

# NET Test Reading Comprehension

## Practice Questions

Directions: Read the following paragraphs and answer the questions that accompany the paragraphs. Circle the letter of the answer, which you believe most accurately satisfies the requirements of each question. At the end of this reading test is the answer key.

### *Passage One*

#### **A**

The Spider has a bad name: to most of us, she represents an odious, noxious animal, which every one hastens to crush under foot. Against this summary verdict the observer sets the beast's industry, its talent as a weaver, its wiliness in the chase, its tragic nuptials and other characteristics of great interest. Yes, the Spider is well worth studying, apart from any scientific reasons; but she is said to be poisonous and that is her crime and the primary cause of the repugnance wherewith she inspires us. Poisonous, I agree, if by that we understand that the animal is armed with two fangs which cause the immediate death of the little victims which it catches; but there is a wide difference between killing a Midge and harming a man. However immediate in its effects upon the insect entangled in the fatal web, the Spider's poison is not serious for us and causes less inconvenience than a Gnat-bite. That, at least, is what we can safely say as regards the great majority of the Spiders of our regions.

1. What is the main idea of paragraph A?

- A: Spiders are hard workers.
- B: Spiders are not worth studying.
- C: Most people hate spiders.
- D: Spiders have an undeserved bad reputation.

2. Which of the following words describes the author's attitude to spider bites?

- A: terrified
- B: lazy
- C: unafraid
- D: uninformed

3. Which of the following inferences can be made from the information given in paragraph A?

- A: It takes more poison to kill a person than to kill a midge.
- B: There is no such thing as a poisonous spider.
- C: Spiders are only interested in killing tiny insects.
- D: People are immune to the poison of a spider.

**B**

Nevertheless, a few are to be feared; and foremost among these is the Malmignatte, the terror of the Corsican peasantry. I have seen her settle in the furrows, lay out her web and rush boldly at insects larger than herself; I have admired her garb of black velvet speckled with carmine-red; above all, I have heard most disquieting stories told about her. Around Ajaccio and Bonifacio, her bite is reputed very dangerous, sometimes mortal. The countryman declares this for a fact and the doctor does not always dare deny it. In the neighborhood of Pujaud, not far from Avignon, the harvesters speak with dread of *Theridion lugubre*, first observed by Leon Dufour in the Catalonian Mountains; according to them, her bite would lead to serious accidents.

4. What is the purpose of paragraph B?

- A: To describe the Malmignatte.
- B: To describe a couple of dangerous spiders
- C: To recount some folktales
- D: To persuade peasants not to be afraid of spiders

5. Which of the following inferences can be drawn from the information in paragraph B?

- A: Poisonous spiders dwell only in the mountains.
- B: Peasants are generally more afraid than doctors of spider bites.
- C: Spiders are fearless.
- D: Spiders are harmless.

**C**

The Italians have bestowed a bad reputation on the Tarantula, who produces convulsions and frenzied dances in the person stung by her. To cope with 'tarantism,' the name given to the disease that follows on the bite of the Italian Spider, you must have recourse to music, the only efficacious remedy, so they tell us. Special tunes have been noted, those quickest to afford relief. There is medical choreography, medical music. And have we not the tarentella, a lively and nimble dance, bequeathed to us perhaps by the healing art of the Calabrian peasant?

6. What do the peasants probably have in mind when they describe "frenzied dances"?

- A: tarantellas
- B: tangos
- C: conversations
- D: seizures

7. What origin does the author ascribe for the tarantella?

- A: as a cure for spider bites
- B: as a pet for small children
- C: as a delicious dessert
- D: as a method of discipline

**D**

Must we take these queer things seriously or laugh at them? From the little that I have seen, I hesitate to pronounce an opinion. Nothing tells us that the bite of the Tarantula may not provoke, in weak and very impressionable people, a nervous disorder which music will relieve; nothing tells us that a profuse perspiration, resulting from a very energetic dance, is not likely to diminish the discomfort by diminishing the cause of the ailment. So, far from laughing, I reflect and enquire, when the Calabrian peasant talks to me of his Tarantula, the Pujaud reaper of his Theridion lugubre, the Corsican husbandman of his Malmignatte. Those Spiders might easily deserve, at least partly, their terrible reputation.

