



Verbal Reasoning Practice Test 8

Solution Booklet

The merits of single-sex education have long been debated in the United States, where demand for single-sex schools is on the rise. Title IV, a 1972 law prohibiting sex discrimination in education, was amended in 2006, allowing for the establishment of single-sex state schools so long as a co-educational alternative is available. While critics view single-sex schools as discriminatory and inadequate preparation for adult life, advocates claim that children, and particularly girls, benefit from a single-sex education. American research shows that girls attending single-sex schools have higher self-esteem, participate more in class, and score higher on aptitude tests than their counterparts in co-educational schools. A 2005 study revealed that both girls and boys attending single-sex schools spent more time on homework and had less disciplinary problems. Single-sex schools subvert stereotypical course-taking patterns and results. Advocates of single-sex schooling argue that educators can teach more effectively by tailoring their tuition to reflect current research about gender-based brain development. Many experts, however, believe that research into single-sex education is inconclusive, and that so long as the education provided is gender-fair, both girls and boys can thrive in a co-educational environment.

Q1 Girls who attend single-sex schools perform better in maths and sciences than their counterparts in co-educational schools.

True

False

Cannot Say

Cannot say – while the sixth sentence states that “single-sex schools subvert stereotypical course-taking patterns and results,” it is not possible to say – based only on the information in the passage – whether girls perform better in maths and sciences. The passage explains how there are advocates on each side of the argument, but does not say who is right.

Q2 The trend towards American single-sex state education is a relatively recent phenomenon.

True

False

Cannot Say

True – single-sex state schools were illegal between 1972 and 2006, as explained in the second sentence.

Q3 Proponents of single-sex education believe there are different learning styles between the two genders.

True

False

Cannot Say

True – the seventh sentence states that educators can tailor their tuition to reflect current research about gender-based brain development.

Q4 Whereas girls benefit academically from single-sex education, the only advantage for boys is improved discipline.

True

False

Cannot Say

Cannot say – the passage cites a 2005 study which found more time spent on homework and less-stereotyped course taking. However the benefits of single-sex education given in the passage are all opinions; the passage does not give them to us as fact.

Q5 Critics of single-sex education believe that such schools reinforce pre-existing gender stereotypes.

True

False

Cannot Say

Cannot say – this is not an argument made in the passage.

Q9 Some critics believe that NASA's new direction marks the end of American leadership in human space exploration.

True

False

Cannot Say

True – summarizes the seventh sentence. Death knell means the beginning of the end.

Q10 The United States government recently announced plans to reduce its space programme budget.

True

False

Cannot Say

Cannot say – the second sentence states that spending has declined over the past 40 years, however it does not say if the government announced this (they could have just done it). Also this does not preclude a one-off cut 39 years ago with a recent small increase. We cannot tell from the passage.

Although according to the EU-funded Psychonaut Research Project it has only been available since 2008, mephedrone is now the fourth most popular recreational drug in the United Kingdom. Also known as “meow meow” and “drone”, mephedrone is a synthetic stimulant that is derived from cathinone compounds found in the khat plant of Eastern Africa. Chemically similar to amphetamines, mephedrone has the effect of euphoria and increased stimulation. Because it is sold as plant fertilizer and thus not subject to medical regulations, mephedrone is currently legal in the United Kingdom, although it has been banned in many other countries, including Sweden, Germany and Israel. Manufactured in China and sold cheaply, the drug’s legality and availability have led to its meteoric rise. While it is not illegal, it does not follow that mephedrone is safe to use - an international lack of scientific research means that its effects on health are not fully known. Following reports of addiction and the drug’s suspected involvement in several deaths; there are calls in the UK to have mephedrone classified as an illegal substance immediately. This legal decision, however, cannot be taken until a government advisory council has fully investigated any scientific evidence.

Q11 Mephedrone is a naturally occurring substance.

True

False

Cannot Say

False – the second sentence describes mephedrone as a “synthetic” stimulant derived from cathinone compounds found in a type of plant.

