

TEST 1

READING

Task 1

Read the texts below. Match choices (A–H) to (1–5). There are three choices you do not need to use.

AMERICANS: MYTHS, STEREOTYPES AND PARADOXES

1 _____.

When we think of Americans, we usually associate them with colourful clothes, noisy behaviour and overweight. But what are they really like? What values do they have? It is not possible to answer this question explicitly but it seems that some American characteristics are a legacy of the Puritan ideology.

2 _____.

The Puritans thought of themselves as a special people able to build 'a city upon a hill'. They considered their success and increasing prosperity a sign of God's grace and did not respect those who failed. They promoted hard work, self-reliance and believed in man's unlimited ability to make progress. Even today their ideas are still popular. The special significance of succeeding in life has come to characterize the American culture ever since.

3 _____.

American children are taught that drive, initiative and activity are the essence of life. It is believed that passivity warps the mind and that is why it is not accepted. Generally, Americans are characterized by a very practical sense and optimism. They never give up and even if they have problems, they are always trying to find some solution. Their recipe is simple: You have no money? No job? Don't wait! Do something! Be flexible! There is always a way out! Take a course in gardening, cooking, ceramics, embroidering, typing... Promote yourself! You must find some way to achieve success! If you don't, you are a muff and a crock.

4 _____.

Americans see their country as a vast continent of unlimited possibilities, the Promised Land where everyone has a chance to become perfect and successful. Success means money, hence Americans seem to be preoccupied with the thought of how to make money. Many of them still believe in the myth 'from rags to riches'. However, not everyone becomes a millionaire in the richest country in the world. The vast majority of Americans have their own house, a good car and a well-paid job. The less fortunate ones rent a sleazy apartment and live on unemployment benefits. It is also commonly accepted that in that country of welfare there are some people living in cardboard boxes, sleeping on the pavement and carrying their belongings in plastic bags.

5 _____.

Another American obsession, apart from money, is being fit and healthy. Illnesses make life complicated, hence Americans put a lot of effort into prevention. They regularly see specialists, take tons of vitamins, minerals and pills, practise sports (especially jogging), and keep a healthy, low-fat diet. Paradoxically, there are more overweight people in the States than anywhere else. It is not surprising since they are constantly tempted by calorific 'junk food' snacks, fry-ups, hot-dogs, hamburgers, pizza, chocolate bars, chips, cookies and so on.

A The Americans are people with a very practical sense and optimism.

B Puritan ideology is the ideology with strict moral principles.

C American children are taught that the care of their parents is the essence of the life.

D American characteristics are a legacy of the Puritan ideology.

A B C D E F G H

1								
2								
3								
4								
5								

E Being fit and healthy is another American obsession, apart from money.

F The Americans are usually associated with rich people and big mansions.

G Puritan ideology is the ideology without any moral principles.

H American belief in the myth 'from rags to riches'.

Task 2

Read the text below. For assignments (6–10) choose the correct answer (A, B, C, D).

A MESSAGE TO THE STARS

Our planet Earth is one of nine planets revolving around the Sun, a fairly small and ordinary star, which lies in the outer areas of the Milky Way galaxy. There are about 250 billion stars in our galaxy and billions of galaxies in the universe. People have always wondered about the possibility of intelligent life forms on other planets. In recent years this has become serious scientific speculation. Some scientists believe that there must be large numbers of stars with planets which could support living intelligent beings. Perhaps we will never know. The nearest star is 4,3 light years away. A light year is the distance covered by light travelling at about 186,000 miles a second in one year. It would take the fastest Earth spacecraft about 40,000 years to reach the nearest star.

For a number of years radio telescopes have been trying to pick up signals from outer space, so far without success. There are, however, millions of possible radio frequencies, and there is no reason why a completely alien civilization should not use a different type of communication, such as X-rays or even a type of wave we have not yet discovered. Suppose contacts were made with beings 300 light years away. By the time we had sent our reply and received their response, the Earth would be 600 years older. It would be an interesting, but rather slow-moving conversation!

6. The nearest star is
A 4,3 light years away B 1,5 light years away
C 2 light years away D 10 light years away
7. There are about ... in our galaxy.
A 100 billion stars B 200 billion stars
C 250 billion stars D 10 billion stars
8. A light year is the distance covered by light travelling at about ... in one year.
A 186,000 miles a second B 100,000 miles a second
C 20,000 miles a second D 10,000 miles a second
9. Suppose contacts were made with beings
A 100 light years away B 200 light years away
C 10 light years away D 300 light years away
10. It would take the fastest spacecraft about ... to reach the nearest star.
A 40,000 years B 10,000 years
C 200,000 years D 15,000 years

Task 3

Read the text below. Match choices (A–H) to (11–16). There are two choices you do not need to use.

NEW YORK MUSEUMS AND ART CENTRES

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The Guggenheim Museum is at Fifth Avenue and 89th Street. It specializes in modern painting, sculpture and graphic arts. The building itself is a place of modern art designed by the famous architect Frank Lloyd Wright.

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