8. Which word best describes the author's attitude towards folk remedies in paragraph D?

- A: indifferent
- B: curious
- C: supercilious
- D: carefree

9. The main idea of the passage (paragraphs A through D) is:

- A: Though most spiders are not dangerous, there are some whose bites may be harmful to humans.
- B: Spiders are dangerous and should be stepped on whenever possible.
- C: Spiders are the most interesting creatures on Earth.
- D: Peasants are not very smart.

10. The purpose of the passage (paragraphs A through D) is to:

- A: persuade the reader to purchase spiders
- B: entertain and inform the reader
- C: describe the tarantula
- D: describe the author

11. This passage is meant to be read by:

- A: children
- B: adults
- C: scientists
- D: preachers

12. This passage was probably written by:

- A: a professor of biology
- B: an amateur entomologist
- C: a peasant
- D: a schoolteacher

13. The larger work from which this passage is taken would probably have the title:

- A: "The Spiders of Europe"
- B: "The Peasants of Europe"
- C: "Folk Remedies of the Old Midwest"
- D: "The Spiders of South America"

**Passage Two**

**E**

In the years following the Civil War, the US heartland suffered from an overabundance of wheat and rice; these surpluses, coupled with the advances in transportation and communication, drove prices down. Farmers were forced into high debt which they could never repay, leading to deflation and a scarcity of currency. Since many farmers didn't own the land that they worked, the banks often had to foreclose when farmers were unable to pay their debts. Farmers blamed their problems on a number of different factors. They blamed the railroads, which usually gave discount rates to bigger shippers. They blamed the banks, who loaned money to the rich but were unforgiving of farmers' economic plight. They also blamed the tax system, claiming that it was easy for businesses to hide their assets, and impossible for farmers to do so. Finally, they blamed the tariff, which discouraged other countries from buying US goods.

14. What is the main idea of paragraph E?

- A: Many farmers had financial problems after the Civil War.
- B: Farmers like to complain.
- C: There was too much wheat and rice after the Civil War.
- D: Farmers were unable to repay their debts.

15. Which of the following inferences can be made based on the information given in paragraph E?

- A: Tariffs always hurt farmers.
- B: Banks do not trust farmers.
- C: Farm equipment is expensive.
- D: Farmers were not rich.

16. Which of the following factors did NOT drive crop prices down after the Civil War?

- A: increase in supply
- B: advances in transportation
- C: decrease in supply
- D: advances in communication

17. Why did farmers blame the tariff for their problems?

- A: the tariff made them sell their products to other countries
- B: the tariff prevented other countries from buying American goods
- C: they couldn't afford foreign products
- D: they hated all taxes

**F**

A series of organizations were established to deal with the complaints of the farmers. The Patrons of Husbandry (Grange) organization was founded in 1867 by Oliver Kelley to establish cooperatives, in which individuals bought goods directly from the whole-sale distributor. His group was also responsible for the Granger Laws, which attacked railroad and grain elevator interests. The Grange, however, had basically disappeared by 1875. The National Farmer's Alliance and Industrial Union pursued a number of different initiatives: more national banks; cooperatives; a federal storage system for non-perishable items; more currency; free coinage of silver; reduction of tariff; direct election of senators; 8-hour workday; government control of railroads and telegraphs; and one term for the president. This group's success led to the formation of the Populist Party in 1890. This party aimed to speak for the farmers, and included all of the farmer's unions as well as some labor unions, the Greenbackers, and the Prohibitionists. The party suffered from internal divisions from its inception.

18. What is the theme of paragraph F?

- A: early political organizations for farmers
- B: the life of Oliver Kelley
- C: the rise of the Greenbackers
- D: the need for a federal storage system

19. Which of the following inferences can you make based on the information given in paragraph F?

- A: There was too much currency in circulation.
- B: Farmers were knowledgeable on political subjects.
- C: Goods are less expensive when they are purchased whole-sale.
- D: People were forced to work twelve-hour days.

