

2005 年东北师范大学英语实践基础考研试题

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**Part I Vocabulary and Grammar (20 points)**

**I. Complete the sentences by choosing one of the four alternatives indicated as A, B, C and D. (20 points)**

- Several short trips to smaller Hawaiian islands were all part of Benny's \_\_\_\_\_.  
A. itinerary B. reservation C. transportation D. agency
- Following dinner, everyone was to attend a \_\_\_\_\_.  
A. museum B. cinema C. orchestra D. concert
- Before making his decision, Brad took his time reviewing the entire \_\_\_\_\_.  
A. patron B. menu C. luncheon D. intermission
- Due to the severity of his injury, George was taken directly to the \_\_\_\_\_.  
A. nursing home B. insurance agency C. waiting room D. emergency room
- Ruth used a "50% off" \_\_\_\_\_ to purchase her new shirt.  
A. commodity B. coupon C. receipt D. waitresses
- In order to buy a new car, Betty was required to make a \$2,000 \_\_\_\_\_ on the vehicle.  
A. down payment B. lease C. auction D. installment
- After nearly a week in the hospital, Sarah needed a few more weeks for \_\_\_\_\_.  
A. recuperation B. pills C. prescription D. medicine
- Before calling technical support, make sure each and every \_\_\_\_\_ is securely plugged in.  
A. socket B. activation C. cable D. current
- Bacon is the most important \_\_\_\_\_ in this particular recipe.  
A. mutton B. ingredient C. poultry D. instrument
- Ashley really wanted to purchase a \_\_\_\_\_ since her desktop was much too heavy to carry around with her.

- A. cyberspace                      B. website                      C.  
 laptop                      D. digital
11. Pressing the F12 function key to \_\_\_\_\_ a second program which backs up all the data.  
 A. activate                      B. conduct                      C.  
 charge                      D. convert
12. An electrical \_\_\_\_\_ in the kitchen caused the fire which destroyed the entire office building.  
 A. terminal                      B. malfunction                      C.  
 laboratory                      D. sensor
13. John does not like his \_\_\_\_\_ since it meant he had to travel two or three times per week.  
 A. consumer                      B. appointment                      C.  
 assignment                      D. consensus
14. Since the family had recently experienced financial hardships, the loan officer decided to \_\_\_\_\_ the usual fees.  
 A. trade                      B. waive                      C.  
 compete                      D. assemble
15. Individuals who excel at their jobs usually consider their work a top \_\_\_\_\_.  
 A. outlook                      B. liability                      C.  
 purchase                      D. priority
16. After the election was over, the loser \_\_\_\_\_ to the winner.  
 A. inspected                      B. abided                      C.  
 conceded                      D. traded
17. One of the Tom's new responsibilities was to go to local colleges and universities to \_\_\_\_\_ students into the construction management business.  
 A. retire                      B. recruit                      C.  
 promote                      D. transfer
18. Since the winter season was approaching, Clare went shopping for warmer \_\_\_\_\_ for the master bedroom.  
 A. furniture                      B. bedding                      C.  
 construction                      D. kitchenware
19. The \_\_\_\_\_ room was plenty large and allowed Andy extra room to fold the clean clothes.  
 A. laundry                      B. cellar                      C.  
 kitchen                      D. attic
20. Pam spent \$30,000 to \_\_\_\_\_ the old home and modernize it.  
 A. utilize                      B. renovate                      C.  
 restore                      D. receive

## II. Find a suitable place to insert the words in the box in the sentences below. (10 points)

all of a sudden    at first glance    at the time    for the time being    in the end    on the spur

of the moment from the distance on second  
 thoughts presumably potentially without doubt

**Example:**

*She'll pass the exam.*

*She'll pass the exam without doubt.*

1. It was a terrible shock but I soon got over it.
2. It was a terrible journey but we got there.
3. I was tempted to dive off the cliff, but I decided it might be a bit dangerous.
4. Electricity is dangerous, so treat it very respect.
5. He has bought that dress specially for the wedding.
6. I hadn't made any plan; I just decided to go.
7. I was driving along the motorway and then the engine just burst into flames.
8. It looked like quite a nice restaurant but when I got closer I realized it was just a café – and not very nice either.
9. I thought it was going to be quite an easy exam, but in actual fact I found some of the questions very tricky.
10. I've got a small dictionary which I can use, but I plan to buy a much better one when I start my new course.