Q12 Sweden and Germany have scientifically proven the health dangers of mephedrone.

True

False

Cannot Say

False – the passage tell us there is an “international lack of scientific research” on the effects on health from the drug. If there is a lack of research it cannot follow that it has been scientifically proven.

Q13 Mephedrone’s low cost makes it especially attractive to teenage users.

True

False

Cannot Say

Cannot say – the passage does not mention the age of mephedrone users, nor the reasons a particular age group use the drug.

Q14 Despite being a legal substance, mephedrone is not safe to use.

True

False

Cannot Say

Cannot say – the sixth sentence states that “a lack of scientific research means that its effects on health are not fully known”.

Q15 The UK government has been criticised for failing to act quickly to criminalise mephedrone.

True

False

Cannot Say

Cannot say – the penultimate sentence states there are calls to have mephedrone classified as illegal, but the passage does not mention criticism of the government, nor about the length or their inaction.

Ecotourism can be defined as responsible travel to natural areas that aims to both conserve the environment and bring economic opportunities to local people. Ecotourism provides an alternative to environmentally damaging industries such as logging and mining, while also stimulating the local economy. However, its dependency on foreign investment leads to one of the main criticisms of the industry: that the profits generated from ecotourism do not benefit the local economy and work force. Furthermore, while the ideals behind ecotourism are unobjectionable, the industry is highly susceptible to “greenwashing” - whereby a false impression of environmental friendliness is given. More radical opposition comes from those critics who believe that ecotourism is inherently flawed because travel that uses fossil fuels is damaging to the environment. Despite these voices of dissent, ecotourism has become the fastest-growing sector of the tourism industry, growing at an annual rate of twenty to thirty percent. Ironically, ecotourism’s very success may counteract its environmental goals, as high levels of visitors - even careful ones - inevitably damage the ecosystem.

Q16 Ecotourism strives to profit from a nation’s natural resources.

True

False

Cannot Say

Cannot say – whilst the second sentence mentions ecotourism as an alternative to logging and mining, we are not told anywhere in the passage that profit from natural resources is one of its aims.

Q17 Ecotourism’s critics believe that air travel contributes to global warming.

True

False

Cannot Say

Cannot say – the fifth sentence states that critics believe that travel using fossil fuels is damaging to the environment, but it does not say how it is damaging to the environment, for example they could just mean depletion of natural resources.

Q18 The passage dismisses the ecotourism industry as an example of greenwashing.

True

False

Cannot Say

False – the fourth sentences merely says that ecotourism is susceptible to greenwashing. The passage nether dismisses nor promotes ecotourism.

Q19 The long-term environmental credentials of ecotourism are debatable.

True

False

Cannot Say

True – the last sentence states that high levels of visitors “may counteract its environmental goals” and that all visitors inevitably damage the environment. The passage leaves open the debate.

Q20 While ecotourism’s environmental benefits are disputed, there is consensus that it benefits local people economically.

True

False

Cannot Say

False – while the second sentence states that stimulating the local economy is one of the aims of ecotourism, the third sentence makes clear that critics believe that “the profits generated from ecotourism do not benefit the local economy and work force. If there are critics, there cannot be consensus.

The democratic peace theory holds that liberal democracies never, or rarely, go to war against each other. The first to espouse this idea was the German philosopher Immanuel Kant, who posited that constitutional republics engender peace, because the majority of people will not vote to go to war unless in self-defence. More recently, the democratic peace theory was put forth in 1964 by Dean Babst. Babst carried out the first statistical research to scientifically prove that democracies never or rarely fight each other. Despite an undeniable statistical correlation between democracy and peace, the democratic peace theory is highly debated amongst political scientists. The definitions of “democracy” and “war” are one contentious issue. Some opponents of the democratic peace theory point to exceptions, such as the Spanish-American War. However, the main criticism of the theory is that it is based on flawed logic - that peace between democracies is not caused by the democratic nature of those states. Furthermore, opponents argue that democracies frequently attack non-democracies, dispelling the notion that democracies are inherently pacifistic. There are several derivatives of the democratic peace theory, including the economic peace theory, which states that increased economic exchange between states helps to avoid conflict.

