

College Admission

Nelson-Denny

Nelson Denny Reading Test

Questions And Answers PDF Format:

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Question: 1

The data in the graph exhibited an aberration.
Aberration means:

- A. deviation from course
- B. linear appearance
- C. inverted appearance
- D. circular theme

Answer: A

Explanation:

Aberration means a deviation from what is normal or typical. Its Latin roots are ab-, meaning away from, and errare, meaning to err or stray. Combined, these make up the Latin verb aberrare, to go astray (from). There are no other meanings.

Question: 2

The prince abjured the ambassador.
Abjured means:

- A. congratulated
- B. renounced
- C. relieved
- D. fired

Answer: B

Explanation:

To abjure means "to renounce." The original Latin roots are ab-, meaning away from, and jurare, meaning to swear, which is also the root of the English word jury. Hence "swearing away from" is renouncing, rejecting, or repudiating someone or something, abstaining from or avoiding something, or taking something back.

Question: 3

The chemist attempted to practice alchemy.
Alchemy means:

- A. turning metal into gold

- B. separating ions
- C. fusion
- D. isolating chemical components

Answer: A

Explanation:

Alchemy refers to the hypothetical process of turning base metals into gold. While this process does not exist in reality, it was a famously popular pursuit during the Middle Ages. Today this word is also used figuratively to mean turning something common into something precious, or any mysterious transformation. The Medieval Latin alchymia derived from the Arabic al-kimiya, originating from the Late Greek word chemeia.

Question: 4

The man at the bar was belligerent.
Belligerent means:

- A. friendly
- B. courteous
- C. angry
- D. talkative

Answer: C

Explanation:

Belligerent means angry or hostile. Its original sense had to do with waging war. Belligerere in Latin means "to wage war," from bellum, which means war (as in the English word "antebellum," meaning prewar), and gerere, which means to wage. "Hostilities" in English can refer to warfare and to anger. An English synonym of belligerent from the same root is "bellicose." Both mean warlike, aggressive, combative, etc.

Question: 5

The ships formed a blockade near the mouth of the Mississippi River. Blockade means:

- A. prevent passage
- B. fishing convoy
- C. whaling expedition
- D. zigzag formation

Answer: A

Explanation:

Blockade refers to preventing passage or blocking it. Its similarity to the word "block" makes it easier to define. One difference between "block" and "blockade" is that "blockade" was originally, and is still often, used to refer specifically to military maneuvers intended to block physically the transportation, trade, and communications of enemy nations. It also refers to obstruction of physiological processes and, generally, to any obstruction. It can be used as a transitive verb or a noun.

Question: 6

The men erected a bulwark near the opening.
Bulwark means:

- A. trap
- B. obstacle
- C. barn
- D. runway

Answer: B

Explanation:

The choice closest to the meaning of bulwark is obstacle. A bulwark is a protective, defensive, or supportive structure that is like a wall. Synonyms include rampart, breakwater, and seawall. The (usually) plural term "bulwarks" can also refer to a ship's sides above the upper deck. It is also used abstractly, as in "Democratic ideals provide a bulwark against despotism."

Question: 7

The group embarked on a clandestine operation.
Clandestine means:

- A. environmental expedition
- B. shipping adventure
- C. scary
- D. secretive

Answer: D

Explanation:

The adjective clandestine means secretive or in secret. The Latin source word clandestinus derived from clam, meaning secretly. Secret, and synonyms like covert, furtive, undercover, stealthy, surreptitious, etc., represent the only meaning of this word.

Question: 8

What is needed for hard physical work?

- A. low-fat diet
- B. low-carb die
- C. more calories
- D. high-fat diet
- E. high-carb diet

Answer: C

Explanation:

More calories are needed. The passage states that "people who do hard physical work require food yielding more calories than those who do less strenuous work." This passage says nothing about carbohydrates or fats.

Question: 9

Most adults require:

- A. 2000 calories daily
- B. 4000 calories daily
- C. 1500 calories daily
- D. 15 calories daily
- E. 350 calories daily

Answer: A

Explanation:

The passage states that most adults require between 2,000 and 3,500 calories a day. Since 3,500 is not in the answer choices, the only correct one left is 2,000. Four thousand calories refers to the caloric requirements of an active teenage boy, not of most adults. Fifteen calories is the number per pound of body weight that a sedentary person may need, but 1,500 calories and 350 calories are not included in the passage.

Question: 10

Who uses more calories?

- A. small people
- B. sedentary people
- C. people in cold countries
- D. people in warm countries
- E. adults

Answer: C

Explanation:

"People in cold countries use more calories than people in hot lands because they lose body heat faster to the surrounding air." This is the sentence in the passage that provides the answer.

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