

Reading Test

65 MINUTES, 52 QUESTIONS

Turn to Section 1 of your answer sheet to answer the questions in this section.

DIRECTIONS

Each passage or pair of passages below is followed by a number of questions. After reading each passage or pair, choose the best answer to each question based on what is stated or implied in the passage or passages and in any accompanying graphics (such as a table or graph).

Questions 1-10 are based on the following passage.

This passage is adapted from Amy Tan, *The Bonesetter's Daughter*. ©2001 by Amy Tan.

At last, Old Widow Lau was done haggling with the driver and we stepped inside Father's shop. It was north-facing, quite dim inside, and perhaps this was why Father did not see us at first. He was busy with a customer, a man who was distinguished-looking, like the scholars of two decades before. The two men were bent over a glass case, discussing the different qualities of inksticks. Big Uncle welcomed us and invited us to be seated. From his formal tone, I knew he did not recognize who we were. So I called his name in a shy voice. And he squinted at me, then laughed and announced our arrival to Little Uncle, who apologized many times for not rushing over sooner to greet us. They rushed us to be seated at one of two tea tables for customers. Old Widow Lau refused their invitation three times, exclaiming that my father and uncles must be too busy for visitors. She made weak efforts to leave. On the fourth insistence, we finally sat. Then Little Uncle brought us hot tea and sweet oranges, as well as bamboo latticework fans with which to cool ourselves.

I tried to notice everything so I could later tell GaoLing what I had seen, and tease out her envy. The floors of the shop were of dark wood, polished and clean, no dirty footprints, even though this was during the dustiest part of the summer. And along the walls were display cases made of wood and glass.

The glass was very shiny and not one pane was broken. Within those glass cases were our silk-wrapped boxes, all our hard work. They looked so much nicer than they had in the ink-making studio at Immortal Heart village.

I saw that Father had opened several of the boxes. He set sticks and cakes and other shapes on a silk cloth covering a glass case that served as a table on which he and the customer leaned. First he pointed to a stick with a top shaped like a fairy boat and said with graceful importance, "Your writing will flow as smoothly as a keel cutting through a glassy lake." He picked up a bird shape: "Your mind will soar into the clouds of higher thought." He waved toward a row of ink cakes embellished with designs of peonies and bamboo: "Your ledgers will blossom into abundance while bamboo surrounds your quiet mind."

As he said this, Precious Auntie came back into mind. I was remembering how she taught me that everything, even ink, had a purpose and a meaning: Good ink cannot be the quick kind, ready to pour out of a bottle. You can never be an artist if your work comes without effort. That is the problem of modern ink from a bottle. You do not have to think. You simply write what is swimming on the top of your brain. And the top is nothing but pond scum, dead leaves, and mosquito spawn. But when you push an inkstick along an inkstone, you take the first step to cleansing your mind and your heart. You push and you ask yourself, What are my intentions? What is in my heart that matches my mind?

60 I remembered this, and yet that day in the ink shop, I listened to what Father was saying, and his words became far more important than anything Precious Auntie had thought. “Look here,” Father said to his customer, and I looked. He held up an inkstick and rotated it in the light. “See? It’s the right hue, purple-black, not brown or gray like the cheap brands you might find down the street. And listen to this.” And I heard a sound as clean and pure as a small silver bell. “The high-pitched tone tells you that the soot is very fine, as smooth as the sliding banks of old rivers. And the scent—can you smell the balance of strength and delicacy, the musical notes of the ink’s perfume? Expensive, and everyone who sees you using it will know that it was well worth the high price.”

I was very proud to hear Father speak of our family’s ink this way.

1

Which choice best summarizes the passage?

- A) A character’s arrival at her family’s ink shop sparks fond memories of her favorite aunt.
- B) A character’s surprise visit leads to a happy reunion at her family’s ink shop.
- C) A character comes to understand her father’s ambitions while visiting her family’s ink shop.
- D) A character’s visit to her family’s ink shop deepens her appreciation of her family’s work.

2

A main theme of the passage is that

- A) family relationships should be nurtured.
- B) quality is achieved through deliberate effort.
- C) hard work results in material compensation.
- D) creativity needs to be expressed concretely.

3

Throughout the passage, the narrator is portrayed as someone who is

- A) reserved around unfamiliar people.
- B) attuned to her immediate surroundings.
- C) sympathetic to the needs of others.
- D) anxious about her responsibilities.

4

It can be most reasonably inferred from the passage that Old Widow Lau’s reluctance to stay for tea is

- A) feigned, because she is not genuinely firm in her resolve.
- B) inconsiderate, because the family has been planning her visit.
- C) appropriate, because the shop is unusually busy.
- D) ill-advised, because she is exhausted from the journey.

5

Which choice provides the best evidence for the answer to the previous question?

- A) Lines 1-4 (“At last . . . first”)
- B) Lines 11-15 (“And he . . . customers”)
- C) Lines 15-18 (“Old . . . leave”)
- D) Lines 19-21 (“Then . . . ourselves”)

6

The narrator indicates that the contrast between the ink-making studio at Immortal Heart village and her family’s ink shop is that the ink shop

- A) displays the family’s ink more impressively.
- B) is more conveniently located for the public.
- C) provides greater individual attention to customers.
- D) offers a larger space for presenting products.

7

Based on the artistic philosophy expressed in the fourth paragraph (lines 46-59), it is reasonable to infer that Precious Auntie would consider a hastily written first draft of a story to be

- A) emotionally raw and powerful.
- B) creatively satisfying for the author.
- C) essentially worthless in and of itself.
- D) inappropriately analytical for a piece of art.

8

Which choice provides the best evidence for the answer to the previous question?

- A) Lines 46-48 (“As he . . . meaning”)
- B) Lines 49-50 (“Good . . . bottle”)
- C) Lines 52-55 (“You simply . . . spawn”)
- D) Lines 57-59 (“You push . . . mind”)

9

As used in line 59, “matches” most nearly means

- A) competes against.
- B) corresponds with.
- C) runs counter to.
- D) treats equally.

10

As used in line 68, “clean” most nearly means

- A) complete.
- B) skillful.
- C) distinct.
- D) upright.