20. What was the basic reason for the formation of the Populist Party?

- A: the success of the Grange
- B: the plight of farmers
- C: the fairness of the tariff
- D: the popularity of the gold standard

**Passage Three****G**

While Thomas Edison was a newsboy on the train, a request came to him one day to go to the office of E. B. Ward & Company, at that time the largest owners of steamboats on the Great Lakes. The captain of their largest boat had died suddenly, and they wanted a message taken to another captain who lived about fourteen miles from Ridgeway station on the railroad. This captain had retired, taken up some lumber land, and had cleared part of it. Edison was offered \$15 by Mr. Ward to go and fetch him, but as it was a wild country and would be dark, Edison stood out for \$25, so that he could get the companionship of another lad. The terms were agreed to. Edison arrived at Ridgeway at 8.30 P.M., when it was raining and as dark as ink. Getting another boy with difficulty to volunteer, he launched out on his errand in the pitch- black night.

21. What is the intent of paragraph G?

- A: To introduce a story about young Thomas Edison
- B: To explain how a light bulb works.
- C: To persuade the reader that Edison was a good boy.
- D: To explain the operations of steamboats on the Great Lakes.

22. Why did the shipping company ask Edison to fetch the captain?
- A: he was a better captain
  - B: to stop trees from being cut down
  - C: another captain had retired
  - D: another captain had recently died

23. Why did Edison want an extra \$10?
- A: so that he could buy dinner on the way
  - B: so that he could get another boy to accompany him
  - C: so that he could buy extra lamp oil
  - D: because he was a slick negotiator

#### H

The two boys carried lanterns, but the road was a rough path through dense forest. The country was wild, and it was a usual occurrence to see deer, bear, and coon skins nailed up on the sides of houses to dry. Edison had read about bears, but couldn't remember whether they were day or night prowlers. The farther they went the more apprehensive they became, and every stump in the ravished forest looked like a bear. The other lad proposed seeking safety up a tree, but Edison demurred on the plea that bears could climb, and that the message must be delivered that night to enable the captain to catch the morning train. First one lantern went out, then the other. "We leaned up against a tree and cried. I thought if I ever got out of that scrape alive I would know more about the habits of animals and everything else, and be prepared for all kinds of mischance when I undertook an enterprise. However, the intense darkness dilated the pupils of our eyes so as to make them very sensitive, and we could just see at times the outlines of the road. Finally, just as a faint gleam of daylight arrived, we entered the captain's yard and delivered the message. In my whole life I never spent such a night of horror as this, but I got a good lesson."

24. From this passage (paragraphs G and H), we can infer that Edison:
- A: knew all about animals.
  - B: hated the other boy.
  - C: lived in a city.
  - D: read the newspaper every day.
25. In contrast to the other boy, Edison was:
- A: scared of bears
  - B: able to see the road
  - C: a newsboy
  - D: determined to get the job done.
26. Based on the context, one can infer that the word "ravished" probably means:
- A: burned
  - B: cleared of trees
  - C: dangerous
  - D: dark

27. Why did the message have to be delivered that night?

- A: so that the captain could catch the morning train
- B: so that the captain could get a good night's sleep
- C: so that the captain could brush his teeth
- D: so that Edison could earn his money

28. This passage was probably taken from:

- A: a collection of folklore
- B: a biography of Thomas Edison
- C: a novel about steamboat captains
- D: a history of the forest

29. What lesson did Edison learn from this experience?

- A: to be prepared
- B: to always hold out for more money
- C: to learn about animals
- D: to buy extra lamp oil

