

The Test of Critical Thinking

Student Instructions

Today, you are going to take a test called *The Test of Critical Thinking*. How well you do on this test will not affect your grade in this class.

During the next 45 minutes, you will read some short stories. After you read each story carefully, you will answer some questions. Think carefully about each possible answer and choose the best one. You will mark all of your answers on the answer sheet. **Please do not place any marks in the test booklet.** Some questions ask you about what happened in the stories and some ask you what *might* happen.

The stories and questions are like the sample question that we will do together.

Let's look at the example on the next page.



GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE

SAMPLE

Nathan and Sean were in the same math class. Their teacher returned the tests she had graded. When they saw their grades, Nathan smiled, but Sean looked unhappy. The teacher said that many students had received low grades, and she hoped they would study more for the next test.

Read each question and mark the BEST answer on the answer sheet.

S-1 Based on this story, what is MOST LIKELY to be true?

- a. Nathan received a better grade on the test than Sean did.
- b. Nathan usually receives better grades than Sean in math.
- c. Sean had expected to do better on the test than he did.
- d. Sean did not do as well on the test as he would have liked.

S-2 What does the teacher believe?

- a. Studying helps students do well on math tests.
- b. Many students did not study for the test.
- c. None of the students studied enough for the test.
- d. Students cannot do well in math without studying.



Explanation of answers for sample story

S-1 Based on this story, what is MOST LIKELY to be true?

A. Nathan received a better grade on the test than Sean did. This answer is INCORRECT.

Nathan seemed happier with his grade than Sean did, but we do not know who actually received a higher grade. If Nathan usually receives C's, he might have received a B and been very happy. If Sean usually receives A's, he might be unhappy with an A-minus.

B. Nathan usually receives better grades than Sean in math. This answer is INCORRECT.

We cannot tell from the story what grades these two students usually receive.

C. Sean had expected to do better on the test than he did. This answer is INCORRECT. We know Sean seems to be unhappy about his grade, but we do not know if he expected a better grade. Even if Sean expected to do badly on the test, he might still have been unhappy with a low grade.

D. Sean did not do as well on the test as he would have liked. This is the CORRECT answer.

Sean looked unhappy when he saw his test grade, so we can conclude that he most likely did not do as well as he would have liked.

S-2. What does the teacher believe?

A. Studying helps students do well on math tests. This is the CORRECT answer. The teacher said that many students had not done well, and she hoped they would study more for the next test. We can conclude from this statement that the teacher believes studying helps students do well on math tests.

B. Many students did not study for the test. This answer is INCORRECT. The teacher's statement suggests that she believes many students did not study *enough*, but not that they did not study *at all*.

C. None of the students studied enough for the test. This answer is INCORRECT. The teacher's statement suggests that she hopes the students who had not done well should study more. She did not say the students who had done well needed to study more.

D. Students cannot do well in math without studying. This answer is INCORRECT. The teacher's statement suggests that she believes studying more would help the students who did not do well to do better on the next test. But she may also believe that some students can do well in math without studying.



Read each story and the questions that go with it carefully. Mark the best answer to each question on your answer sheet. Please do not place any marks in the test booklet.

STORY 1

Natalie and Robert are in the same gym class. Natalie was the fastest runner in the class. Robert did the most pull-ups. Each student claimed to be the best athlete in the class. David said neither one could be the best because both students are short, and tall people are usually better athletes. After a lot of talking, the students agreed to let their friend Simon decide who is the best.

1. Simon knew Natalie won second place in the pull-up contest, and Robert was fourth in running. Robert is taller than Natalie. Why did Simon **MOST LIKELY** choose Natalie as best athlete?
 - a. Overall, Natalie did better than Robert.
 - b. Simon likes Natalie better than Robert.
 - c. Robert is too slow to be the best athlete.
 - d. Overall, Simon thinks short people are better athletes.



GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE

STORY 1 cont.

2. What are Natalie and Robert disagreeing about?
 - a. Is it better to be a tall or short athlete?
 - b. Who should judge the best athlete?
 - c. Can girls be better athletes than boys?
 - d. What makes someone the best athlete?