**III. The text below contains a number of grammatical errors. Read the text carefully and underline the mistakes and then correct them. (10 points)**

A distraught mother has discovered she is bringing up the wrong baby \_\_\_\_\_  
 for the past six years. And the couple who adopted her real baby  
 are \_\_\_\_\_  
 refusing to let her see the boy, said that he must be never told the truth. \_\_\_\_\_  
 Now heartbreaking Jodie is taking the case to court in what is set to  
 be \_\_\_\_\_  
 one of America's strangest legal battle at the custody of a child. The lawful \_\_\_\_\_  
 truth was revealed when Jodie's marriage began to  
 disintegrating. \_\_\_\_\_  
 In one of their many rows, husband Walter claimed that he was not the \_\_\_\_\_  
 real father of their son. Blood test not only proved him right,  
 but \_\_\_\_\_  
 also showed that Jodie could not be the real  
 mother. \_\_\_\_\_  
 Further investigations revealed a tragic mix-up at Griffith  
 Hospital \_\_\_\_\_  
 where Jodie had given birth to. The hospital's supposed  
 foolproof \_\_\_\_\_  
 system of identity bracelets had gone wrong, and somewhere  
 between \_\_\_\_\_  
 the maternity ward and the nursery two babies switched. Jodie's real  
 child \_\_\_\_\_  
 was given to a young mother who had already arranged her baby to

be \_\_\_\_\_  
 adopted. And the couple who adopted the boy, and named him Melvin,  
 are \_\_\_\_\_  
 now saying that the young boy's life would be too badly disrupted if he \_\_\_\_\_  
 ever \_\_\_\_\_ sees \_\_\_\_\_ Jodie \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ the  
 truth.  
 Meanwhile Jodie has now officially adopted the child she has been looking  
 after \_\_\_\_\_  
 for six years. But yesterday she vowed: "I'll fight to the end to get  
 Melvin  
 back. I'm \_\_\_\_\_ entitled to have him – he's my  
 son."

**IV. Fill the gaps in the text below with words given. Note there are more words than needed. (10 points)**

burning flame fire glistering grace groaned glorious heaving imposing  
 purple quietly silent

"But we did not make a start at once. We must see the last of the ship. And so the boats drifted about that night, 1. \_\_\_\_\_ and setting on the swell. The men dozed, waked, sighed, 2. \_\_\_\_\_ I looked at the burning ship." "Between the darkness of earth and heaven she was 3. \_\_\_\_\_ fiercely upon a disc of 4. \_\_\_\_\_ sea shot by the blood-red play of gleams; upon a disc of water 5. \_\_\_\_\_ and sinister. A high, clear 6. \_\_\_\_\_, an immense and lonely flame, ascended from the ocean, and from its summit the black smoke poured continuously at the sky. She burned furiously; mournful and 7. \_\_\_\_\_ like a funeral pile kindled in the night, surrounded by the sea, watched over by the stars. A magnificent death had come like a 8. \_\_\_\_\_, like a gift, like a reward to that old ship at the end of her laborious days. The surrender of her weary ghost to the keeping of stars and sea was stirring like the sight of a 9. \_\_\_\_\_ triumph. The masts fell just before daybreak, and for a moment there was a burst and turmoil of sparks that seemed to fill with flying fire the night, patient and watchful, the vast night lying 10. \_\_\_\_\_ upon the sea..."

