

## PRACTICE WORK and STUDY GUIDE FOR ENGLISH 9 SPRING FINAL

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### Comprehension and Analysis

*Read the selection and answer the questions that follow. Note that each paragraph is numbered.*

"I Am the Population Problem" by Lisa Hymas

1. Population growth tends to get blamed on other people: Africans and Asians who have "more kids than they can feed," immigrants in our own country with their "large families," even single mothers in the "inner city."

2. But actually the population problem is all about me: white, middle-class, American me. Steer the blame right over here.

3. Well-meaning people have told me that I'm "just the sort of person who should have kids." **Au contraire.** I'm just the sort of person who should not have kids.

4. Population isn't just about counting heads. The impact of humanity on the environment is not determined solely by how many of us are around, but by how much stuff we use and how much room we take up. And as a financially comfortable American, I use a lot of stuff and take up a lot of room.

5. My **carbon footprint** is more than 200 times bigger than an average Ethiopian's, and more than 12 times bigger than an average Indian's, and twice as big as an average Brit's.

6. When a poor woman in Uganda has another child -- too often because she lacks access to family-planning services, economic opportunity, or self-determination -- she might dampen her family's prospects for climbing out of poverty or add to her community's challenges in providing everyone with clean water and safe food, but she certainly isn't placing a big burden on the global environment.

7. When someone like me has a child, watch out, world! Gear, gadgets, gewgaws, bigger house, bigger car, oil from the Middle East, coal from Colombia, coltan from the Congo, rare earths from China, pesticide-laden cotton from Egypt, genetically modified soy from Brazil. And then, when that child has children, wash, rinse, and repeat (in hot water, of course). Without even trying, we Americans slurp up resources from every corner of the globe and then spit 99 percent of them back out again as pollution.

8. **Conscientious** people try to limit that consumption, of course. I'm one of them. I get around largely by bus and on foot, eat low on the food chain, buy used rather than new, keep the heat low, rein in my gadget lust. But even putting aside my remaining carbon sins (see: flying), the fact is that just by virtue of living in America, enjoying some small portion of its massive material infrastructure, my carbon footprint is at unsustainable levels.

9. Far and away the biggest contribution I can make to a cleaner environment is to not bring any mini-mes into the world. A 2009 study by statisticians at Oregon State University found that the climate impact of having one fewer child in America is almost 20 times greater than the impact of adopting a series of eco-friendly practices for your entire lifetime, things like driving a high-mileage car, recycling, and using efficient appliances and CFLs.

10. And so, for environmental as well as personal reasons, I've decided not to have children. I call myself a GINK: green inclinations, no kids.

11. Most people won't make the same decision, of course, and I don't fault them for that. Everyone has different circumstances and values, and environmental issues are not the only ones worth considering. I believe in choice, and that means supporting choices different from mine.

12. But it needs to become easier for people to make the same decision I have, if they are so inclined.

13. Here in the U.S., the Pill has been available for more than 50 years. It's now almost universally accepted that women will use birth control to delay, space out, or limit childbearing. But there's not so much acceptance for using birth control to completely skip childbearing. At some point, you're expected to grow up, pair up, put the Pill off to the

side, and produce a couple of kids. Deviate from this scenario and you'll get weird looks and face awkward conversations with family members, friends, coworkers, and complete strangers.

<sup>14.</sup> One 30-something woman I know who works for a reproductive-health NGO says that her colleagues pester her about her decision not to have children, telling her she needs to get started on that family or she'll regret it. And these are people whose careers are dedicated to making birth control and reproductive health care available to all women! Pro-natal bias runs deep.

<sup>15.</sup> Many women in the U.S. have found that it's difficult, if not impossible, to find a doctor who will perform a tubal ligation if the woman has not already had children (and sometimes even if she has). Doctors warn that sterilization is an irreversible, life-altering decision. But having a child is an irreversible, life-altering decision, and you don't find doctors warning women away from that. The broadly held **prejudice**, in the medical profession and much of the rest of society, is that becoming a parent is the right and inevitable choice.

<sup>16.</sup> Over recent years and decades, it's become more acceptable for mixed-race couples to have children, and single women, and gay couples, and women over the age of 40, and that's all good. Acceptance has been slower to come for the decision not to have children. There's now a fledgling childfree movement, but some who are part of it say they still feel like they're violating a taboo.

<sup>17.</sup> Real reproductive freedom has to include social acceptance of the decision not to reproduce. When we achieve that, it will mean less pressure on women and men who don't feel called to become parents. It will mean less of a stigma on people who may have wanted to become parents but didn't get the chance. It will mean a wider array of options for people who haven't decided yet. It will mean fewer children born to ambivalent or unhappy parents, getting us closer to the goal of "every child a wanted child."