3. What is LEAST likely to be true in this story?
 - a. Natalie and Robert think short people are usually good athletes.
 - b. Natalie and Robert think being the best athlete is important.
 - c. Natalie and Robert think Simon will make a fair decision.
 - d. Natalie and Robert think David is not a good judge of athletes.



GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE

STORY 2

Bill and Lee went camping with their parents at a local park one weekend. The park was very crowded. On Saturday afternoon, their father asked them to pick up some litter and then to go into the woods to cut branches for cooking hot dogs. The two brothers did as their father asked. As they stepped out of the woods, a park ranger stopped them. He looked at their sticks and asked, “Don’t you know that in the park you should take nothing but pictures and leave nothing but footprints?” The boys were puzzled by what the ranger had said. They told him that their father had asked them to cut the branches for cooking hot dogs. The ranger walked the boys back to their campsite and talked to their father alone. That evening, the ranger joined the family for dinner. Early the next morning, the family packed up and went home.

4. Why were the boys puzzled?
 - a. The boys had only done what they were asked to do.
 - b. The boys had taken only a few branches from the woods.
 - c. The boys did not understand the ranger’s question.
 - d. The boys thought it was okay to cook hot dogs.

5. What is the most likely reason the ranger talked to the father?
 - a. To explain that the boys had cut too many branches
 - b. To explain proper park behavior
 - c. To explain why boys should not be alone in the woods
 - d. To explain why people should take pictures in the woods



GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE

STORY 2 cont.

6. What was the MOST LIKELY reason the family went home the day after the ranger visited?
- a. The ranger had told the family to leave.
 - b. The family had planned to leave that day.
 - c. The ranger had upset the family.
 - d. The family had no more sticks for cooking hot dogs.
7. What did the ranger think when he asked, “Don’t you know that in the park you should take nothing but pictures and leave nothing but footprints”?
- a. He thought the boys should have known how to behave in the park.
 - b. He thought the boys should have been taking pictures.
 - c. He thought the boys were going to make a fire in the woods.
 - d. He thought the boys were afraid of getting in trouble.



GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE

STORY 2 cont.

8. Why might the ranger tell other children this story?
- a. To teach them to pick up litter in the park.
 - b. To teach them to obey their parents while camping.
 - c. To teach them to protect the trees in the park.
 - d. To teach them to be honest with park rangers.
9. Why did the ranger talk to the boys' father ALONE?
- a. To complain about the boys' behavior
 - b. To tell the father the family had to leave the park
 - c. To find out if the boys were really brothers
 - d. To discuss the situation without embarrassing the father



GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE

STORY 3

Carla was nervous as she stood on the stage before her performance. As she sang, the students in the audience began to laugh. Carla heard the laughing and sang even louder. By the time she had finished her song, almost everyone was laughing. The music stopped, and Carla smiled and bowed. As the curtain closed, Carla's teacher wiped away tears and gave Carla a big hug. Carla was glad her song was finished. When she got home, Carla told her parents that the audience had loved her song.

10. Based on the story, what is **MOST LIKELY** to be true?

- a. Carla's teacher felt sorry for her.
- b. Carla's parents were proud of her.
- c. Carla is a bad singer.
- d. Carla sang a funny song.

11. Based on the story, what **BEST** shows that Carla may have told her parents the truth?

- a. She was nervous about singing.
- b. Her song made the students laugh.
- c. She was glad when her song was over.
- d. Her teacher gave her a big hug after her song.



GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE

STORY 3 cont.

12. Based on the story, how did Carla's teacher feel?
- a. She was proud of Carla.
 - b. She was angry that the students laughed.
 - c. She felt sorry for Carla.
 - d. She was sad that Carla's parents were not there.
13. What is the LEAST LIKELY reason why Carla sang louder?
- a. She wanted the students to be able to hear the song.
 - b. She had reached the most important part of the song.
 - c. She was ignoring the students who were making fun of her.
 - d. She had become less nervous as she sang.
14. Which statement BEST shows that Carla was prepared for her performance?
- a. She kept singing while the students laughed.
 - b. She was glad when she was done.
 - c. She hugged her teacher to thank her.
 - d. She smiled and bowed when she was done.

