

TOEFL Reading Sample Paper 04

- A) **Subject:** Reading Comprehension
- B) **Total Questions:** 20 Questions (2 Passages — 10 Questions per Passage)
- C) **Marking Scheme & Rules:**
- **Standard Questions:** 1 Point (Multiple Choice, Insert Text, etc.)
 - **Prose Summary:** 2 Points. This is the final question of each set.
 - **Partial Credit:** Awarded for the Prose Summary (usually 1 point if 2 out of 3 choices are correct).
 - **Negative Marking:** None. 0 points for incorrect answers.
 - **Timing:** Recommended 35 minutes for the entire section.

PASSAGE I: The Evolution of the Perfume Industry

Paragraph 1: The history of perfumery is a global narrative spanning thousands of years. In Ancient Rome, scent was a symbol of status, with emperors reportedly bathing in aromatic waters. Following the decline of Rome, much of this olfactory knowledge was preserved and advanced by Islamic civilizations. Arab and Persian pharmacists pioneered the use of alcohol in distillation, a technique that required significantly fewer raw materials—such as flower petals—compared to the ancient method of soaking flora in warm oil. During the Crusades, this sophisticated chemical knowledge was eventually reintroduced to Europe via monasteries.

Paragraph 2: [A] Initially, fragrances were inextricably linked to medicine and spirituality. [B] During the Black Death, the bubonic plague was erroneously thought to be spread by "miasma" or foul air. [C] Consequently, people inhaled pungent spices like cinnamon to ward off disease. [D] This era also fostered a deep-seated fear of water, leading many to use alcohol-based perfumes as cleaning agents rather than bathing.

Paragraph 3: By the 17th century, France emerged as the epicenter of the trade under Louis XIV, whose protectionist policies encouraged the consumption of luxury goods. At this time, perfumery was the domain of glove-makers. **The connection between these two crafts existed because the tanning process for leather involved the use of putrid substances, requiring a heavy application of scent to make the final product wearable.** This collaboration eventually birthed powerful guilds that required seven years of apprenticeship, ensuring high standards of quality and secrecy.

1. The word "pioneered" in Paragraph 1 is closest in meaning to:
- A. Evaluated
B. Introduced
C. Simplified
D. Rejected
2. According to Paragraph 1, how did Islamic pharmacists improve perfume production?
- A. By discovering new species of flowers in India.
B. By utilizing alcohol to make the extraction process more efficient.
C. By reviving the Roman tradition of bathing in scent.
D. By teaching European monks how to grow aromatic plants.
3. The word "putrid" in Paragraph 3 is closest in meaning to:
- A. Prestigious
B. Fragile
C. Decaying
D. Rare
4. Why does the author mention "cinnamon" in Paragraph 2?
- A. To provide an example of a scent used to combat the plague.
B. To show that exotic spices were widely available in Europe.
C. To explain how the distillation process was first discovered.
D. To argue that cinnamon has genuine medicinal properties.
5. According to Paragraph 3, why were glove-makers originally the primary producers of perfume?
- A. They were the only craftsmen with access to the royal court.
B. Leather required scenting to mask the unpleasant smells of production.
C. They had invented the first glass bottles for liquid storage.
D. Perfume was only sold in shops that sold leather clothing.
6. What can be inferred from Paragraph 1 about the reintroduction of perfume to Europe?
- A. It occurred before the fall of the Roman Empire.
B. It was facilitated by the exchange of knowledge during the Crusades.
C. It was initially resisted by the Church for being too luxurious.
D. It led to the immediate end of oil-based perfume techniques.
7. Which of the sentences below best expresses the essential information in the highlighted sentence in Paragraph 3?
- A. Leather goods were once considered unwearable because they smelled like perfume.
B. Scent was used to cover up the foul odors resulting from the leather-making process.
C. Glove-makers and perfumers were forced to work together by royal decree.
D. The tanning process was perfected by adding flower petals to the leather.
8. Look at the four squares [A, B, C, D] in Paragraph 2. Where would the following sentence best fit?
- "This belief in the protective power of pleasant odors shifted the focus of perfumery from ritual to survival."*

A. [A]

B. [B]

C. [C]

D. [D]

9. According to the passage, the Napoleonic era changed the industry by:

- A. Forcing perfumers to focus on external use to keep their formulas secret.
- B. Providing large government subsidies for perfume exports.
- C. Encouraging the use of perfumes as a form of ingested medicine.
- D. Creating a monopoly for French perfumers in the London market.

