

Student Name _____

OHIO GRADUATION TESTS



Reading

Practice Test

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READING TEST

Directions: Each passage in this test is followed by several questions. After reading the passage, choose the best answer to each question; then blacken the corresponding space on your answer document. When you respond to the short-answer and extended-response items, you do not have to use all of the space provided in your answer document, but be sure your answers are complete. You may refer to the passages as often as necessary.

Caged Bird

- 1 A free bird leaps
on the back of the wind
and floats downstream
till the current ends
and dips his wing
in the orange sun rays
and dares to claim the sky.

- 2 But a bird that stalks
down his narrow cage
can seldom see through
his bars of rage
his wings are clipped and
his feet are tied
so he opens his throat to sing.

- 3 The caged bird sings
with a fearful trill
of things unknown
but longed for still
and his tune is heard
on the distant hill
for the caged bird
sings of freedom.

- 4 The free bird thinks of another breeze
and the trade winds soft through the sighing trees
and the fat worms waiting on a dawn-bright lawn
and he names the sky his own.

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- 5 But a caged bird stands on the grave of dreams
his shadow shouts out a nightmare scream
his wings are clipped and his feet are tied
so he opens his throat to sing.
- 6 The caged bird sings
with a fearful trill
of things unknown
but longed for still
and his tune is heard
on the distant hill
for the caged bird
sings of freedom.

“Caged Bird” by Maya Angelou., copyright © 1983 by Maya Angelou., from SHAKER, WHY DON'T YOU SING? By Maya Angelou. Used by permission of Random House, Inc.

1. The significant difference between the two birds in the poem is that
 - A. one bird can sing and the other bird is silent.
 - B. one bird knows how to fly and the other bird does not.
 - C. one bird has opportunity and the other bird has been denied it.
 - D. one bird has held on to its dreams of flight and the other bird has not.
2. What is the author's purpose in describing the two birds?
 - A. to portray the two birds as being similar
 - B. to let the reader decide which is the better bird
 - C. to show that one bird is not superior to the other
 - D. to contrast the free and the caged bird

3. "But a bird that stalks
down his narrow cage
can seldom see through
his bars of rage" (stanza 2)

Which sentence below accurately describes the effect of the metaphor in the stanza above?

It explains that the bird that is trapped may

- A. break the bars that confine it.
 - B. not hope to see the outside world.
 - C. soon grow to accept the situation.
 - D. be consumed by its own anger.
4. "A free bird leaps
on the back of the wind
and floats downstream
till the current ends
and dips his wing
in the orange sun rays
and dares to claim the sky."
(stanza 1)

Which phrase is closest in meaning to the word claim?

- A. to take as one's own
- B. to wish ardently for
- C. to work hard for
- D. to explore a new territory

5. According to the information given in the poem, the bird that stalks down its cage (stanza 2) is probably moving in which of the following ways?

- A. lightly
- B. grimly
- C. joyously
- D. indecisively

Yellowstone Makes a Triumphant Return Ten Years After Fires

- 1 What a difference a decade makes. Ten years ago this month, Yellowstone National Park was a sea of flames. Some of the largest wildfires in U.S. history swept restlessly across the park's magnificent terrain, incinerating forests, threatening historic buildings. The news media and politicians fanned the flames even higher. Yellowstone, they said, was devastated.
- 2 Night after night, horrific images of ash and flame flashed across America's TV screens. One evening, after showing an enormous expanse of blackened forest, network news anchor Tom Brokaw solemnly concluded, "This is what's left of Yellowstone tonight."
- 3 But guess what? Fire didn't destroy Yellowstone. Ten years later, we realize fire had the opposite effect. Fire rejuvenated Yellowstone. Elk and other wildlife are healthy. Tourism is thriving. Biodiversity¹ is booming. New forests are rising from the ashes of old ones. The recovery is so dramatic it deserves a closer look.
- 4 First, a bit of background: The 1988 fires were gigantic. They swept over roughly 793,000 of Yellowstone's 2.2 million acres—one third of the park. Some were lightning-caused; others were of human origin. The \$120 million firefighting effort amassed against them has been called the largest in U.S. history. The heroic work saved many key structures. But in the wild lands, it made almost no difference. What put Yellowstone's fires out was not retardant-dropping planes or armies of firefighters on the ground. It was a quarter inch of autumn rain.
- 5 In July and August, as fires raged across the park, business owners fumed. Our future is ruined, they said. Tourism is dead. But today, tourism is very much alive. Yellowstone has set numerous visitation records since 1988. Fire has not repelled tourists; it has attracted them—just as it attracts many species of wildlife. Ten years later, the number one question asked of Yellowstone naturalists remains "What are the effects of the fires?"
- 6 The answer is simple: The fires were therapeutic. Since 1988, some seventy scientific research projects have looked at various aspects of the Yellowstone fires. Not one has concluded the fires were harmful. That sounds too good to be true. But it is. The science is there to prove it.
- 7 Come to Yellowstone this summer and see for yourself. Pull off the road near Ice Lake, east of the Norris Geyser Basin. Here the fire burned especially savagely. Hundreds of thousands, perhaps millions, of mature lodgepole pine trees were