STORY 4

Paco and his mother were shopping at the mall. Paco wanted a new jeans jacket like the one many of the popular kids in his class were wearing. He asked his mother to buy one for him. She said she could not afford one right then because she needed to buy a new jacket for herself. She wanted a nice jacket to wear to a meeting about a new job. Paco told her that all his friends had jeans jackets. He was afraid that if he did not get one, no one would like him. His mother listened to Paco, but she disagreed with him. She bought the jacket for her meeting. Paco said, “You care more about your new job than about me.”

15. What did Paco and his mother both believe?

- a. Wearing the wrong clothes can make people dislike you.
- b. It is more important for adults to look good than children.
- c. What you wear affects what others think of you.
- d. Women’s jackets cost more than boys’ jackets.

16. Based on the story, what did Paco’s mother think?

- a. Her meeting was more important than Paco’s friendships.
- b. She needed a new jacket more than Paco did.
- c. A cheaper jeans jacket would be better for Paco.
- d. Paco’s friends should care more about him than about his clothes.

GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE 

STORY 4 cont.

17. IF all the popular kids in Paco's class wear the same type of jeans jacket, what is MOST LIKELY true?

- a. The jacket they wear is the best type of jeans jacket.
- b. Popular kids like the jeans jacket.
- c. Wearing the jeans jacket makes kids popular.
- d. Paco will be unpopular unless he has the jeans jacket.

GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE 

STORY 5

Tanya works at a large summer camp. She is a counselor for ten campers who share a cabin. Many of Tanya's campers were often late for dinner. Tanya told the campers she would take them to a movie if everyone came to dinner on time for a whole week. All of Tanya's campers were on time for dinner that week. Tanya took them to a movie. Tanya told Mrs. Greene, the camp owner, how well the reward had worked. Mrs. Greene disagreed. She reminded Tanya that she had made a new rule for the whole camp last week. The new rule said anyone late for dinner would not get dessert. Mrs. Greene said her new rule had caused Tanya's campers to come to dinner on time. Tanya did not argue with Mrs. Greene. But, she was sure that her reward, not the new rule, had gotten her campers to come to dinner on time.

18. What caused Tanya's campers to come to dinner on time?

- a. Mrs. Greene's rule
- b. Tanya's reward
- c. Neither the rule nor the reward
- d. There is no way to know

19. What do Tanya and Mrs. Greene each believe?

- a. Punishments work better than rewards.
- b. Her own action changed the campers' behavior.
- c. Campers who are late for dinner are rude.
- d. Campers who are on time for dinner should be rewarded.

GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE 

STORY 5 cont.

20. What is the main question in this story?

- a. Does reward work better than punishment?
- b. Does Tanya know more about campers' behavior than Mrs. Greene?
- c. What can be done to make campers come to dinner on time?
- d. Why did Tanya's campers come to dinner on time?

21. What would Tanya MOST LIKELY tell her campers if they stopped making their beds?

- a. They should behave better.
- b. She would tell Mrs. Greene about their behavior.
- c. She would give them popcorn if they made their beds.
- d. She would send them to bed early if they did not make their beds.

GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE 

STORY 6

Juan took apart an old wooden clock, piece by piece. Juan's sister, Maria, was happy to sit and watch him. After taking apart the old clock, Juan looked closely at each piece. He wiped each wheel and gear with an oily cloth. He put all of the pieces on a table. Juan rubbed his hands together and looked at his watch with concern. He worked to put all of the small pieces back together. Much later, when Juan looked out the window, he saw his parents get out of their car. He looked at his watch and smiled.

22. Why did Juan look at his watch with concern?

- a. He wasn't sure his watch was working.
- b. He was afraid his parents would be angry.
- c. He hoped to finish before his parents arrived.
- d. He found the job was taking longer than he had hoped.

