**Read TheoryCritical Reading Comprehension Test (RTCRCT)**

Name\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Date\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**I.**

Most people know that an avalanche is a large mass of snow that detaches from a mountainside and rushes down the slope, often at a very high speed. However, not everyone realizes that there are many different kinds of avalanches, with various causes and effects. Avalanches are categorized based on whether the snow is wet or dry, and whether or not it is compacted. The four most common types are: dry snow, wet snow, wet slab, and dry slab.

The least dangerous type is a dry snow avalanche, which is made up of powdery snow. A dry snow avalanche most often occurs on steeper slopes during a snowstorm when the temperatures are below freezing. Despite the fact that they can reach speeds of up to 225 miles per hour, these avalanches tend to be small, and their snow is loose, not compacted, so they are less dangerous. Yet even a dry snow avalanche can cause harm under the right conditions.

A wet snow avalanche differs from a dry snow avalanche in that it consists of loose, partially melted snow and water. Wet snow avalanches generally occur during the springtime when temperatures are consistently above freezing and there is an abundance of both sunshine and rainfall. The warmer temperatures and the sun melt the outer layers of snow. The increased springtime rainfall **saturates** the snow with water, weakening the cohesive layers beneath the surface. The combination of these factors results in unstable conditions. Wet snow avalanches are the least common type of avalanche, and they are much slower than dry snow avalanches, typically traveling at speeds of only 10-20 miles per hour.

Like a wet snow avalanche, a wet slab avalanche most often occurs during the spring, due to melting snow and increased rainfall. The additional moisture weakens the bonds between the water molecules of the snow. Daytime melting and nighttime refreezing of the ice and snow create **ideal** conditions for a wet slab avalanche. This type of avalanche is the slowest, generally traveling at a speed of no more than 10 miles per hour. But because the snow is compacted, not loose, a wet slab avalanche is still quite dangerous even at this slow speed.

The last type, a dry slab avalanche, is the most dangerous of all. It occurs when substantial snowfall accumulates over a layer of existing snow in a very short period of time. The stress caused by the weight of the newly fallen snow can make the compacted layer underneath break away. This creates a dry slab avalanche, which travels at speeds of 60-80 miles per hour. Dry slab avalanches account for roughly 90% of all avalanche-related casualties annually.

Millions of avalanches happen around the world each year, the vast majority of which occur naturally. However, nearly all of the avalanches that result in fatalities are triggered by either the victim or someone in the victim’s party. Each year, approximately 150 people become casualties of an avalanche. Sadly, most of these avalanche accidents are preventable. The first step in preventing avalanche related fatalities is to be better informed about the various types of avalanches and the conditions under which they occur.

**1)** The main purpose this passage is to

**A**. communicate the dangers of avalanches

**B**. show how preventable an avalanche can be

**C**. describe the four basic types of avalanches

**D**. define what an avalanche is

**2)** In paragraph 2 the author writes, "Yet even a dry snow avalanche can cause harm under the right conditions." The purpose of this statement is to

**A**. contradict a previous idea

**B**. support a later point

**C**. qualify an earlier statement

**D**. introduce a larger idea

**3)** As used in paragraph 3, which is the best synonym for **saturates**?

**A**. soaks

**B**. damages

**C**. covers

**D**. dehydrates

**4)** According to the passage, the main causes of wet snow and wet slab avalanches are

**A**. melting snow and increased rainfall

**B**. decreased rainfall and warmer temperatures

**C**. warmer temperatures and longer days

**D**. shorter nights and melting snow

**5)** As used in paragraph 4, which is the best antonym for **ideal**?

**A**. predictable

**B**. flawed

**C**. unstable

**D**. suitable

**6)** Based on information in the passage, it can be inferred that which of the following statements is true?

**A**. Because it can travel at very high speeds, the dry snow avalanche is the most dangerous type.

**B**. All avalanches, whether they are traveling at 10 miles per hour or 225 miles per hour, can be very dangerous.

**C**. The speed at which an avalanche travels shares a direct correlation with the degree of danger it poses.

**D**. Most casualties occur from wet slab avalanches.

**7)** Based on information in the passage, it can be inferred that wet slab avalanches and dry slab avalanches are the only two types that

**A**. consist of compacted snow

**B**. travel at higher speeds

**C**. occur at unexpected times of the year

**D**. result from below freezing temperatures

**8)** According to the passage, the avalanche capable of reaching the highest speed is the

**A**. dry snow avalanche

**B**. wet snow avalanche

**C**. wet slab avalanche

**D**. dry slab avalanche

**9)** The main purpose of the final paragraph is to

**A**. state the precise number of avalanche related causalities that happen each year

**B**. describe how avalanches typically are triggered

**C**. illustrate how tragic it can be to lose a friend in an avalanche related incident

**D**. suggest a way in which readers can help prevent avalanche related accidents

**II.**

If you visit Japan, you might choose to travel around the country by “Shinkansen” train. These high-speed trains connect the major cities of Japan. They are nicknamed “bullet trains” because they go very fast and have pointy noses like a bullet.

Bullet trains are a good way to travel for several reasons other than their speed. They are very **punctual**, often leaving on time to the second. They are also comfortable. All the seats face forward, and there is plenty of leg room. Most importantly, bullet trains are very safe. In their 35-year history, there have been only a few accidents and no deaths.

The only **downside** to bullet trains is that they are expensive. A ticket to travel to another city can cost almost as much as an airline ticket would. However, if you fly, you will land at an airport at the edge of a city. Train stations are usually right in the middle of a city. This means that it is often more convenient to take a bullet train instead of flying, because you will arrive exactly where you want to be.