<sup>18.</sup> Finally, it will mean fewer Americans making a mess of the planet, and a little more breathing room for those of us who are already here or on the way.

<sup>19.</sup> I recognize that I am the population problem. I'm trying to be part of the solution. Let's make it easier for others to join me.

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1. In paragraph 3, the phrase ***au contraire*** most nearly means
    - a. "they are wrong"
    - b. "on the contrary"
    - c. "people are too controlling"
    - d. "regrettably"
  2. Which of the following best expresses the **main idea** of the entire selection?
    - a. People unfairly judge women who choose not to have children.
    - b. Because Americans contribute disproportionately to the problems this world faces, they must put forth greater efforts to reduce the negative impacts they make on the world, including being intentional about their reproductive choices.
    - c. Equality demands that women be equally revered and respected whatever their reproductive choices.
    - d. Reproductive responsibility is an issue that not only applies to people in countries known for population problems, but it must also strive to create social respect for the choices of those who *choose* not to have children.
  3. Paragraph 7 consists of
    - a. facts only
    - b. facts and opinions
    - c. opinions only
    - d. none of the above

4. In paragraph 8, what does the word **conscientious** most nearly mean?
  - a. careful, reliable, responsible
  - b. awake, alert, aware
  - c. educated, skilled, accomplished
  
5. In paragraph 15, what does the word **prejudice** most nearly mean?
  - a. bias, judgment, leaning
  - b. premonition, foreshadowing
  - c. expertise, authority, opinion
  - d. responsibility, obligation
  
6. Rather than mere numbers on the planet, what does the author say is the real impact humans have on the world?
  - a. The attitudes and customs that make us apathetic to global issues.
  - b. Our general disregard for any consequences that impact others instead of ourselves.
  - c. The amount of stuff we have and the amount of room we take up.
  - d. Over-population.
  
7. Which of the following best describes the author's **tone** in this selection?
  - a. admiring
  - b. amused
  - c. sarcastic
  - d. sincere
  
8. Why does the author feel the responsibility for population growth lies on her?
  - a. Because Americans are voracious, greedy, and selfish consumers.
  - b. Because as consumers, when Americans have children, our children become consumers, creating an ever-increasing carbon footprint.
  - c. Because she does not want children.
  - d. Because all of her friends have children and pressure her to have children.
  
9. We can infer from paragraph 13 that
  - a. the author judges people who have more than one child.
  - b. the author would support restrictions on the number of children a couple is allowed to have.
  - c. the author would support an educational program advocating reproductive responsibility.
  - d. the author has experienced pressure to have her own children.
  
10. The author's purpose in this selection is to
  - a. entertain readers with the absurd idea that Americans are the real contributors to population growth.
  - b. inform readers and challenge them to think more deeply and reflectively about the impacts our choices have on the rest of the world and to push readers to make those choices more responsibly.
  - c. persuade women to see that reproductive freedom means not having children.
  - d. debate the causes of population growth.
  
11. Which sentence in paragraph 17 is the topic sentence?
  - a. The first sentence
  - b. The second sentence
  - c. The third sentence

d. The fourth sentence

12. Which of the following includes **evidence** that supports the selection's main idea?

- a. "The broadly held prejudice, in the medical profession and much of the rest of society, is that becoming a parent is the right and inevitable choice."
- b. "My carbon footprint is more than 200 times bigger than an average Ethiopian's, and more than 12 times bigger than an average Indian's, and twice as big as an average Brit's."
- c. "I am the population problem."
- d. "A 2009 study by statisticians at Oregon State University found that the climate impact of having one fewer child in America is almost 20 times greater than the impact of adopting a series of eco-friendly practices for your entire lifetime, things like driving a high-mileage car, recycling, and using efficient appliances and CFLs."
- e. A and B only
- f. B and D only
- g. C and D only
- h. All of the selections include evidence.

13. Which of the following paragraphs includes an **anecdote**?

- a. Paragraph 8
- b. Paragraph 11
- c. Paragraph 14
- d. Paragraph 17

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## Grammar & Conventions

Write a sentence or two that demonstrates how to correctly do each of the following:

1. Use a comma-conjunction to join two independent clauses.

a. Independent clause, FANBOYS independent clause.

b. \_\_\_\_\_

2. Use a colon to join two independent clauses.

a. Independent clause that introduces or builds up: Second independent clause that explains the first.

b. \_\_\_\_\_

3. Use a semi-colon to join to independent clauses and to that they relate.

a. Independent clause; independent clause that is closely related to the first.

b. \_\_\_\_\_

4. Use commas to punctuate a series, or list.

a. I like raspberries, strawberries, and blueberries.

b. \_\_\_\_\_

What is an independent clause? a group of words that include a subject and a verb and a complete idea and that can stand alone as a sentence.