**Part II Reading Comprehension (50 points)**

**I. There are five reading passages followed by a total of twenty-five multiple choice questions.**

**Read the passage and then make your choices. (25 points)**

**Passage One**

Sir Isaac Newton noted in 1672 that a beam of sunlight passed through prism and allowed to fall on a white surface becomes a "rainbow" of varying colors: red at one end, ranging through orange, yellow, green and blue, to violet at the other. This colored strip of pure lights is called a *spectrum*, the Latin word meaning "apparition."

Sunlight consists of a mixture of light of varying wavelengths that affect our eyes differently, so that we see the components of sunlight as colors. When a beam of light passes into glass at an acute angle, it is bent, or refracted, and if the glass is a triangular prism, the wavelengths are refracted farther in the same direction, and the spectrum appears. Light that appears red is refracted the most.



Scientists have found that particular substances, when heated to a white heat, give off only certain colors; when the light from this heated substance is passed through a slit, each color in the light will form an image of the slit at a certain predictable position in the spectrum, leaving the rest of the band black. Sunlight passing through a cool gas will have certain of its colors absorbed – dark images of the slit will then appear against the colored background.

By using a spectroscope, an instrument through which one can view a spectrum against a marked scale so that the position of each color line can be located exactly, scientists have learned about the composition of the sun and the star.

1. A beam of sunlight becomes a “rainbow” when it \_\_\_\_\_.  
 A. passes through a pane of glass                      B. falls on any white surface  
 C. passes through a prism                                  D. is composed of pure light
2. Sunlight consists of \_\_\_\_\_.  
 A. a mixture of light of varying wavelengths      B. pure color  
 C. light waves of equal lengths                      D. light waves traveling at varying angles
3. The spectrum results from light waves being \_\_\_\_\_.  
 A. projected in an unvarying pattern                  B. heated by their passage through glass  
 C. refracted at any angle                                  D. refracted by a prism
4. Scientists have found that certain substances, when heated, will \_\_\_\_\_.  
 A. absorb all colors    B. refract all colors  
 C. give off only certain colors                          D. reflect certain colors
5. The selection says that scientists have used the spectroscope to study the \_\_\_\_\_.  
 A. composition of the sun and stars                      B. nature of light waves  
 C. behavior of gases    D. positions of the sun and stars

#### Passage Two

Fingerprints, one of the great deciders of innocence or guilt in criminal charges, are now in the dock themselves. This is because of a growing number of claims from defendants that their “prints” have been “lifted” and planted at scenes of crimes. And these allegations are being taken seriously by lawyers, judges and policemen because it is possible to move a fingerprint from one spot and place it elsewhere.

With one of the cornerstones of evidence now being placed in doubt a committee of criminal lawyers is carrying out an inquiry into fingerprinting. The investigation has been ordered by Justice, the prestigious legal organization, and a report is due early next year. Last night a spokesman for Justice said: “There are an increasing number of cases where people are claiming their prints have been transferred and put in incrimination objects. We are not aiming to establish if these allegations are true or not, but we are questioning current fingerprinting methods as part of a general investigation into scientific evidence. Some of Britain’s top criminal lawyers are worried about this increasing number of claims.

How can a fingerprint be transferred? A finger mark left on a greasy glass or some other smooth surface can be “lifted” with a strip of adhesive. It can then be deposited on another, perhaps incriminating, object. Accusations about “planted prints” were first put up at an Old Bailey IRA bomb trial nine years ago – without success. Fingerprints at the scene of a crime used to be dusted down with fine powder, photographed for identification purposes, then the pictures and the objects

carrying the prints were produced in court.

However, since 1973 a new method of taking prints has been generally used in Britain. Police experts now use a strip of adhesive tape to “lift” a print which is then produced in court as evidence. Before 1973 the object on which the prints were found – a bottle, dagger or a gun – used to be shown in court as well. This is no longer necessary. As a result criminals are claiming that their prints have been “lifted” and planted elsewhere. There have been two successful claims in the United States, though this line of defense has failed in Britain.

