

12. Directions: An introductory sentence for a brief summary of the passage is provided below. Complete the summary by selecting the THREE answer choices that express the most important ideas in the passage. Some sentences do not belong in the summary because they express ideas that are not presented in the passage or are minor ideas in the passage. This question is worth 2 points.

Rachel Carson was a pioneering environmentalist who helped draw public attention to the effects of human activity on wildlife.

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Answer Choices	
Carson at first considered majoring in English and becoming a nonscientific writer.	Carson's three books about ocean ecology increasingly focused on the dangers humans posed to marine life.
The government considered Carson a valued expert and invited her input on ecological policy.	Many scientists doubted Carson's conclusions, causing her to write more books to support them.
The book <i>Silent Spring</i> has had both immediate and long-term influence on environmentalism.	Carson did much of her research by talking to people with everyday experience using pesticides.

Reading Practice Drill #4

National Flags

→ The flag, the most common symbol of national identity in the modern world, is also one of the most ancient. The traditional flag of fabric is still used to mark buildings, ships, and diplomatic caravans by national affiliation, but its visual design makes it adaptable for other roles as well. Most flags have a compact, rectangular shape and distinct visual symbolism. Their strong colors and geometric patterns are usually instantly recognizable even if miniaturized to less than a square centimeter. Images of flags can thus serve as identifying icons on airliners, television broadcasts, and computer displays.

Despite its simplicity, the national flag as we know it today is in no way a primitive artifact. It is, rather, the product of millennia of development in many corners of the globe. Historians believe it had two major ancestors, of which the earlier served to indicate wind direction. ■ Early human societies used very fragile shelters and boats. ■ Their food sources were similarly vulnerable to disruption. ■ Even after various grains had been domesticated, people needed cooperation from the elements to assure good harvests. For all these reasons, they feared and depended on the power of the wind, which could bring warmth from one direction and cold from another.

Ascertaining the direction of the wind using a simple strip of cloth tied to the top of a post was more reliable than earlier methods, such as watching the rising of smoke from a fire or the swaying of field grasses. The association of these prototypes of the flag with divine power was therefore a natural one. ■ Tribes began to fix long cloth flutters to the tops of totems before carrying them into battle, believing that the magical assistance of the wind would be added to the blessings of the gods and ancestors represented by the totem itself.

→ These flutters may seem like close kin of our present-day flags, but the path through history from one to the other wanders through thousands of years and over several continents. The first known flag of a nation or ruler was unmarked: The king who established the Chou Dynasty in China (around 1000 B.C.E.) was reputed to have a white flag carried ahead of him. This practice may have been adopted from Egyptians even further in the past, but it was from China that it spread over trade routes through India, then across Arab lands, and finally to medieval Europe.

In Europe, the Chinese-derived flag met up with the modern flag's second ancestor, the heraldic crest. The flags used in Asia may have been differentiated by color, but they rarely featured emblems or pictures. European nobles of the medieval period had, however, developed a system of crests (symbols or insignias specific to particular families) that were commonly mounted on hard surfaces; shields to be used in battle often displayed them especially prominently.

The production of these crests on flags permitted them to be used as heralds, meaning that they functioned as visual announcements that a member of an important household was present. While crests began to appear on flags as well as shields, the number of prominent families was also increasing. They required an ever greater number of combinations of stripes, crosses, flowers, and mythical animals to distinguish themselves. These survived as the basic components of flag design when small regional kingdoms were later combined into larger nation-states. They remain such for many European countries today.

Some nations, particularly those whose colors and emblems date back several hundred years, have different flags for different official uses. For example, the flag of Poland is a simple rectangle with a white upper half and red lower half. The colors themselves have been associated with Polish nationalism since the 1700s. They originated as the colors of the Piast family, which during its rule displayed a crest bearing a white eagle on a red field. Homage is paid to the Piast Dynasty in the Polish ensign, the flag officially used at sea. Unlike the familiar plain flag flown on land, the ensign has a red shield with a white eagle centered on its upper white stripe.

1. Paragraph 1 of the passage describes the design of the typical flag as
- (A) unfamiliar to people from other countries
 - (B) likely to change as technology improves
 - (C) suited to many different uses
 - (D) older than the country it represents

Paragraph 1 is marked with an arrow [→]

2. The word *miniaturized* in the passage is closest in meaning to
- (A) publicized
 - (B) colored
 - (C) made brighter
 - (D) made smaller

3. The word *primitive* in the passage is closest in meaning to
- (A) ancient
 - (B) unsophisticated
 - (C) identifiable
 - (D) replaceable

4. The word *they* in the passage refers to
- (A) grains
 - (B) people
 - (C) elements
 - (D) harvests
5. The earliest ancestors of the flag were associated with divine power because

- (A) they were flown as high in the sky as people could reach
- (B) they were woven from valuable field grasses
- (C) they moved with the wind
- (D) tribes that flew them always won battles

6. The word *fix* in the passage is closest in meaning to

- (A) create
- (B) respect
- (C) attach
- (D) blow

7. According to paragraph 4 of the passage, the first known national flag in history

- (A) was not carried into battle
- (B) is still used in China today
- (C) was copied by the Egyptians
- (D) was not colored or patterned

Paragraph 4 is marked with an arrow [→]

8. As discussed in the passage, a crest is

- (A) the most important member of a household
- (B) the color of a particular flag
- (C) the symbol of a particular family
- (D) a European noble

9. According to paragraph 6 of the passage, the number of flag designs increased because

- (A) fewer shields were being made for battle
- (B) nation-states were becoming larger
- (C) artists had greater freedom in creating flags
- (D) more families wanted their own symbols

Paragraph 6 is marked with an arrow [→]

10. The word *them* in the passage refers to

- (A) crests
- (B) families
- (C) hard surfaces
- (D) shields

11. The word components in the passage is closest in meaning to
- (A) styles
 - (B) makers
 - (C) countries
 - (D) parts

12. The two flags of Poland mentioned in the passage differ in that
- (A) they do not use the same colors
 - (B) they originally represented different families
 - (C) only one is used officially
 - (D) one does not have a crest

13. Look at the four squares [■] that indicate where the following sentences could be added to the passage.

Therefore, strong winds could easily tear roofs from houses or cause high waves that imperiled travelers.

Where would the sentence best fit?

Click on a square [■] to add the sentence to the passage.

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There were many historical steps in the evolution of the national flag as it's known today.

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Answer Choices	
A Chinese king's practice of having a flag carried ahead of him spread across Asia to Europe.	Ancient tribes respected the power of the wind and began to carry totem poles with flutters for good luck in battle.
Many countries have followed Poland's example and used an eagle on their flags to symbolize strength and power.	Heraldic crests and colors combined with a standard rectangular shape to make a symbol with many uses.
Early humans lived lives that were vulnerable to disruption by natural forces.	Some flags used in Asian countries may have been colored in distinct ways.