What is a dependent clause? a group of words that include a subject and a verb but that cannot stand alone as a sentence. Ex. While I was watching **Grammar & Punctuation**

Choose the selection that corrects the error made in the underlined portion of the sentence.

- <sup>1</sup> Many companies make sugar-free soft drinks, which are flavored by synthetic chemicals the drinks usually contain only one or two calories per serving.
- Many companies make sugar-free soft drinks. Which are flavored by synthetic chemicals. The drinks usually contain only one or two calories per serving.
  - Many companies make sugar-free soft drinks, which are flavored by synthetic chemicals, the drinks usually contain only one or two calories per serving.
  - Many companies, make sugar-free soft drinks, which are flavored by sunthetic chemicals: The drinks usually contain only one or two calories per serving.
  - Many companies make sugar-free soft drinks, which are flavored by synthetic chemicals. The drinks usually contain only one or two calories per serving.
- <sup>2</sup> Mr. Leyland played the viola professionally for many years and he now conducts a community orchestra.
- Mr. Leyland played the viola professionally for many years, and he now conducts a community orchestra.
  - Mr. Leyland played the viola professionally for many years; and he now conducts a community orchestra.
  - Mr. Leyland played the viola professionally for many years: and he now conducts a community orchestra.
  - No error.
- <sup>3</sup> The crab grass was flourishing but the rest of the lawn, unfortunately, was dying.
- The crab grass was flourishing; but the rest of the lawn, unfortunately, was dying.
  - The crab grass was flourishing: but the rest of the lawn, unfortunately, was dying.
  - The crab grass was flourishing, but the rest of the lawn, unfortunately, was dying.
  - No error

*Choose the best selection for each.*

- <sup>4</sup> Choose the sentence that is punctuated correctly.
- The top five Spring Break activities for high school students are the following travelling to someplace warm, going to parties, hanging out with friends, go to the movies, and play video games.
  - The top five Spring Break activities for high school students are: travel to someplace warm, going to parties, hang out with friends, going to the movies, and playing video games.
  - The top five Spring Break activities for high school students are as follows: travelling to someplace warm, going to parties, hanging out with friends, going to the movies, and playing video games.
  - The top five Spring Break activities for high school students: travelling to someplace warm, going to parties, hanging out with friends, going to the movies, and playing video games.
- <sup>5</sup> Choose the sentence that is punctuated correctly.
- You will need to bring to the party: some food, something to drink, and a movie.
  - You will need to bring three these things to the party some food, something to drink, and a movie.
  - You will need to bring three these things to the party; some food, something to drink, and a movie.
  - You will need to bring these three things to the party: some food, something to drink, and a movie.
- <sup>6</sup> Choose the sentence that is punctuated correctly.
- I enjoy reading on the beach, novels by Kurt Vonnegut are among my favorites.
  - I enjoy reading on the beach: novels by Kurt Vonnegut are among my favorites.
  - I enjoy reading on the beach; novels by Kurt Vonnegut are among my favorites.
  - I enjoy reading on the beach novels by Kurt Vonnegut are among my favorites.

Read the following essay and answer the questions.

### American Hearts by Autumn Grove, Class of 2009

<sup>1</sup> Anytime the name of my country is spoken, emotions are elicited: joy, wrath, pride, sadness, hope...the realm of possibilities is astounding in magnitude. This number is rivaled only by the many varied definitions of what it truly means to belong to such an eclectic, diverse country. Americanism—or patriotism—is a complex concept to think about. What does it mean? Does taking pride in America stem from serving in the armed forces and protecting the citizens from harm? Is an elderly lady active in her church's programs to feed and clothe the homeless a patriot? Can people show their devotion in its entirety throughout the thirty-odd seconds it takes to recite the Pledge of Allegiance? The answer is a resounding yes!

<sup>2</sup> Feeling patriotic is one of the most important responsibilities that Americans should undertake. It can cost next to nothing, but the effects are countless; morale boosting, inspiration to aid others, and hope can spring from the vocalization of the National Anthem. People who love their country are valuable assets to the future.

<sup>3</sup> Charity is a large aspect of the spirit that keeps this country alive. Without all of those elderly church ladies and civic-minded young people alike, what a dark place the world would be! Americans everywhere are keeping patriotism active by helping out those fellow countrymen whom are down on their luck. Operating soup kitchens, helping innocent victims of abuse or natural disasters, and fighting to secure funds used to research debilitating diseases are all acts of selfless charity, and, by extension, heartfelt demonstrations of patriotism in its purest form. Dispensing hope to the hopeless can only incur positive karma.