**10)** What kind of train does the author talk about in this passage?

**A**. shinkanset

**B**. sinkansen

**C**. shinkansea

**D**. shinkansen

**11)** These trains are nicknamed “bullet trains” because of their

**A**. safety and shape

**B**. safety and timing

**C**. speed and shape

**D**. speed and timing

**12)** This passage was most likely written for

**A**. tourists who travel to Japan

**B**. Japanese business travelers

**C**. people who are interested in Japan

**D**. people who like to learn about trains

**13)** In paragraph 2, we learn that bullet trains are very punctual. As used in paragraph 2, which of these people can also be described as **punctual**?

**A**. Antonio, who checks his work carefully to make sure there are no mistakes

**B**. Rochelle, who has to have her desk organized in exactly the right way

**C**. Carolyn, who always calls someone if she says she is going to

**D**. Harvey, who is never late to class even when it is raining

**14)** According to the author, bullet trains are comfortable because

I. all the seats face forward

II. there is plenty of leg room

III. there is extra space for bags

**A**. I only

**B**. I and II only

**C**. II and III only

**D**. I, II, and III

**15)** As used in the final paragraph, the word **downside** most nearly means

**A.** hill

**B**. problem

**C**. argument

**D**. mistake

**16)** The author says that one reason to take a bullet train instead of flying is because the bullet train is often

**A.** much faster

**B**. much cheaper

**C**. more comfortable

**D**. more convenient

**17)** To help travelers decide between a bullet train and an airplane, it would be most helpful for the author to add information about

**A**. how many seats each one has

**B**. how many miles each one travels

**C**. how much time each one takes

**D**. which one most people choose

**III.**

Marcia says that all of her friends have a cell phone, but Marcia’s mom doesn't want to buy her one. Marcia's mom doesn't want Marcia to play video games either. What is more, the Internet scares her. Marcia's mom says, “If Marcia has a cell phone, how do we know whom she is talking to? Video games are bad for you. The Internet is dangerous and uncontrolled. It’s like having a gun in the house. We should just ban her from using the computer, and I'm not buying her a cell phone until she is eighteen. This is the only way we can be sure that Marcia is safe."

Marcia’s dad disagrees with Marcia's mom. Although he agrees that there are some dangers to it, he likes the Internet, and finds it to be very useful. “The trouble is,” he says, “We just can’t stop Marcia from using the Internet, as this would put her at a disadvantage. What is more, I like video games. I think that, when played in moderation, they are fun. Obviously, it is not good to play them without restraint or self-control. Finally, I think Marcia needs a cell phone. We can’t take these things away.”

**18)** Which of the following best describes the difference between Marcia's mom and Marcia's dad?

**A**. Mom wants to ban Marcia from using the computer, while dad likes to play video games.

**B**. Mom thinks technology is dangerous, while dad thinks it can be useful.

**C**. Mom cares little about Marcia's future, while dad is very supportive.

**D**. Mom is very strict while Dad is open minded.

**19)** Which of the following best describes the similarity between Marcia's mom and Marcia's dad?

**A**. Mom and dad both like technology.

**B**. Mom and dad both think video games are bad.

**C**. Mom and dad both think the internet is dangerous.

**D**. Mom and dad both care about Marcia's wellbeing.

**20)** In paragraph 1, Marcia's mom says, "It's like having a gun in the house." She says this in order to

**A**. support the idea that the Internet is dangerous

**B**. reject the claim that guns can be safe if used responsibly

**C**. encourage Marcia's dad to purchase a gun

**D**. explain why the Internet is uncontrolled

**21)** In paragraph 2, Marcia's dad says, "We just can’t stop Marcia from using the Internet, as this would put her at a disadvantage." What does Marcia's dad mean by this?

**A**. Marcia needs to learn how to use the internet if she wants to have friends in the future.

**B**. Marcia should not stop using the internet because this will seriously slow her learning.

**C.** If a person's ability to use the internet becomes important in the future, Marcia will be at a loss.

**D**. If Marcia does not learn to use the internet on her own, then she will never learn to recognize its dangers.

**22)** In paragraph 2, Marcia's dad says, "Finally, I think Marcia needs a cell phone." Given what you know about Marcia’s mom’s concerns, what is the best reason Marcia's dad can provide to convince Marcia's mom that Marcia needs a cell phone?

**A.** Marcia can use her cell phone to talk to her friends, instead of needing to borrow one of ours.

**B**. Having a cell phone will teach Marcia how to use new technology.

**C**. Because all of her friends have one, it would be unfair to disallow Marcia to have a cell phone.

**D**. If Marcia's is in trouble she can use her cell phone to call for help.

**23)** Which of the following describes a level of game play that Marcia' dad would disapprove of?

**A**. On Saturday, Marcia plays video games all evening. The next day, she wakes up early and goes for a walk through the woods near her house. When her friend calls Marcia, they talk about what they are going to wear to school on Monday.

**B**. Marcia plays video games for an hour or two. Then she eats lunch and meets her friends at the skating rink. That night, Marcia and her friends go to see a movie.

**C**. Marcia plays video games all morning. When her friends ask her come play outside, Marcia tells them that she is too busy and continues to play.

**D**. Marcia plays video games for an hour every day for five days straight. During these days, she does not watch any TV.

**24)** Marcia's mom can best be described as

A. ridiculous

B. careful

C. cruel

D. rude