicolas Joseph Cugnot created the first mechanical car, but it relied on a steam engine and could reach a speed of 2.5 miles per hour.
 - B. In 1769, Nicolas Joseph Cugnot created the first mechanical car, which relied on a steam engine and could reach a speed of 2.5 miles per hour.
 - C. In 1769, Nicolas Joseph Cugnot created the first mechanical car, however it relied on a steam engine and could reach a speed of 2.5 miles per hour.
 - D. In 1769, Nicolas Joseph Cugnot created the first mechanical car, the machine relied on a steam engine and could reach a speed of 2.5 miles per hour.
2. Read the sentence. Choose the words that best fit in the blanks.

____ is the ____ player on the football team?

- A. Who; best
 - B. Whom; best
 - C. Who; better
 - D. Whom; better
3. What change, if any, should be made to the sentence?

Interestingly enough, the sunsets on the Red Planet (Mars) are a bright blue.

- A. Change "*on*" to "*in*"
- B. Change "*(Mars)*" to "*(mars)*"
- C. Change "*are*" to "*is*"
- D. Make no change

4. Choose the words that best complete the sentence.

If I had known it was going to rain in Boston all week long, _____ different clothes.

- A. I would have packed
- B. I should have packed
- C. I would be able to pack
- D. I should have known to pack

5. Which sentence uses the modifier correctly?

- A. Covered with whipped cream, cake is delicious.
- B. Jogging to the store, a friend of mine passed me in her new SUV.
- C. Tired of grading papers all week, I knew my professor would not assign more homework.
- D. After eating all of the carrots, I wondered if the rabbit would be back to polish off the strawberries.

Question	Key	Competency
1	B	Combining Sentences/Coordination/Subordination
2	A	Word Usage/Choice
3	D	Sentence Correction
4	A	Sentence Completion
5	A	Sentence Logic