23. Why did Juan take the clock apart?

- a. He wanted to fix a broken part.
- b. He wanted to clean the clock.
- c. He wanted to see inside the clock.
- d. He wanted to see how clocks work.

GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE 

STORY 6 cont.

24. Why did Juan look at his watch and smile?

- a. He had finished the clock in time.
- b. His watch was working well.
- c. His parents had arrived on time.
- d. He had a surprise for his parents.

25. What would MOST LIKELY have happened if Juan had not finished the clock before his parents arrived?

- a. Maria would have been upset.
- b. Maria would have had to explain everything.
- c. Juan's parents would have been angry.
- d. Juan would have been disappointed.

GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE 

STORY 6 cont.

26. What BEST shows that Juan is careful?

- a. He checked to see how long his work was taking.
- b. He asked his sister to watch him work.
- c. He checked every part of the clock.
- d. He was proud when he finished the clock.

27. IF you expect Juan to be punished if his parents see him with the clock, what are you assuming?

- a. Juan was supposed to have been watching Maria.
- b. Juan was supposed to fix the clock before his parents arrived.
- c. Maria and Juan were not supposed to make a mess.
- d. Juan was not supposed to touch the clock without permission.

GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE 

STORY 7

Mr. Kelso's students were making paper models of the sun and planets to put on the classroom wall. They made Earth the size of a quarter and colored it blue and green. The students wanted the sun and the other planets to be just the right size compared to Earth. Mars was red and smaller than Earth. The bright yellow sun had to be nearly nine feet tall! Several students suggested that their planets and sun should be the right distance from each other, just as they are in space. One student, André, said that the planets and the sun could not fit in the same classroom. The other students didn't believe André. He offered to explain. The students looked at Mr. Kelso, who smiled and nodded. The students decided to make the sun and planets smaller.

28. Why did André say the sun and planets would not fit in the same classroom?

- a. He wanted to make Mr. Kelso smile.
- b. He wanted to start an argument.
- c. He wanted to help the other students.
- d. He wanted the sun to be smaller.

29. What extra information did André use to make his conclusion?

- a. The sizes of all nine planets.
- b. The distance between the planets and the sun in space.
- c. The distance between Mars and Earth in space.
- d. The size of the sun.

GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE 

STORY 7 cont.

30. What is the most likely reason Mr. Kelso smiled and nodded?

- a. He thought it was funny that he had tricked the class.
- b. He was happy a student understood the problem.
- c. He thought that André was being funny.
- d. He was happy that the class made the planets smaller.

31. Why did the students' suggestion create a problem?

- a. The nine-foot sun was too large to fit on the classroom wall.
- b. Mr. Kelso's directions were not clear when the project started.
- c. Earth and Mars were too small to be seen clearly on the classroom wall.
- d. The size of the model planets affected how far apart they should be placed.

32. Why did the students decide to make the sun and planets smaller?

- a. The students wanted to get a good grade.
- b. The students did not believe André.
- c. The students could not do the project as planned.
- d. The students thought Mr. Kelso smiled because they were right.

GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE 

STORY 8

John's friend Paul usually talks and laughs a lot during lunch. On Tuesday, Paul was very quiet during lunch. On the way to class, John asked Paul if he was upset with him, and Paul said, "No." Then John asked Paul what was wrong, and Paul said, "Nothing is wrong." John thought Paul might be angry because John had not chosen him for his basketball team in gym class on Friday. John decided that if Paul was not going to talk to him, he would not talk to Paul either.

33. Based on the story, what is **MOST LIKELY** John's point of view?

- a. He thinks Paul should not be upset about gym class.
- b. He feels sad that Paul is not talking as much as usual.
- c. He thinks something he did caused Paul to be quiet.
- d. He feels bad about not choosing Paul for his team.

34. What is the main question in this story?

- a. Why is Paul angry with John?
- b. Why was Paul quiet during lunch?
- c. Why didn't John choose Paul for his team?
- d. When will Paul talk to John again?



GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE

STORY 8 cont.

