



Reading Test Answer Explanations

Question 1

The main purpose of the passage is to

- (A) describe a main character and a significant change in her life.
- (B) provide an overview of a family and a nearby neighbor.
- (C) discuss some regrettable personality flaws in a main character.
- (D) explain the relationship between a main character and her father.

Item Difficulty: Easy

Content: Rhetoric / Analyzing purpose

Best Answer: A

Choice A is the best answer. Emma Woodhouse's life and family are discussed, including the marriage of her governess Miss Taylor who then moves out of Emma's home. In line 74, Emma wonders how she is to "bear the change" of Miss Taylor's departure, which indicates its significance.

Choices B and D are incorrect because the passage focuses more on Emma than on her family and neighbors, and Emma's relationship with her father is a relatively minor consideration. Choice C is also incorrect because Emma is characterized as handsome and clever with a happy disposition, and her arrogance is only briefly mentioned.

Question 2

Which choice best summarizes the first two paragraphs of the passage (lines 1-14)?

- (A) Even though a character loses a parent at an early age, she is happily raised in a loving home.
- (B) An affectionate governess helps a character to overcome the loss of her mother, despite the indifference of her father.
- (C) Largely as a result of her father's wealth and affection, a character leads a contented life.
- (D) A character has a generally comfortable and fulfilling life, but then she must recover from losing her mother.

Item Difficulty: Hard

Content: Information and Ideas / Summarizing

Best Answer: A

Choice A is the best answer. The passage indicates that Emma's mother died long ago and that Emma barely remembers her. Emma is raised by an affectionate father and governess and is described as a person with a happy disposition.

Choices B, C, and D are incorrect: Emma's father is not described as indifferent, Emma is not described as contented because of her father's wealth, and Emma does not appear to suffer from the loss of her mother.

Question 3

The narrator indicates that the particular nature of Emma's upbringing resulted in her being

- (A) despondent.
- (B) self-satisfied.
- (C) friendless.
- (D) inconsiderate.

Item Difficulty: Medium

Content: Information and Ideas / Reading closely

Best Answer: B

Choice B is the best answer. According to the passage, Emma had "a disposition to think a little too well of herself" (line 30). Thinking a "little too well of herself" means that Emma had an elevated opinion of herself, or that she was self-satisfied.

Choices A, C, and D are incorrect because Emma's relationship with her father and Miss Taylor, the two characters who raised her, did not result in her being despondent, friendless, or inconsiderate.

Question 4

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

- (A) Lines 1-5 ("Emma . . . her")
- (B) Lines 9-14 ("Her . . . affection")
- (C) Lines 28-32 ("The real . . . enjoyments")
- (D) Lines 32-34 ("The danger . . . her")

Item Difficulty: Medium

Content: Information and Ideas / Citing textual evidence

Best Answer: C

Choice C is the best answer. Lines 28-32 state that "The real evils indeed of Emma's situation were the power of having rather too much her own way, and a

disposition to think a little too well of herself; these were the disadvantages which threatened alloy to her many enjoyments." Thinking a "little too well of herself" means that Emma had an elevated opinion of herself, or that she was self-satisfied.

Choices A, B, and D are incorrect because they do not provide the best evidence for Emma being self-satisfied. Choice A describes Emma's positive traits, choice B describes Emma's affectionate relationship with Miss Taylor, and choice D discusses only that Emma's problems were negligible.

Question 5

As used in line 26, "directed" most nearly means

- (A) trained.
- (B) aimed.
- (C) guided.
- (D) addressed.

Item Difficulty: Medium

Content: Information and Ideas / Interpreting words and phrases in context

Best Answer: C

Choice C is the best answer. In lines 25-27, Emma's situation is described as "doing just what she liked; highly esteeming Miss Taylor's judgment, but directed chiefly by her own." In other words, Emma respects Miss Taylor's opinion but makes decisions directed, or guided, primarily by her own opinion.

Choices A, B, and D are incorrect because lines 25-27 emphasize that in "doing what she liked" Emma was directed, or guided, by her own opinion. Emma's opinion is not trained by, aimed at, or addressed by anyone else.

Question 6

As used in line 54, "want" most nearly means

- (A) desire.
- (B) lack.
- (C) requirement.
- (D) request.

Item Difficulty: Hard

Content: Information and Ideas / Interpreting words and phrases in context

Best Answer: B

Choice B is the best answer. Lines 53-55 describe how Emma felt a loss after Miss Taylor married and moved out of Emma's home: "but it was a black morning's work for her. The want of Miss Taylor would be felt every hour of every day." In this context, "want" means "lack."

Choices A, C, and D are incorrect because in this context "want" does not mean desire, requirement, or request.

Question 7

It can most reasonably be inferred that after Miss Taylor married, she had

- (A) less patience with Mr. Woodhouse.
- (B) fewer interactions with Emma.
- (C) more close friends than Emma.
- (D) an increased appreciation for Emma.

Item Difficulty: Easy

Content: Information and Ideas / Reading closely

Best Answer: B

Choice B is the best answer. According to lines 76-81, following Miss Taylor's marriage, "Emma was aware that great must be the difference between a Mrs. Weston only half a mile from them, and a Miss Taylor in the house; and with all her advantages, natural and domestic, she was now in great danger of suffering from intellectual solitude." This implies that since Miss Taylor's marriage, the two characters see each other less often.

Choice A is incorrect because the passage does not mention Miss Taylor's relationship with Mr. Woodhouse. Choices C and D are incorrect because the passage describes how Miss Taylor's marriage might affect Emma but not how the marriage might affect Miss Taylor.

Question 8

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

- (A) Line 37 ("Miss . . . married")
- (B) Lines 47-48 ("The event . . . friend")
- (C) Lines 61-66 ("A large . . . recollection")
- (D) Lines 74-81 ("How . . . solitude")

Item Difficulty: Medium

Content: Information and Ideas / Citing textual evidence

Best Answer: D

Choice D is the best answer because lines 74-81 refer to Emma's new reality of "intellectual solitude" after Miss Taylor moved out of the house.

Choices A, B, and C are incorrect because none of these choices support the idea that Miss Taylor and Emma had fewer interactions following Miss Taylor's marriage. Choice A mentions Emma's "sorrow" towards losing Miss Taylor, choice B introduces how Miss Taylor may benefit from the marriage, and choice C describes Emma's and Miss Taylor's close friendship.

Question 9

Which situation is most similar to the one described in lines 84-92 ("The evil . . . time")?

- (A) A mother and her adult son have distinct tastes in art and music that result in repeated family arguments.
- (B) The differences between an older and a younger friend are magnified because the younger one is more active and athletic.
- (C) An older and a younger scientist remain close friends despite the fact that the older one's work is published more frequently.
- (D) The age difference between a high school student and a college student becomes a problem even though they enjoy the same diversions.

Item Difficulty: Medium

Content: Information and Ideas / Reading closely

Best Answer: B

Choice B is the best answer. Lines 84-92 describe the fact that though Emma and her father have a loving relationship, Mr. Woodhouse is much older than Emma and in poor health. For these reasons, he did not make a good companion for the spirited, young Emma. Their relationship is most similar to a friendship between an older and younger person that is negatively affected by the fact one is more lively and active than the other.

Choice A is incorrect because Emma and her father did not have regular arguments. Choice C is incorrect because the relationship between Emma and Mr. Woodhouse was affected by the difference in their age and activity, not any relative successes one or the other might have had. Choice D is incorrect because there is no indication that Emma and her father enjoyed the same activities.