¹ **biodiversity:** the number and variety of organisms found within a specified geographic region

destroyed. But today, the forest floor is a sea of green, knee high lodgepoles planted, literally, by the fires of 1988.

- 8 Yellowstone's lodgepole forest is a place of mystery. In order to live, it must first die. It must burn. The fire that swept through here worked an ancient magic: It scorched lodgepole cones, melted their sticky resin, and freed the seeds locked inside. Within minutes, a new forest was planted.
- 9 By suppressing wildfire, as Smokey Bear has taught us to do, we interrupt nature's cycles. We rob our western forests of something they need desperately. We steal their season of rebirth. Without fire, pine forests grow senile, prone to disease, and unnaturally thick. There are lessons in these lodgepoles. Too much protection is no virtue. We can harm what we try to save. I'm not suggesting that we worship fire—that we let it run wild outside of natural parks and wilderness areas. But we can respect its wisdom. We can treat it, when possible, as an ally, not an enemy, and use it more frequently under controlled conditions to protect communities and make forests healthier.
- 10 Look closely around Ice Lake and you will almost surely see something else: wildlife. Bison, elk, mule deer, white-tailed deer, bighorn sheep, and mountain goats have all prospered since 1988. Just as fire rejuvenated lodgepoles, so, too, did it revitalize plants that grazing animals eat. Walt Disney got it all wrong: Bambi and his forest friends have nothing to fear—and much to gain—from fire.
- 11 If you're lucky, you may also see Yellowstone's king of beasts: the grizzly bear. To a grizzly, wildfire is a meal ticket. Fires kill trees, which fall to the ground and fill up with insects: grizzly sushi. Others enjoy the feast, too. Before 1988, three-toed woodpeckers were almost nonexistent in Yellowstone. After 1988, one ornithologist spotted thirty in one day. But dead lodgepoles are more than lunch counters; they are housing opportunities, home sites for mountain bluebirds, tree swallows, and other "cavity-nesting" birds and mammals.
- 12 Ten years ago, the news media said fire "blackened" Yellowstone. Today, we know the reverse is true. Fire has painted the park brighter, added color and texture to its ecosystem, and increased the diversity and abundance of its species. As Yellowstone scientist John Varley put it recently, "The biodiversity story over the past ten years has been fascinating. Biodiversity has gone through a revolution at Yellowstone."

"Yellowstone Makes a Triumphant Return Ten Years After Fires" by Bruce Babbitt, Former Secretary of the Interior, originally printed in *The Austin American-Statesman*.

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6. Which subheading accurately reflects the information in paragraphs 1 and 2?
- A. Effects of the Yellowstone Fire
 - B. Tourism Since the Yellowstone Fire
 - C. News Media Dramatically Reports Fire
 - D. Biodiversity in Yellowstone Since the Fire
7. Why does the passage open with the line, "What a difference a decade makes"?
- A. to highlight how quickly time passes
 - B. to highlight the difficulty of post-fire recovery
 - C. to highlight the cycle of nature
 - D. to highlight the limitation of natural processes
8. What is the intended effect of the rhetorical question used in paragraph 3?
- A. to produce an echoing sound when read aloud
 - B. to serve as a topic sentence
 - C. to stimulate reader interest
 - D. to create patterns of stressed and unstressed syllables
9. Which sentence is a detail from the passage intended to convey that the population of such wildlife as three-toed woodpeckers actually increased after the fire?
- A. After the danger passed, wildlife returned.
 - B. Downed trees created a habitat that sustained a food chain.
 - C. Tourism decreased, minimizing the danger to woodpeckers.
 - D. After the fire, predators of birds abandoned the forest floor.