## Answer Key

1. D. The paragraph asserts that though spiders are thought to be dangerous, they are in fact benign.
2. C. The author insists that the bites from most spiders are not dangerous.
3. A. The author suggests that spiders' poison can be lethal to tiny creatures but harmless to people.
4. B. The paragraph describes two spiders that are thought to be dangerous.
5. B. The author indicates that doctors are less likely to be concerned about spiders.
6. D. The physical gyrations of a seizure might be described as a "frenzied dance."
7. A. The author mentions that peasants believe the poison of the tarantula can be cured with dancing.
8. B. The author declares that he likes to inquire into the basis for these remedies.
9. A. The passage describes how most spiders are harmless, but then mentions a few that can be harmful.
10. B. The passage is written at a level to be enjoyed by a novice to the study of spiders.
11. B. The vocabulary and subject matter of the passage is most appropriate for adults who do not know too much about spiders.
12. B. The author appears to have a personal interest in the study of spiders, without being too technical.
13. A. This passage seems to be part of a larger work of non-fiction.
14. A. The paragraph details all of the troubles afflicting farmers in this era.
15. D. If farmers were rich, they would have received discount rates and loans.
16. C. A decrease in supply would probably raise the price of crops.
17. B. The farmers were annoyed that the tariff closed off a market for their crops.
18. A. The paragraph describes some of the early organizations created to represent the interests of farmers.
19. C. Cooperatives were created to reduce the cost of common goods.
20. B. The Populist Party was formed to represent the interests of farmers and common citizens.
21. A. This paragraph begins a story about Thomas Edison when he was a boy.
22. D. The shipping company needed a replacement captain immediately.
23. B. Edison was afraid to make the journey by himself.
24. C. Edison is a newsboy, and admits that he doesn't know much about animals.
25. D. Edison refuses the other boy's suggestion that they stop or climb a tree.
26. B. The passage refers to stumps as a feature of the "ravished" forest.
27. A. The passage states explicitly that they had to reach the captain that night so he could leave the next morning.
28. B. The passage appears to be part of a larger narrative of the life of Edison.
29. A. Edison decided that he would always learn whatever he needed to know before beginning an enterprise

## NET Mathematics Test Review

1.  $498 + 254 =$

- A: 732
- B: 752
- C: 742
- D: 753

2.  $5997 + 4327 =$

- A: 10,234
- B: 10,442
- C: 10,324
- D: 10,554

3.  $3,788 + 2,265 =$

- A: 6,053
- B: 5,053
- C: 6,054
- D: 6,044

4.  $7,769 - 3,628 =$

- A: 4,133
- B: 4,142
- C: 4,041
- D: 4,141

5.  $783 - 396 =$

- A: 387
- B: 377
- C: 397
- D: 407

6.  $3,077 - 2,488 =$

- A: 579
- B: 590
- C: 578
- D: 589

7.  $198 \times 6 =$

- A: 1,288
- B: 1,268
- C: 1,378
- D: 1,188

8.  $519 \times 19 =$

- A: 8,981
- B: 9,861
- C: 10,681
- D: 9,691

9.  $301 \times 35 =$

- A: 10,535
- B: 8,544
- C: 10,574
- D: 10,775

10.  $469 \div 3 =$

- A: 151 r2
- B: 146 r1
- C: 157 r2
- D: 156 r1

11.  $303 \div 4 =$

- A: 73 r3
- B: 75 r3
- C: 64 r1
- D: 72 r3

12.  $14,883 \div 36 =$

- A: 410 r12
- B: 412 r14
- C: 413 r15
- D: 415 r17

13. Express  $546/1000$  as a decimal.

- A: .0546
- B: .546
- C: 54.6
- D: 546.000

14.  $.89 + 3.8 + .036 =$

- A: 47.26
- B: 4.726
- C: 48.26
- D: 4.826

15.  $.27 \times .4 =$

- A: 1.08
- B: .0108
- C: 10.8
- D: .108

16.  $.84 + .6 =$

- A: 14
- B: .14
- C: .014
- D: 1.4

17. Express the hundredths place in .2380

- A: 3
- B: 2
- C: 0
- D: 8

18.  $.37 - .19 =$

- A: .19
- B: .019
- C: 17
- D: .18

19. Round 5.788 to the nearest hundredth.

- A: 5.8
- B: 5.79
- C: 5.80
- D: 5.77

20. Which is the equivalent decimal number for three hundred and sixty-four thousandths?

- A: .364
- B: 364,000
- C: 3.6400
- D: .0364

21.  $3 \frac{1}{3} + 4 + \frac{2}{5} =$

- A:  $8 \frac{3}{4}$
- B:  $7 \frac{2}{3}$
- C:  $7 \frac{1}{2}$
- D:  $7 \frac{11}{15}$

22.  $4 \frac{3}{4} - 2 \frac{1}{2} =$

- A:  $2 \frac{1}{4}$
- B:  $2 \frac{1}{2}$
- C:  $3 \frac{1}{4}$
- D:  $2 \frac{1}{3}$