According to the ex-chief of Scotland Yard’s fingerprint department, Mr. Harold Squires, who is now an independent defense witness: “More than 55% of the cases I now get are making these claims. But so far I have not seen any fingerprint evidence that proves the allegation to be true. Petty crooks are always accusing the police of lifting their prints and planting them at the scene of a crime.” According to ex-chief Superintendent Squires, lifting a mark and transferring it to another object “requires great skill and trouble.” He added: “It’s almost impossible but it can be done. It can usually be easily detected by someone like me, but there is a chance that even I may not be able to tell.”

6. Fingerprints have been traditionally regarded as \_\_\_\_\_.
  - A. the only proof of a suspected criminal’s innocence or guilt
  - B. no proof of a suspected criminal’s innocence or guilt
  - C. one of many proofs of a suspected criminal’s innocence or guilt
  - D. a key proof of a suspected criminal’s innocence or guilt
7. The investigation into fingerprints is \_\_\_\_\_.
  - A. to prove that policemen have been behaving dishonestly
  - B. to establish the truth of the allegations
  - C. part of a wider investigation.
  - D. to allay the fears of some top criminal lawyers.
8. The text suggests that \_\_\_\_\_.
  - A. some of the allegations against fingerprinting are justified
  - B. transferring fingerprints is a very delicate operation
  - C. transferring fingerprints is too much trouble for most policemen
  - D. it is likely that some policemen transfer fingerprints
9. We learn from Paragraph 4 that since 1973, \_\_\_\_\_.
  - A. fingerprints at the scene of a crime have been dusted down with fine powder and photographed
  - B. it has been necessary to produce in court the objects on which the prints were found
  - C. there have been successful claims against police fingerprinting methods in the United States and Great Britain
  - D. police fingerprinting methods have been simplified
10. Mr. Squires seems most concerned that \_\_\_\_\_.
  - A. the number of suspected criminals accusing the police of transferring their fingerprints
  - B. the increasing number of small time criminals
  - C. the dishonesty of the police
  - D. the unreliability of the new fingerprinting methods

### Passage Three

Is language, like food, a basic human need without which a child at a critical period of life can be

starved and damaged? Judging from the drastic experiment of Frederick II in the thirteenth century it may be. Hoping to discover what language a child would speak if he heard no mother tongue he told the nurses to keep silent.

All the infants died before the first year. But clearly there was more than language deprivation here. What was missing was good mothering. Without good mothering, in the first year of life especially, the capacity to survive is seriously affected.

Today no such drastic deprivation exists as that ordered by Frederick. Nevertheless, some children are still backward in speaking. Most often the reason for this is that the mother is insensitive to the cues and signals of the infant, whose brain is programmed to mop up language rapidly. There are critical times, it seems, when children learn more readily. If these sensitive periods are neglected, the ideal time for acquiring skills passes and they might never be learned so easily again. A bird learns to sing and to fly rapidly at the right time, but the process is slow and hard once the critical stage has passed.

Linguists suggest that speech milestones are reached in a fixed sequence and at a constant age, but there are cases where speech has started late in a child who eventually turns out to be of high IQ (Intelligence Quotient). At twelve weeks a baby smile and utters vowel-like sounds; at twelve months he can speak simple words and understand simple commands; at eighteen months he has a vocabulary of three to fifty words. At three he knows about 1000 words which he can put into sentences, and at four his language differs from that of his parents in style rather in grammar.

Recent evidence suggests that an infant is born with the capacity to speak. What is special about Man's brain, compared with that of the monkey, is the complex system which enables a child to connect the sight and feel of, say, a teddy-bear with the sound pattern "teddy – bear." And even more incredible is the young brain's ability to pick out an order in language from the hubbub of sound around him, to analyze, to combine and recombine the parts of a language in novel ways.

But speech has to be triggered, and this depends on interaction between the mother and the child, where the mother recognizes the cues and signals in the child's babbling, clinging, grasping, crying, smiling, and responds to them. Insensitivity of the mother to these signals dulls the interaction because the child gets discouraged and sends out only the obvious signals. Sensitivity to the child's non-verbal cues is essential to the growth and development of language.

