

1. ANS: B

Note: This Victorian selection contains prose that many students find difficult. More time needs to be allotted to the study of earlier prose because of the difficulty of the syntax and voice. According to John D. Rosenberg editor of *The Genius of John Ruskin*, “No figure among the Victorians surpasses John Ruskin in magnitude of genius, modernity of message, or mastery of prose.” But, this mastery also creates a “time” problem because of the constant references to those prose lines that students have to find and read before they can eliminate incorrect choices. Have students draw lines from the question back to the pose lines to help reduce “searching time.”

This passage has 15 of 53 questions or 28.3% of the questions on this exam. It’s an important passage of prose by well known writer John Ruskin who wrote volumes over a myriad of topics.

1. The speaker characterizes the life of the mountain village as severe but patiently endured, choice B. This characterization begins in paragraph two with a traveler described as being “high above all sorrow.” The traveler notes the beauty and majesty of the as “we pause beside the cross.” The speaker states in lines 34 and 35 that the mountain life is a hard and suffered only by torpor, a time of “darkness of calm enduring.” The villagers understand “Love, patience, hospitality, faith—these things they know” through all the pain of each season, line 42. Live is difficult, not simple and rewarding, choice A. The people are simple not enlightened by religion so much as church is a place of rest, choice C. Both D and E suggest that the villagers are wild as the landscape and cursed by God and nature. They live in not in harmony with nature, but they are a simple and accepting people as stated in line 42.

PTS: 1 DIF: Medium MSC: 60% answered correctly
NOT: 1991 #39

2. ANS: C

2. The antecedent to “its” is the subject of the clause just before it: sky, choice C. An antecedent usually attaches itself to the noun most closely related to it in prose. By definition, ante means before. An antecedent is something that happens or exists before something else can happen as the sky has to be “seen through the openings in the pines before the consuming flame of white space can be seen gathered into solemn crowns and circlets....” Lines 4, 8, and 9 with cross, excess, and space are not in logical proximity to the meaning of the passage. Glen, line 6, introduces the sentence, but the glen is not opening—the sky is. This clause gives the condition by which the mountains can be viewed.

PTS: 1 DIF: Easy MSC: 84% answered correctly
NOT: 1991 #40

3. ANS: C

3. The description is Romantic, meaning highly imaginative and emotional, choice C. Descriptions such as “stoop to these glens in forky zigzags...grey and narrow arch... shuddering curve...cross of rough-hewn pine...dark against lurid fury of the foam...” are highly imaginative. (Compare this passage to a science textbook to note the difference between the scientific objective and the subjective Romantic voice of the authors.) Conventional metrical patterns or meter are not in this prose passage and no understatement and economy exist, A and B. The opening sentence is not periodic with the verb suspended until the end of the sentence, choice D. A sardonic, scornful or mocking, mood and atmosphere are not in the passage, choice E. The speaker of the passage is in awe in the first six sentences.

PTS: 1 DIF: Medium MSC: 50% answered correctly
NOT: 1991 #41

4. ANS: C

4. In these lines, the description turns between majestic and frail. The best description of the mountains is “dramatic and melancholy quality” (C) which begins with references of “full of power, yet as frail as shadows; lifeless, like the walls of a sepulcher...” and standing beautiful in “crimson folds like a veil...” This reference casts the tone through the sepulcher. This crypt or burial chamber gives the mountains a dramatic and melancholy nature and continues with the impulsive nature of a sea spirit, finally disappearing between two golden clouds. The features are not always visible in these lines, choice A. The mountains are not described as sinister or monstrous, choice B and the traveler is not mentioned in the lines, choice D. E is the best distracter, but the mountains are not oppressively present; they just are.

PTS: 1 DIF: Medium MSC: 56% answered correctly
NOT: 1991 #42

5. ANS: B

5. The noun summits is still the subject and the antecedent for this description of the Rocky Mountains. The passage contains only two pronouns “them” and “it,” and both refer back to the subject summits, choice B. These lines are not about the pines, choice A. “As shadows” is operating as a metaphor, choice C; as is “walls of sepulcher,” choice D. “Crimson folds” is describing the fall used as a verb of crimson folds of the summits. Verbs cannot be antecedents, only nouns.

PTS: 1 DIF: Easy MSC: 75% answered correctly
NOT: 1991 #43

6. ANS: A

6. The chief effect of the diction in “Enter the street...” is to provide (choice A) a vivid contrast to the description of the traveler’s approach to the scene. Start with the two words “happy” to describe the traveler contrasted to the word “foul,” to describe the streets of the village. Choice B incorrectly shows the traveler’s understanding that even though life would be hard there would also be peace and fellowship with nature which is “not so.” Choice C is incorrect because the villagers do possess the virtues of love, etc. The diction is not elevated or romantic nor full of despair and defeat with the villagers blaming their problems on a vengeful deity, choice D.

PTS: 1 DIF: Medium MSC: 63% answered correctly
NOT: 1991 #44

7. ANS: D

7. The key word in this question is “predominant” tone of the speaker which is not mean-spirited or vengeful, amused, or disinterested. He does not indicate a false hope that the villagers’ lives will change, choices A, B, C, and E. Instead the tone is one of condescension or contempt, showing disdain but also pity for the villagers’ accepting this life with “no books, no thoughts, no attainments, no rest—a smoke, as it were, of martyrdom.

