Section I: Multiple-Choice Questions

First Passage
From The Proud Tower by Barbara Tuchman

1. The first sentence speaks of the “remorselessly uncompromising opinions” of Robert Cecil (Lord Salisbury), which paradoxically are to be the means of making him prime minister or the obstacle that must be overcome. The freedom with which Lord Salisbury expresses and acts on his opinions is a central issue in the rest of the passage. The notion is not retracted (B or D), and although the comment is amusing, it is also relevant (E).

2. B. The remark is an understatement expressed by using the negative and, in the restraint of its expression, at odds with a phrase like “remarkable for their virulence and insolence.” Disraeli’s phrase could be called a metaphor (“measure”) but not a simile (A). It is directly quoted (C). Although the remark is “to the man” (ad hominem), that is, a personal comment, it is not an ad hominem argument (D) or a diatribe (E), an abusive attack.

3. B. There are direct quotations from Disraeli, Lord Morley, and an unnamed fellow member in the first paragraph. The later paragraphs have fewer quotations, although at least one can be found in each of the two following paragraphs. Neither the first paragraph nor the rest of the passage makes noteworthy use of cause-and-effect reasoning, ad hominem arguments, or abstract generalizations.

4. D. The second paragraph and the remainder of the passage enlarge the characterization of Lord Salisbury. The second paragraph provides examples of his rudeness and his short attention span but also discusses his attitudes toward the public and his oratorical skills, so B and C are not quite as accurate as D. Choices A and E are untrue.

5. C. Although he spoke without notes, we know from the first paragraph that his speeches could be “clear and perfect.” Choices A and B cannot be correct. The characterization of Lord Salisbury makes it clear that he didn’t fear any audience and wasn’t at all reluctant to reveal his real feelings. If his speeches in public were awkward, they were because he was indifferent to what the public thought and didn’t, as he saw it, waste his time in preparation for them.

6. B. As it is used here, a “tattoo” is a continuous drumming, not an ink picture on skin. A student who chooses answer D probably has the word “tattoo” in mind.

7. B. The praise of an enemy is praise that is untainted by prejudice so (I) is certainly true. The paragraph goes on to discuss Lord Salisbury’s “sympathetic” private self (II). Given Lord Salisbury’s indifference to the opinions of others, especially those of the opposing political party, it is far more likely that Salisbury would be equally unconcerned by Gladstone’s praise or blame.

8. D. Since the phrase says “not in the press,” there would be no point in adding “not even in Punch!” even if Punch was a mainstream newspaper (E). We can infer that Punch must be some kind of publication even more likely to take liberties with a public figure than the press, pointing to a satirical publication rather than a conservative one.

9. C. The sentence is loaded with intensifiers: “simple,” “in his bones and brain cells,” “any,” “anyone whatever.” If the phrase “no reason” were omitted, the sentence would lack a direct object and make no sense.

10. E. The sentence contains 12 prepositional phrases. It uses three parallel participial phrases (“having entered . . .,” “having been returned . . .,” and “having . . . sat . . .”). The sentence is periodic, reaching its subject, verb, and object only at the end.

11. A. The last paragraph says that Lord Salisbury revered “up—to the monarchy.” The only member of the royal family among these choices is the Prince of Wales, the son of the king or queen.
Third Passage

From “Meditations upon a Broomstick” by Jonathan Swift

24. A. The sentence is not pedantic (overly scholarly). All of the remaining answer choices can be found in this sentence.

25. E. Intemperance is a lack of moderation in behavior, and the “use of intemperance” is a metaphor for those excesses. It is the “ate” that chops man down like a tree. Before that, man had “green boughs”; after, he has but a “withered trunk.” The phrase does not refer to “man’s dominance over nature” (A). Nature is not shown as providing much nourishment (B), rather, it is destroyed. “Ate of intemperance” is neither a simile (C) nor a hyperbole (D).


27. B. The broomstick starts life as a flourishing tree, but after man uses it up, he throws it away or burns it. Choices C and E contradict the passage. Nature does not triumph over man’s evil tendencies, and man does not fear nature, but rather destroys it. The evil inherent in man’s soul (D) is not addressed.

28. C. The sentence is not pedantic (overly scholarly). All of the remaining answer choices can be found in this sentence.


30. D. Swift never suggests that man accomplishes anything magnificent; obviously, a broomstick can’t claim such an accomplishment.

31. A. “Man” is the antecedent: “man” is a reasoning vegetable to this author.

32. C. No oxymorons (the juxtaposition of two contradictory terms) appear. All the other literary devices are used.

33. B. Man pretends to solve the problems of the world but only makes them worse. Choice A is inaccurate—the broomstick represents decline, not thriving. Choice C is also inaccurate; the broomstick is a metaphor for man, not society. There is no evidence for Choice D; nature doesn’t exert control in this author’s world, man does. E is obviously incorrect: The broomstick is an analogy for man’s physical state, not his intellectual state.

34. E. It is only man’s presentation that allows him to believe that he can correct abuses; in fact, he “raises a mighty dust where there was none before.”

35. C. Swift is cynical toward mankind and all of man’s works, believing that mankind is motivated wholly by self-interest and therefore not to be trusted. This author takes a strong position, not a neutral one (A), and while he may be condescending, the condescension is directed toward man, not nature (B). “Bellicose” (D) means quarrelsome and warlike, and is too strong a term to accurately describe the tone here.
49. A. In the quest for the ideal, the grasshopper is created out of wire, cardboard, and paint, ironically becoming in the process a lesser thing because it does not resemble reality. Even if true (and there is no evidence that they are), choices B and C are not ironic. Common sense tells us that everyone can tell a cardboard grasshopper from a real one (D), and the passage suggests that the cardboard grasshopper has, indeed, been created (E).

50. C. In lines 65–78, Howells claims that the natural, simple grasshopper will eventually be recognized. The remaining choices are types of grasshoppers that he hopes will disappear as the natural one emerges.

51. E. Howells urges his readers to read widely from all literary periods and to reach an individual interpretation that is not based on some pedantic notion. Conversely, he feels that it is a mistake to read only classical literature.

52. B. Howell’s satire makes fun of those who believe that they can create an idealized copy of nature when, obviously, nature’s product is alive, real, and superior. It is also humorous to think of this silly cardboard grasshopper as realistic imitation of life. The other answer choices are either stated too strongly or not evident in the passage.

53. A. The author believes that one should use simplicity, naturalness, and honesty in art and in its appreciation. The remaining answers involve attitudes that Howells criticizes.

54. A. Although the artist creates an idealized version of the grasshopper and the scientist’s description (version) of the grasshopper will be based on reality, both of their creations remain artificial, both representations rather than reality. It is true that Howells presents the scientist’s creation as preferable because it approaches reality more closely, but the fact remains that neither creation is itself reality. There is no evidence in the passage for the remaining answer choices.

55. C. A motif is a conventional or recurring element in a narrative, a device not found in the passage. The remaining devices are present. Some examples: Irony: the grasshopper analogy (while the artist professes that the cardboard grasshopper is to be preferred to the real, Howells would have the reader understand that the opposite is true). Metaphor: “The seeds of death” (line 24). Allusion: to Shakespeare, Thackeray, Hawthorne, and others. Analogy: extended analogy in the grasshopper segment.