11. Frederick II's experiment was drastic because \_\_\_\_\_.
  - A. he wanted to prove that children are born with the ability to speak
  - B. he ignored the importance of mothering to the infant
  - C. he was unkind to the nurses
  - D. he wanted to see if the children would die before they reached the age of one
12. The reason some children are backward in speaking today is that \_\_\_\_\_.
  - A. they do not listen carefully to their mothers
  - B. their brains have to absorb too much language at once
  - C. their mothers do not respond to their attempts to speak
  - D. their mothers are not intelligent enough to help them.
13. By "critical times" the author means \_\_\_\_\_.
  - A. difficult periods in the child's life
  - B. moments when the child becomes critical towards its mother
  - C. important stages in the child's development
  - D. times when mothers often neglect their children



14. Which of the following is not implied in the message? \_\_\_\_\_

- A. The faculty of speech is inborn in man.
- B. Children do not need to be encouraged to speak.
- C. The child's brain is highly selective.
- D. Most children learn their language in definite stages.

15. If the mother does not respond to her child's signals \_\_\_\_\_.

- A. the child will never be able to speak properly
- B. the child will stop giving out signals
- C. the child will invent a language of his own
- D. the child will make little effort to speak

#### Passage Four

In face of the numbers of people who war suffering anxiety attacks over AIDS, global warming, ozone sharp decline, and the proliferation of chemical weapons, you have a disturbingly large population easily influenced by the madness aroused with the arrival of the period of the second thousand years.

Even supposedly sober observers are taking positions in the millenarian parade. Novelist, poet, and science writer Brad Leithauser is convinced the second millennium is going to bring a "psychological shift" that will "literally redefine what it means to be a human being."

Leithauser believes that global weather patterns will undergo random, even chaotic, changes produced by the dreaded greenhouse effect. In his novel *Hence* set around 2000, Leithauser visualizes religious leaders seizing on the resultant disturbances – flooded cities, soaring cancer rates, and what have you – and taking them "as a sign that the end is near."

At the same time, Leithauser thinks, a combination of high-speed living and runaway technology will serve further to alienate people from themselves. He predicts that invasive media will bring an inescapable large number of stimuli. In this atmosphere of "ever-shortening collective memory," books will become pass. Indeed, any form of reflective solitude will become "quietly sinful," says a character in Leithauser's novel, and seeking it out will require "almost an act of social defiance." Economic expert Ravi Bartra is equally convinced that by the dawn of the second millennium people will have undergone a thorough spiritual and economic transformation. He warns that the voices of the rich will soon superheat the global economy to the point of explosion and collapse, in the wake of which "society will border on chaos. There will be a polarization of society into two classes – the haves and the have-nots – and there will be a lot of crime and street demonstrations" as the angry have-nots make strong claim for food, shelter, and social justice.

But Batra, unlike Leithauser, sees the coming bimillennial breakdown as a sort of getting rid of sin by fire on the way to a better world. From the ashes of economic and social collapse, he says, will rise a "higher consciousness" – a climate in which pornography, selfishness, and extreme concentration of wealth are reproached and society becomes "more concerned with the handicapped and the weaker." On the job, he foresees "far more democratic large factories, where employees not only sit on boards of directors but actually run companies." Meanwhile, discipline will capture the home-and-family front, with "children obeying their parents more, and more family stability, fewer divorces."

16. The first two paragraphs say that, faced with the various problems, people are likely to become crazy about \_\_\_\_\_.

- A. the turn of the millennium
- B. global warming and ozone depletion





relocation of which is extremely costly. Still, a search should be made for such opportunities. The current lack of adequate ambulatory care facilities raises another possibility. Some floors or other large compact areas of hospitals could be transferred from inpatient to ambulatory uses. Reimbursement of ambulatory service is chaotic, but the problem is being addressed. The overhead associated with the entire hospital should not be charged even *pro rata* to the ambulatory facilities. Even if it were, the total cost would probably be less than that of building a new facility. Many other issues would also need study, especially the potential over-centralization of ambulatory services.