<sup>4</sup> Risking one's life for the betterment of the nation is one of the most altruistic things a citizen can do, but it's a common misconception that enlisting in the armed forces is the only way to be a true American patriot. Loyalty is the common denominator between an everyman and a soldier. By doing something as simple as reciting the Pledge of Allegiance and respecting the American flag, a person can show their devotion to America. Americanism requires loyalty to be effective; without it, patriotism could not be.

<sup>5</sup> Personally, I believe that tolerance is the third vital part of patriotism. Acceptance and tolerance—and unconditional love and pride—are ideals held in high regard. Tolerance is the basis for this great nation's existence, and without its practice, suffering occurs. When Americans band together to make a change and bring the gift of tolerance to formerly closed-minded people, a beautiful thing occurs. Peace is achievable if tolerance becomes the rule instead of the exception.

<sup>6</sup> While all of the above are examples of proactive patriotism, there is a darker side. Some citizens today are counterproductive to patriotic efforts, whether they realize it or not. Ignoring one's untapped potential is the gravest act of un-Americanism mostly because it seems harmless. Abandoning dreams and letting oneself get caught up in monotony and mediocrity is so easy, but it takes a toll on everybody involved—children, spouses, friends, family, neighbors, even well-wishers. Having goals, or chasing the American dream by striving for success, happiness, and fulfillment is perhaps the most natural—yet strong—act of patriotism of all.

<sup>7</sup> In closing, patriotism is much more than just a fleeting feeling that one should experience on the 4<sup>th</sup> of July. Patriotism is giving oneself to a greater cause for the good of all. It's choosing to accept a person for who they are instead of begging them to become somebody else. Americanism is semblance of love, loyalty, charity, and devotion to humanity on a grand scale.

1. In which paragraph does the author **define** patriotism?
  - a. Paragraph 1
  - b. Paragraph 5
  - c. Paragraph 6
  - d. Paragraph 7
2. The purpose of this essay is to
  - a. to persuade Americans to be better patriots.
  - b. to inform people on how to be good patriots.
  - c. to entertain readers with stories of patriotism.
  - d. to define the most vital elements of being a patriot.
3. In paragraph 1, which of the following writer's tools does the author **not** use?

- a. Example
  - b. Questions
  - c. Synthesis
  - d. Creating context for the topic
4. Valid observations for this essay might include
- a. third person point of view, use of figurative language, five paragraph structure
  - b. definition occurs in pieces throughout essay and wraps up only at the end, strong word choice
  - c. first person point of view, effective use of facts and statistics as evidence
  - d. strong hook at beginning, includes a “what it’s not” definition, second person point of view
5. Which of the following best describes the purpose of paragraph 6?
- a. It provides a context for readers to connect their own bad behaviors to the essay and encourages reflection.
  - b. It concludes the essay with a synthesis of what all this means in the lives of Americans.
  - c. To provide readers with a comparison between what the author’s personal experiences with patriotism are, and therefore creates a more balanced and effective essay.
  - d. It provides final evidence and reasoning to support the definition.

**Vocabulary in context.** Figure out the meaning of the underlined word by looking at the sentence around it—look for and mark synonyms, examples, antonyms, or gist clues. Then select the synonym that best represents the meaning of the word.

1. The police officer was trying to deal with two distraught people at once—a trembling mugging victim and a crying lost child.
  - a. Unhealthy
  - b. Disturbed
  - c. Upset
  - d. Bewildered
2. Circus performers generally dress in ostentatious costumes, with plenty of sequins, feathers, and dazzling trim.
  - a. Inexpensive
  - b. Showy
  - c. Athletic
  - d. Tight
3. In earlier centuries, people looked with fear upon a number of innocuous practices, such as eating tomatoes, taking a bath, and letting a baby kick its legs.
  - a. Dangerous
  - b. Superstitious
  - c. Harmless
  - d. Numerous
4. Unused muscles will begin to atrophy; thus a broken leg is noticeably thinner when the cast is removed, and a patient bedridden for too long will lack the lower-body strength needed to stand.
  - a. Develop
  - b. Strengthen
  - c. Waste away
  - d. Loose fat
5. Some consider terrorism the most heinous crime; others consider treason, torture, or crimes against children the worst evils.
  - a. Dreadful
  - b. Ominous
  - c. Lingering
  - d. Illegal
6. In “The Interlopers, Saki describes the setting of the story as a “narrow strip of precipitous woodland” (135). Which of the following are good synonyms for **precipitous** as it is used in this sentence?
  - a. Moist, luxurious

- b. Obnoxious, spacious
- c. Crowded, gentle
- d. Steep, sheer

7. In "Flowers," Walker writes: "It was the rotted remains of a noose, a bit of shredded plowline, now blending ***benignly*** into the soil." Using gist clues, determine which of the following best defines ***benignly***:

- a. Harmlessly
  - b. Rapidly
  - c. Raucously
  - d. Intrepidly
-