23.  $4 \frac{1}{5} \times \frac{3}{4} \times 6 =$

- A:  $17 \frac{4}{5}$
- B:  $16 \frac{2}{3}$
- C:  $20 \frac{1}{2}$
- D:  $18 \frac{9}{10}$

24.  $2/7 \div 1/9 =$

A:  $18/7$

B:  $7/2$

C:  $7/18$

D:  $2/63$

25. Which of the following is correct?

A:  $9/15 = 3/4$

B:  $12/15 = 4/5$

C:  $12/16 = 2/3$

D:  $3/15 = 1/4$

26. Solve for x:  $4/x = 1/5$

A: 15

B: 18

C: 12

D: 20

27. Reduce  $12/156$  to lowest terms.

A:  $1/12$

B:  $2/7$

C:  $1/13$

D:  $1/10$

28. Express  $17/6$  as a mixed fraction.

A:  $2 \frac{5}{6}$

B:  $3 \frac{1}{6}$

C:  $2 \frac{2}{6}$

D:  $2 \frac{1}{6}$

29. Express seventy four hundredths as a percentage.

A: 740%

B: 7.4%

C: 74%

D: .74%

30. 15% of 120 =

A: 16

B: 15

C: 18

D: 20

31. 9 is what percent of 72?

A: 10%

B: 15%

C: 18%

D: 12.5%

32. 4 is what percent of 50?

- A: 9%
- B: 8%
- C: 10%
- D: 4%

33. Four tenths of 18 equals:

- A: 6.8
- B: 7
- C: 7.2
- D: 7.4

34. .6% of 18 equals:

- A: 1.08
- B: 10.8
- C: .108
- D: .0108

35. The ratio of 7:4 = (?)%

- A: 160%
- B: 67%
- C: 175%
- D: 125%

36.  $\frac{2}{4} = (?)\% \times \frac{2}{5}$

- A: 125%
- B: 110%
- C: 105%
- D: 135%

37. Express  $\frac{4}{16}$  as a decimal.

- A: .5
- B: .025
- C: .25
- D: .05

38. Express .24 as a percentage.

- A: 2.4%
- B: .24%
- C: .024%
- D: 24%

39. Express  $\frac{14}{4}$  as a percentage.

- A: 30%
- B: 333%
- C: 300%
- D: 350%

40. Express  $\frac{5}{25}$  as a percentage.

- A: 20%
- B: 15%
- C: 25%
- D: 30%

41.  $1.5/50\% = ?$

- A: 3
- B: 4.5
- C: 6
- D: 1.5

42. Express .075 as a percentage.

- A: 75%
- B: 750%
- C: .75%
- D: 7.5%

43. Express the ratio of 6:14 as a percentage.

- A: 40%
- B: 50%
- C: 43%
- D: 55%

44. Express  $\frac{3}{8}$  as a percentage.

- A: 33%
- B: 30%
- C: 37.5%
- D: 40%

45. Express 8.6% as a reduced fraction.

- A:  $\frac{21}{250}$
- B:  $\frac{86}{1,000}$
- C:  $\frac{22}{84}$
- D:  $\frac{43}{500}$

46. Express 160% as a decimal.

- A: 16
- B: 1.6
- C: .016
- D: .16

47. Solve for x: 24 is 60% of x

- A: 4
- B: 400
- C: 20
- D: 40

48. 8% of  $x$  is equal to 48. Solve for  $x$ .

- A: 600
- B: 540
- C: 480
- D: 640

49. Express  $\frac{32}{96}$  as a reduced common fraction.

- A:  $\frac{1}{2}$
- B:  $\frac{2}{5}$
- C:  $\frac{3}{5}$
- D:  $\frac{1}{3}$

50. Express 37% as a decimal.

- A: 37.0
- B: .37
- C: 3.7
- D: .037

51. 8 is 40% of  $x$ . Solve for  $x$ .

- A: 50
- B: 40
- C: 20
- D: 30

52. 25% of  $x$  is 50. Solve for  $x$ .

- A: 260
- B: 220
- C: 240
- D: 200

53.  $4b + 2b - 5b =$

- A:  $2b$
- B:  $b$
- C:  $-b$
- D:  $-2b$

54.  $(5y^2 - 4y) + (2y^2 + 6y - 9) =$

- A:  $6y^2 + 2y - 9$
- B:  $7y^2 + 2y - 9$
- C:  $6y^2 + y - 9$
- D:  $5y^2 + 2y - 9$

55.  $4x - 6 = 42$ . Solve for  $x$ .