The Planning Commission language seems to imply that one reason for closing smaller hospitals is that they are "mainly voluntary and proprietary," thus, preserving the public hospital system by making the rest of the hospital system for many reasons, but the issue should be faced directly and not hidden behind arguments about hospital size if indeed that was the meaning.

21. The best title for the passage would be \_\_\_\_\_.  
 A. Maintaining Adequate Hospital Facilities  
 B. Defending the Public Hospitals  
 C. Protecting the Proprietary and Voluntary Hospitals  
 D. Economic Efficiency in Hospital Bed Closing
22. The Planning Commission is accused by the author of being \_\_\_\_\_.  
 A. unfair                                      B. foolish                                      C. shortsighted                                      D. ignorant
23. The author's purpose in discussing ambulatory care is to \_\_\_\_\_.  
 A. discuss alternatives to closing hospital beds  
 B. present a method of reducing the fiscal disadvantages of closing only parts of larger hospitals  
 C. help preserve the public hospital system  
 D. attack the inefficient use of space on larger hospitals
24. With which of the following is the author least likely to agree? \_\_\_\_\_.  
 A. A proposal to save costs in prison system by building only very large prison complexes.  
 B. A plan to stop the closing of any beds whatsoever in the city, until the costs of various alternatives can be fully considered.  
 C. A proposal by an architecture firm that new hospital buildings have centralized record systems.  
 D. A mayoral commission being formed to study the plight of the elderly.
25. How does the author feel that his suggestions for closing inpatient beds could impact on the ambulatory care system? \_\_\_\_\_.  
 A. Ambulatory care costs will probably be reduced.  
 B. A reduction of hospital beds will increase the demand for ambulatory services.  
 C. Smaller hospitals will have to cut back ambulatory services to stay fiscally viable.  
 D. The use as ambulatory facilities of the space made available in large hospitals by bed closings might result in having too many ambulatory services based in large hospitals.

## II. Read the following passage and then answer the questions following it. (25 points)

(1) Humor, which ought to give rise to only the most light-hearted and gay feelings, can often stir up vehemence and animosity. Evidently it is dearer to us than we realize. Men will take almost

any kind of criticism except the observation that they have no sense of humor. A man will admit to being a coward or a liar or a thief or a poor mechanic or a bad swimmer, but tell him he has a dreadful sense of humor and you might as well have slandered his mother. Even if he is civilized enough to pretend to make light of your statement, he will secretly believe that he has not only a good sense of humor but one superior to most. He has, in other words, a completely blind spot on the subject. This is all the more surprising when you consider that not one man in ten million can give you any kind of intelligent answer as to what humor is or why he laughs.

(2) One day when I was about twelve years old, it occurred to me to wonder about the phenomenon of laughter. At first thought: It was easy enough to see what I laugh at and why I am amused, but why, at such times do I open mouth and exhale in jerking gasps and wrinkle up my eyes and throw back my head and hallow like an animal? Why do I not instead rap four times on the top of my head or whistle or whirl about?

(3) That was twenty years ago and I am still wondering, except that I now no longer even take my first assumption for granted; I no longer clearly understand why I laugh at what amuses me nor why things are amusing. I have illustrious company in my confusion, of course. Many of the great minds of history have brought their powers of concentration to bear on the mystery of humor, and, to date, their conclusions are so contradictory and ephemeral that they cannot possibly be classified as scientific.

(4) Many definitions of the comic are incomplete and many are simply rewordings of things we already know. Aristotle, for example, defined the ridiculous as that which is incongruous sort of observation, for if at this minute I insert here the word *rutabagas*, I have introduced something incongruous, something not painful or dangerous, and also something not funny. Of course, it must be admitted that Aristotle did not claim that every painless incongruity is ridiculous, but as soon as we have gone as far as this admission, we begin to see that we have come to grips with a ghost. When we think we have it pinned, it suddenly appears behind us, mocking us.