35. What new information would BEST show that John was wrong about why Paul was quiet?

- a. Paul was quiet during lunch on Monday.
- b. Paul and John have been best friends for a long time.
- c. Paul got a bad grade on a math test before lunch.
- d. Paul does not like to play basketball.



GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE

STORY 9

Karen and Mollie had planned to go to a movie Saturday evening. Mollie called Karen Saturday morning. She told Karen her parents would not allow her to go to the movie after all. When Karen called her friend later that evening, she was told Mollie had gone to a party. Karen was angry because her friend had gone to a party instead of a movie with her. She decided that she could not be friends with someone who did not tell the truth.

36. After talking with Mollie Saturday morning, what did Karen think Mollie would be doing that evening?

- a. Mollie would be going out with her parents.
- b. Mollie would be going to a party.
- c. Mollie would be watching TV with a friend.
- d. Mollie would be staying home.

37. What is most likely to happen next in the story?

- a. Karen will decide to end her friendship with Mollie.
- b. Mollie will call Karen to invite her to a movie.
- c. Mollie will decide to end her friendship with Karen.
- d. Karen will call Mollie to invite her to a movie.

GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE 

STORY 9 cont.

38. What would show that Karen's thoughts about Mollie were unfair?

- a. Mollie had not known that her parents wanted her to go to a party.
- b. Mollie had changed her mind about going out with Karen.
- c. Mollie had tried to call Karen Friday night to change their plans.
- d. Mollie had never lied to Karen in the past.

39. What BEST shows that the story is told from Karen's point of view?

- a. Karen and Mollie planned to go to a movie together.
- b. Mollie called Saturday morning to tell Karen she could not go to the movie.
- c. Karen called Mollie and learned that Mollie was not home.
- d. Mollie went to a party instead of going to a movie with Karen.

GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE 

STORY 9 cont.

40. What was the MOST LIKELY reason Karen called Mollie?

- a. To ask Mollie to go to a movie.
- b. To tell Mollie why she was angry.
- c. To talk to Mollie about her day.
- d. To ask Mollie if she enjoyed the party.

41. Why is it likely that Karen was NOT angry with Mollie Saturday morning?

- a. Sometimes parents change children's plans.
- b. Sometimes parties are more fun than movies.
- c. Sometimes friends don't tell the truth.
- d. Sometimes friends change their minds.

GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE 

STORY 10

Lisa planted lettuce in her back yard. One morning, the leaves of the plants were smaller than they had been the day before. The edges of the leaves were ragged. Lisa concluded that her neighbor's pet rabbit had been eating her lettuce. Her neighbor said that his rabbit had gotten out of its cage the night before. But, he said, the rabbit could not have eaten Lisa's lettuce because the rabbit was trained to eat only rabbit food.

42. Based on the story, what **MUST** be true?

- a. Some animal ate Lisa's lettuce.
- b. Lisa's lettuce was damaged before the rabbit got out.
- c. Something happened to Lisa's lettuce the night the rabbit got out.
- d. The lettuce leaves will grow back if the rabbit stays in its cage.

43. What new information would **BEST** show that the rabbit ate the lettuce?

- a. A neighbor with a fence around her garden has perfect lettuce.
- b. Lisa's cousin has a rabbit that loves lettuce and rabbit food.
- c. Lisa's neighbor has been wrong about his rabbit in the past.
- d. Lisa finds ragged edges on her lettuce after the rabbit gets loose again.



GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE

STORY 10 cont.

44. Based on the story, what does the neighbor believe about his rabbit?

- a. His rabbit is smarter than other rabbits.
- b. His rabbit does not like to eat lettuce.
- c. His rabbit does what it has been trained to do.
- d. His rabbit will not get out of its cage again.

45. What new information, IF TRUE, would make it IMPOSSIBLE for the rabbit to have eaten Lisa's lettuce?

- a. Rabbits do not eat vegetables.
- b. Rabbits can be trained to eat only rabbit food.
- c. Rabbits do not go very far when they get loose.
- d. Rabbits cannot eat lettuce when it is covered up.