PTS: 1 DIF: Easy MSC: 81% answered correctly
NOT: 1991 #45

8. ANS: A

8. This sentence gives examples to line 42, “Love, patience, hospitality, faith,” choice A. The villagers are willing to help each other. But, the sentence ends “in this they are different from the cattle and from the stones, but in all this *unrewarded* as far as concerns the present life.” Choices B, C, D, and E are incorrect because the sentence does not defend the villagers’ life; contradict the preceding observations; illustrate appreciation for the beauty of nature; or enumerate the simple joys of life.

PTS: 1 DIF: Medium MSC: 65% answered correctly

NOT: 1991 #46

9. ANS: B

9. Line 29 begins the speaker’s attitude about the villagers with the short statement: “It is not so.” These villagers have little solace from their lives “except only...mountain air” as the one parenthetical exception for living conditions because the rest of the sentence contains qualifying statements about the life of torpor, choice B. In this sentence, the speaker does not recall the necessity of learning and action (A), does not think religion is hopeless (C), illustrate the optimism of the villagers (D), or contradict any earlier statements about the village life, (E). The second paragraph focuses almost entirely on the speaker’s disdain of the inactivity, both physically and mentally, of the villagers.

PTS: 1 DIF: Medium MSC: 46% answered correctly

NOT: 1991 #47

10. ANS: E

10. This is another true/false or yes/no question. The last sentence is characterized by all of the following A, multiple modifiers; B, parallel structures; C, an oppressive atmosphere; and D, religious imagery. It is not characterized by ironic wit. The speaker is disdainful in these lines of the passagel, and not suggesting ironically that it really is the preferred life.

PTS: 1 DIF: Medium MSC: 57% answered correctly

NOT: 1991 #48

11. ANS: B

11. “It is not so.” This sentence is the major rhetorical shift in the development of the speaker’s exposition, Choice B. A is incorrect because these lines still refer the traveler, not the speaker. “Perhaps more” continues the already stated shift, choice C. Both choices of D and E support the speaker’s intention of expressing the languor of the villagers.

PTS: 1 DIF: Medium MSC: 63% answered correctly

NOT: 1991 #49

12. ANS: A

12. The “rough-hewn” of pine, a soft wood cross is a symbol, choice A that is used at the beginning of the passage and again at the end for their plight, choice A. The villagers think of the cross as representation of some false sense of a martyred life. Martyrs sacrifice because of a deeply understood and especially strong religious belief. The villagers, on the other hand, don’t have the depth of understanding with “no books, no thoughts, no attainments...pattering of a few prayers, not understood” to be martyred. The cross, then, is not an image of charm, influence, or a metaphor for the traveler, choices B, C, and E. Choice D is not valid because there is no leisure, only respite, in the passage for the comparison of the work.

PTS: 1 DIF: Easy MSC: 81% answered correctly

NOT: 1991 #50

13. ANS: C

13. The speaker’s assertions are critical of the villagers who consists of making a sparse living of “black bread, rude roof, no light at night, and “laborious” days (line 52) making C the best choice for the logical deduction, a “life of labor is not sufficient for a full life.” The speaker goes on to include “no books, no thoughts, no attainments, no rest...” to further the evidence for his assertions. Choice A is not in the passage about the speaker, rather the traveler. No narrative is given about the mountain scenes as charming except for, perhaps, the traveler, choice B. Animals aren’t the subject of the selection, choice D. The villagers might think that happiness is fleeting, choice E, but the speaker does not use any evidence to support this deduction as logical.

PTS: 1 DIF: Hard MSC: 34% answered correctly

NOT: 1991 #51

14. ANS: A

14. Almost all the students taking this test answered this image question correctly, choice A. The images of light and dark literally appear throughout both paragraphs using the words “dark” and “light.” Words such as sunshine, flame, shadow, flashes, sunbeam, gloomy, black, dark, cloud, and smoke (to list only a few) connote light and dark images. The question asks for the most prominent while nature and rebirth and reaping and growth, choices B, C, D, and E, are present, they are not as prominent throughout the passage.

PTS: 1 DIF: Easy MSC: 91% answered correctly

NOT: 1991 #52

15. ANS: E

15. The central rhetorical strategy is to contrast the setting and its inhabitants, Choice E. Students did not have much difficulty seeing that the first paragraph focuses on the mountain setting and the second paragraph focuses on the inhabitants. They had far more difficulty understanding the difference in the traveler’s reaction to the setting and the speaker or narrator’s reactions to the setting. Choices A, B, C, and D are not the “central rhetorical strategy” in the passage in that the reader is not forming judgments, the speaker gives us his; although ironies exist in the passage, it is not key rhetorical strategy for its development; the language of the villagers is not anywhere in the passage except the “pattering of a few prayers”; and the passage does not begin nor end on a note of uncertainty or indecision.

PTS: 1 DIF: Easy MSC: 78% answered correctly

NOT: 1991 #53