10. Explain how nature can sometimes repair itself, citing two details from the passage to support your explanation. Write your answer in the **Answer Document**. (2 points)

11. According to paragraph 8, you can infer that lodgepole pines

- A. are the oldest of all pine trees.
- B. provide a natural habitat for insects.
- C. were totally destroyed by the fires.
- D. have seeds that are best distributed by fire.

Speech to the New Americans

(NOTE: The author's name (Andrei Codrescu) is pronounced along the lines of "An DREY Co DRES q." The "Iron Curtain" (paragraph 3) was the political barrier that existed between the countries of the Soviet Union bloc and Western Europe from 1945 to 1990. Romania was allied with the Soviet Union during the Cold War, a member of the Soviet bloc, and was thus spoken of as "behind the Iron Curtain.")

1 HELLO, NEW AMERICANS!

2 Ladies and gentlemen, friends, and fellow citizens, I'm Andrei Codrescu from Romania, and this country has been very very good to me.

3 Romania was a Communist country when I was growing up (remember the Iron Curtain?). In school they told us that America was a bad place where the rich laughed in the face of the poor who went about begging in the streets. That America was a country where crime and racism made it dangerous to walk outside.

4 My grandmother, on the other hand, whispered to me that in America "dogs walk around with pretzels on their tails." Fat, healthy dogs. Big, hot pretzels. She also whispered that in America the "roads are paved with gold." That wasn't as good as the dogs with the pretzels—but she had to whisper because in Romania you could not say such things out loud.

5 I myself imagined America as the place where I could be a very famous writer who could say out loud all the things that would land me in jail in Romania.

6 When I came to America I found that the school and my grandmother were both wrong

7 And yes, in America some dogs not only walked around with pretzels on their tails but got their own burial plots in Hollywood. Some dogs inherited fortunes and were tended by human servants.

8 But the roads were not paved with gold. In fact, in 1992, certain roads are not paved at all because there isn't enough money to pave them with.

9 Yes, there are beggars and poor people and very rich people in America. But mostly there are in-between people, people who are neither rich nor poor, people who have nice houses or apartments with a little garden or a balcony, people who treat their dogs very nicely if they have dogs, people who (for the most part) let each other talk, laugh, and vote however they please. People who do not have to whisper. And the roads, whether in good shape or not, can take you

somewhere else if you do not like where you are. America is a big country and you can move anywhere you want in it without having to show your passport.

- 10 Almost ten years ago I sat where you sit now and listened to a judge welcome me to America. “You are now Americans,” the judge said. “You can keep your native customs, you can keep your wonderful cooking and your churches, but you are not Chinese, Haitians, Russians, or Romanians any longer. You cannot hold the interests of your old countries above those of your new country. You are now Americans.”
- 11 The judge spoke the truth. But the judge did not mention how hard it is to keep your customs, your cooking, and your language alive. The judge did not mention the loneliness of having left friends and family behind. He did not mention the embarrassment of different manners, the trauma of simple exchanges and transactions. He did not mention the heartbreak of watching your children forget where they came from.
- 12 For me, this was all good. I came here when I was nineteen years old. My loneliness became a time to dream ambitious dreams, dreams of revenge and conquest, dreams of showing everyone that I was more than the skinny little foreigner with holes in his shoes who could not speak very good English.
- 13 I also used my embarrassment so as not to take myself so seriously. One time, in Detroit, I asked a bus driver: “Can I buy this bus?” I meant to say, “Can I ride this bus?” He pushed me away and said: “Go buy the next bus!”
- 14 I haven’t bought that bus yet—but I just bought a car.
- 15 And as for the heartbreak of your children becoming American, that is inevitable. I was only a child myself when I came here but now I have children of my own. They are very American. They like to read books but they also play sports. In Romania you either read books or played sports. You couldn’t do both. And my children, as American as they are, are very interested in where they come from. They are proud of it, in fact, because it makes them different.
- 16 And so—I would modify what the judge said to me ten years ago in this way:
- 17 “You must make an effort to keep your old customs and to make others admire them, you must use your native cooking to make new friends and to bring your community together, you must make an effort to support the community life of your fellow immigrants. You are still Chinese, Haitians, Russians, and Romanians, but you are also American, which means that you can be better Chinese, better Haitians and Russians and Romanians—better because you are living together with all of these other people and you can enrich each other through your