Q21 Immanuel Kant’s theory about democratic peace was based on his scientific research.

True

False

Cannot Say

False – the third sentence states that the first statistical research into the theory was not carried out until Babst’s work in the 1960s.

Q22 The premise for the democratic peace theory is the accountability of a democratically elected government to its electorate.

True

False

Cannot Say

True – the second sentence explains that the majority of people will not vote to go to war, and as a result the country will not go to war.

Q23 The definition of peace is divisive amongst political scientists.

True

False

Cannot Say

Cannot say – the fifth sentence states that the definitions of “democracy” and “war” are the subject of contention, but the passage does not mention their interpretation of “peace”, which may or may not be contentious.

Q24 The economic peace theory says that countries are less likely to engage in war if their trade is independent of each other.

True

False

Cannot Say

False – the last sentence states that economic peace theory “states that increased economic exchange between states helps to avoid conflict”. This is the opposite of what the statement says, so it cannot be true.

Q25 Dean Babst found statistical evidence showing democracies do not fight in wars.

True

False

Cannot Say

Cannot say – the passage tells us about the evidence Babst found showing that democracies do not go to war against other democracies, but it says nothing of any evidence proving or disproving that democracies get involved in any war, for example against non-democracies.

The debate over the British Museum’s Parthenon sculptures, also called the Elgin Marbles, has run for nearly two centuries. These marble statues were removed - with official permission - from the ruins of the Parthenon in 1801 by Lord Elgin, the British Ambassador to the Ottoman Empire. He sold these ancient Greek treasures to the British Museum in 1816, where they have been housed ever since. Today, five million visitors from around the world visit the sculptures, free of charge, at the British Museum. Since gaining independence in 1830, however, the Greek government has argued for their return to Athens. Historically, the Hellenic position centred on ownership, claiming that Lord Elgin bribed authorities to acquire the marbles illegally. The counterargument is that Lord Elgin saved these classical treasures from neglect. Greece no longer disputes the British Museum’s ownership, but states that the sculptures should be loaned to the New Acropolis Museum in Athens, where they would be reunited with other surviving sculptures and displayed in their proper geographic and cultural context. Despite public sympathy for the return of the Elgin marbles, the British Museum believes that the Parthenon marbles are part of shared world heritage and thus should be widely accessible. Furthermore, returning the Parthenon statues would set a precedent for returning other artefacts to their land of origin.

Q26 The British Museum takes the view that the Parthenon sculptures transcend national boundaries.

True

False

Cannot Say

True – the ninth sentence describes the British Museum’s view – that the marbles are “part of shared world heritage”. Shared world heritage means they don’t believe individual nations should claim more of an ownership over other nations.

Q27 Prior to 1830, Greece was part of the Ottoman Empire.

True

False

Cannot Say

Cannot say – the passage states that Greece won its independence in 1830, and that Lord Elgin was Ambassador to the Ottoman Empire, but the statement above is an assumption.

Q28 The British public cannot understand why the Greek government want the Parthenon marbles returned.

True

False

Cannot Say

False – the ninth sentence mentions “public sympathy for the return of the Elgin marbles”, contrary to the British Museum’s stance. If the public have sympathy, it can be said that they understand why they might be wanted back.

Q29 The only surviving Parthenon marbles are divided between the British Museum and the New Acropolis Museum.

True

False

Cannot Say

Cannot say – whilst we are told that there are Parthenon marbles in both the British Museum and the New Acropolis Museum, the passage does not specify that these are the only remaining Parthenon marbles.

Q30 Greeks believe that the Elgin Marbles technically do not belong to the British Museum.

True

False

Cannot Say

False – the seventh sentence states “Greece no longer disputes the British Museum’s ownership”.