(5) An all-embracing definition of humor has been attempted by many philosophers, but no definition, no formula has ever been devised that is entirely satisfactory. Aristotle's definition has come to be known loosely as the "disappointment" theory, or the "frustrated expectation," but he also discussed another theory, borrowed in part from Plato, which states that the pleasure we derive in laughing is an enjoyment of the misfortune of others, due to a momentary feeling of superiority or gratified vanity in appreciation of the fact that we ourselves are not in the observed predicament.

(6) Most of the later theories of humor fall under one of these two headings. If a man slips on a banana peeling and falls, we laugh, and in laughing we justify the derision theory. If a man says, "Here's a list of people who won't watch Arthur Godfrey any more," and then hands you an obituary column, your laughter arises from a frustrated expectation. But, alas, our definitions have already begun to turn to rubber, for it's obvious that you could also be laughing at the man who slipped on the banana peeling because you expected him to continue to a particular point, and the sudden disappointment or frustration of your expectation was what aroused your risibility. Likewise, a joke that derails your train of thought could also be amusing partly because of your contempt for the ignorance of the speaker.

(7) There is another theory, undoubtedly of some value, which claims that all laughter originated in the gleeful shout of victory over an adversary. I believe this was probably the starting point of much of our present laughter, but it doesn't explain to me why babies smile and laugh. Cicero said



that the ridiculous rested on a certain meanness and deformity, and that a joke, to be really amusing, had to be at someone's expense. He also admitted, however, that the very funniest jokes are simply those in which we expect to hear one thing and then hear another. To be made aware that the pursuit of laughter takes place in an intellectual maze, we have only to realize that many a comment at someone's expense is not a joke at all, and that every frustrated expectation is not automatically amusing. Perhaps laughter is a simple gift of the gods, a potentially of the mind that, because it varies from individual to individual, will never be completely understood.

(8) Humor is then seen to be as indefinable as beauty. My favorite color is blue, yours is green, another's is red. I like Bach, you like Beethoven, another likes Guy Lombardo. I like the exact, scenic translations of Ka Vinci, you prefer the poetic distortions of Matisse, another chooses Picasso. I laugh at Groucho Marx, you prefer Jackie Gleason, another tunes in to Eddie Cantor. We cannot be dictated to in our artistic judgments. Perhaps a joke has no objective meaning whatever; perhaps its existence as a joke is altogether subjective and different in the case of each observer.

(9) I believe one important natural function of laughter is to help us control our emotions. The person who purposely looks for the element of humor in an uncomfortable situation is making use of an important procedure in emotional control. The ability to laugh off an awkward incident has saved many an unpleasant moment in social life. Laughter is superb relaxation.

(10) There is something about laughter which can sweep away annoyance, jealousy, and even disgust. Laughter can turn aside anger because it is contagious. The old observation about the yawn is true of the laugh, too. Your laughter will make another person laugh, and he in turn, will make your laughter more hearty.

(11) And yet laughter itself is not the prime mover in such situations. It is but the outward, visible manifestation of a sudden inner state of mind.

(12) Babies, when they first begin to smile and chuckle – often at the age of six or seven weeks – seem to do so without rhyme or reason. Later their laughter becomes conditioned, and they learn to use it at appropriate moments. The mystery of it all arises thus: For every “rule” explaining the psychology of laughter, there are a thousand exceptions. Some theories say suddenness and surprise are necessary to humor, but one minute's thought will serve to produce a wealth of evidence that familiar things which the mind can slowly savor are also often vastly amusing.