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differences. You are American now, which means that you must forget the hatreds and prejudices of your own past . . . that if you are a Croatian American you cannot fight your Serbian American neighbor because that's what is going on in the old country. You cannot pass on to your children the prejudices and hatreds of the old country. You must always remember *why* you left your countries in the first place: because you were persecuted for your political beliefs, for your religious beliefs, or simply because you wanted to live a better material life No matter. All those reasons are precisely why you must heal the wounds of the past. America is the place where you must deliberately forgo revenge if you are to go forward. You can be born again here, but like a baby you must cancel the pain that brought you here.

18 America was set up as a place to get away from the murderous sentimentalities of the old worlds—which does not mean that you must abandon or forget the beauties of your cultures. On the contrary. The greater and prouder the cultural difference you bring here the greater your success. America changes with every single new citizen. America in 1992 is not the America I came into in 1966. Today, Spanish is spoken almost as much as English, and millions of people from Asia, the Caribbean, and the Pacific have come since then, changing the flavor and look of the place, making America more colorful, spicier, more exciting.

19 The American poet Walt Whitman wrote in 1855:

I celebrate myself, and sing myself,

And what I assume you shall assume,

For every atom belonging to me as good belongs to you.

20 And so it is. Today's song may be a bit darker and more difficult but it's still there.

21 America is an idea in our minds. Every generation of new immigrants remakes America in the shape of what they imagine it to be.

22 It's your turn.

From ROAD SCHOLAR: Coast to Coast Late in the Century by Andrei Codrescu. Copyright ©1993 Andrei Codrescu. Reprinted by permission of Hyperion.

12. Which phrase below describes Codrescu's audience?
- A. immigrants waiting to become American citizens
 - B. the children of recent American immigrants
 - C. people who have just become American citizens
 - D. people studying to become American citizens
13. With which statement would the author probably agree?
- A. New Americans should leave their old ways behind.
 - B. New Americans are no different than any other Americans.
 - C. New Americans require more education than other Americans.
 - D. New Americans help revitalize America.

14. Choose one of the following ideas for a graphic to accompany this passage. Give two reasons or examples from the text to support your choice.

- a photo of Andrei Codrescu speaking to an audience
- a photo of a group of new Americans standing together
- a picture of the flag of the United States

Write your answer in the **Answer Document**.

15. The story of the exchange between the author and the bus driver is intended to convey that
- A. the author was lonely and missing his family.
 - B. the author's clothes did not fit him.
 - C. the author was ambitious and had many ideas for success.
 - D. the author did not yet speak English well.

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16. The author advises new Americans to
- A. try to become like their neighbors.
 - B. hold on to the opinions they formed in their native countries.
 - C. remember the difficulties of living in their native countries.
 - D. forget the hatreds and problems they had in their native countries.
17. The author implies that America has changed since he came here. Which statement describes the change he implies?
- A. America has become a more comfortable place to live.
 - B. America has become even more diverse and culturally rich.
 - C. More immigrants from Europe have arrived.
 - D. The children of immigrants behave differently.
18. In paragraph 6, the author writes, “when I came to America I found that the school and my grandmother were both wrong.” Explain what his school taught him and what his grandmother told him about America, and give one example for each to show how they were both wrong. Write your answer in the **Answer Document**. (4 points)
19. Which sentence accurately restates the meaning of the last line of the speech (“It’s your turn.”)?
- A. New Americans have the chance to help shape America.
 - B. New Americans should try to become as successful as possible.
 - C. New Americans need to teach their children about their “old” customs and habits.
 - D. New Americans have the obligation to share their customs with other Americans.

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