- A: 12
- B: 10
- C: 8
- D: 14

56.  $5(x - 6) = 4x + 4$ . Solve for  $x$ .

A: 28

B: 32

C: 30

D: 34

57.  $5ab^2 + 3ab^2 =$

A:  $8a^2b^4$

B: 8

C:  $8a^2b^2$

D:  $8ab^2$

58.  $5(3y - 5) + 2 - 6(y + 7) =$

A:  $7y - 55$

B:  $9y - 65$

C:  $15y - 55$

D:  $10y - 65$

59.  $7x + 6 = 34$ . Solve for  $x$ .

A: 4

B: 6

C: -2

D: 2

60.  $4x + 7 = 2(x - 3)$ . Solve for  $x$ .

A: 6.5

B: 6

C: -6.5

D: -5.5

## Answer Key

1. B. Carrying in addition of whole numbers.
2. C. Carrying in addition of whole numbers.
3. A. Basic number facts in addition of whole numbers.
4. D. Basic number facts in subtraction of whole numbers.
5. A. Borrowing in subtraction of whole numbers.
6. D. Borrowing through zero in whole numbers.
7. D. Single-digit multiplication of whole numbers.
8. B. Double-digit multiplication of whole numbers.
9. A. Multiplication of whole numbers involving carrying through zero.
10. D. Basic short division operations with whole numbers.
11. B. Short division of whole numbers involving zero.
12. C. Long division of whole numbers.
13. B. Translating a common fraction into a decimal.
14. B. Placing the decimal point in addition.
15. D. Placing the decimal point in multiplication.
16. D. Placing the decimal point in division.
17. A. Place value of digits in decimals.
18. D. Placing the decimal point in subtraction.
19. B. Rounding decimals to a certain place value.
20. A. Converting written expression of a number into numerical expression.
21. D. Addition of common fractions and mixed fractions and whole numbers.
22. A. Subtraction of mixed fractions.
23. D. Multiplication of common fractions, mixed fractions, and whole numbers.
24. A. Division of common fractions.
25. B. Finding equality of fractions.
26. D. Solving for a variable with fractions.
27. C. Reduction of fractions.
28. A. Converting a common fraction to a mixed fraction.
29. C. Translating a word phrase into a percentage.
30. C. Calculating the percentage of a whole number.
31. D. Finding the percentage of one number and another.
32. B. Finding the percentage of one number and another.
33. C. Determining the percentage of a whole number.
34. C. Determining the fractional percentage of a number.
35. C. Determining the percentage of a ratio statement.
36. A. Percent of fraction and another fraction.
37. C. Converting common fraction to a decimal fraction.
38. D. Converting decimal fraction to a percentage.
39. D. Converting a common fraction to a percentage.
40. A. Converting a common fraction to a percentage.
41. A. Dividing a decimal fraction by a percentage.
42. D. Converting decimal fractions to percentages.
43. C. Converting a ratio to a percentage.
44. C. Converting a common fraction to a percentage.
45. D. Converting a percentage to a common fraction.
46. B. Converting a percentage to a decimal.

47. D. Finding a number when a percentage of it is known.
48. A. Finding a number when a percentage of it is known.
49. D. Converting a percentage to a common fraction.
50. B. Converting a percentage to a decimal.
51. C. Finding a number when a percentage of it is known.
52. D. Finding a number when a percentage of it is known.
53. B. Collecting similar terms (algebraic addition).
54. B. Removing parentheses, collecting similar terms (algebraic subtraction).
55. A. Solving for one unknown (involving algebraic addition and subtraction and division axioms).
56. D. Solving for one unknown (removal of parentheses through multiplication and utilization of algebraic addition, subtraction, and division axioms).
57. D. Collecting similar terms having exponents.
58. B. Removal of parentheses through multiplication followed by collecting similar terms.
59. A. Solving for an unknown (subtraction, division axioms).
60. C. Solving for one unknown through parentheses removal and followed by the use of addition and subtraction and division axioms.