(13) My dozen years in catering to public taste have convinced me that what people will laugh at is almost entirely determined by their social conditioning. In his nightly performance in *Fanny*, Ezio Pinza told a joke that pertained to heart attacks. Night after night the joke got a tremendous laugh, but for several days after President Eisenhower's heart attack in the fall of 1955, his joke was met with complete silence. Any TV comedian's secretary can show you letters that pour in daily protesting jokes about mother-in-law, fat people, dogs, criminals, traveling salesmen, policemen, politicians, cowboys, Indians, and what have you. These jokes are hilariously received by millions of people, but a few individuals, because of their personal conditioning, undertake to write letters to Jack Benny or Bob Hope telling them that the jokes are simply not funny. I guess it's not too surprising that people don't really know what's not funny because, as I say, we all have a lot of trouble telling for sure what is funny and why.

(14) To me, one interesting thing is that people who get around to formulating theories that purport to explain humor always seem to state them with vigorous certainty. If I were to state a theory of humor (and I am not going to), I'd start it out with a phrase like “Most humorous ideas



seem to be..." or "Much of what men regards as amusing..." But no. Plato just came right out and said, "The pleasure of the ludicrous originates in the sight of another's misfortune." I wonder what Plato would say about this poem:

Roses are red,  
 Violets are blue.  
 You think this will rhyme,  
 But it won't.

(15) That's funny for one reason. You expected one thing and got another. So we're back to Aristotle's disappointment theory. But I wonder what Aristotle would say about this line: I've been turned down so many times if I feel like an old bedspread.

(16) The humor here involves neither a frustrated expectation nor a feeling of superiority. If anything, jokes of that type make the hearer feel inferior to the speaker. A lot of this sort involves what we might call the "double meaning" theory. In this instance we are suddenly reminded that the phrase "to turn down" has more than one meaning. So with this new theory we're back in our maze again, as confused as ever about the mystery of laughter.

**[1] Decide whether the following statements are true or false. Write T for true and F for false. (5 points)**

26. Humor sometimes can bring you hostility instead of joy.
27. The author began to wonder about the phenomenon of laughter when he grew up.
28. Babies' laughter becomes conditioned at the age of six weeks.
29. Laughing off an awkward incident is often unpleasant for most people.
30. The author has a more accurate definition of humour.

**[2] Paraphrase the following sentences. (10 points)**

31. To me, one interesting thing is that people who get around to formulating theories that purport to explain humor always seem to state them with vigorous certainty. (Para. 14)
32. Many of the great minds of history have brought their powers of concentration to bear on the mystery of humor, and, to date, their conclusions are so contradictory and ephemeral that they cannot possibly be classified as scientific. (Para. 3)
33. But, alas, our definitions have already begun to turn to rubber, for it's obvious that you could also be laughing at the man who slipped on the banana peeling because you expected him to continue to a particular point, and the sudden disappointment or frustration of your expectation was what aroused your risibility. (Para. 6)
34. Cicero said that the ridiculous rested on a certain meanness and deformity, and that a joke, to be really amusing, had to be at someone's expense. (Para. 7)
35. Some theories say suddenness and surprise are necessary to humor, but one minute's thought will serve to produce a wealth of evidence that familiar things which the mind can slowly savor are also often vastly amusing. (Para. 12)

**[3] Answer the following questions briefly according to your understanding of the passage. (10 points)**

36. The author asks two rhetorical questions in Paragraph 2. What is the author's purpose in using them?

37. What can be an appropriate title to this passage?
38. What idea does the author want to transfer through Paragraph 14?
39. What is the major theme of the whole passage?
40. "Humor is the saving grave of us," but humor is not with everybody. In your opinion, how should we cultivate our good sense of humor?

### Part III Writing (50 points)

**I. Margaret Fuller, who is called sometimes "the most important woman of the nineteenth century," said: "If you have knowledge, let others light your candles at it." How do you understand the statement? Write a short essay of about 200 words in which you should (1) explain your own understanding of the statement; (2) comment on the idea Fuller conveys with this statement based on your own interpretation. (20 points)**

**II. Write an essay of about 400 words in which you explain the causes of any drastic change of opinion, attitude, or behavior you have undergone in your life, and how this change has affected you life. Your composition will be evaluated by the following for basic principles: honesty, clarity, brevity and variety. (30 points)**