10. [Summary] Select 3 sentences that summarize the most important ideas of the passage.

- a. Perfume knowledge was preserved by Islamic pharmacists and later reintroduced to Europe.
- b. The connection between perfume and health peaked during the Black Death.
- c. Early branding and trademarks made 19th-century perfumes very expensive.
- d. The French perfume industry grew out of the need to scent leather products.
- e. Napoleonic wars allowed British perfumers to dominate global markets briefly.
- f. Distillation was a difficult process that only monks were allowed to perform.

PASSAGE II: Behavioral Economics in Primates

Paragraph 1: While humans are capable of immense technological feats, they are also prone to consistent errors in judgment. To investigate whether these mistakes are cultural or **imbedded** in our biology, psychologist Laurie Santos of Yale University conducted experiments with Brown Capuchin monkeys. These primates were chosen because they are distant relatives of humans and possess the intelligence to learn complex tasks but lack the cultural influences that shape human financial behavior.

Paragraph 2: To facilitate the study, the researchers introduced the monkeys to a market economy using metal discs as currency. [A] The monkeys quickly learned to exchange these discs for food rewards, such as grapes. [B] Remarkably, they were able to identify "bargains"—preferring a researcher who offered two grapes for one disc over one who offered only a single grape. [C] This demonstrated that the basic concept of trade was easily understood by the primates. [D]

Paragraph 3: The team then tested risk-taking behavior. In humans, there is a tendency to be risk-averse when dealing with gains but risk-seeking when faced with potential losses. For instance, most people prefer a guaranteed \$500 over a 50% chance of gaining \$1000. However, when faced with a loss, people often choose a risky gamble to avoid losing money entirely. **The experiment revealed that capuchin monkeys mirrored this human irrationality, opting for safer choices in times of abundance and taking significant risks when they stood to lose their rewards.** This suggests that our financial failures may be deeply rooted in our evolutionary history.

11. The word "imbedded" in Paragraph 1 is closest in meaning to:
- A. Concealed
 - B. Rooted
 - C. Corrected
 - D. Acquired
12. Why did Laurie Santos choose Brown Capuchin monkeys for her experiment?
- A. They are the only animals capable of using tools.
 - B. They have a natural society that already uses a form of money.
 - C. They are intelligent enough to learn but unaffected by human culture.
 - D. They are more closely related to humans than chimpanzees are.
13. According to Paragraph 2, how did the monkeys show they understood the value of "money"?
- A. By saving their metal discs for several days.
 - B. By choosing the seller who gave them more food for the same price.
 - C. By attempting to manufacture their own metal discs.
 - D. By refusing to work for the researchers without payment.
14. What is the "Rhetorical Purpose" of the author's mention of the "\$500" and "\$1000" example in Paragraph 3?
- A. To prove that humans are more rational than monkeys.
 - B. To illustrate a common human bias in financial decision-making.
 - C. To explain the budget required for the Yale University study.
 - D. To argue that most people are willing to take risks for large gains.
15. Which of the sentences below best expresses the essential information in the highlighted sentence in Paragraph 3?
- A. Monkeys are smarter than humans because they always choose the safest option.
 - B. Like humans, monkeys take more risks when they are afraid of losing something.
 - C. The experiment failed to show any similarity between humans and monkeys.
 - D. Abundance of food leads monkeys to become more aggressive and risky.
16. The word "irrationality" in Paragraph 3 refers to:
- A. A lack of mathematical ability.
 - B. Logical thinking that leads to success.
 - C. Behavior that contradicts consistent logic or self-interest.
 - D. The ability to communicate with other species.
17. According to the passage, the primary aim of the experiment was to determine:
- A. If monkeys can be trained to work in human factories.
 - B. The origins of human errors in judgment.
 - C. Which type of food monkeys prefer most.
 - D. How to prevent another collapse of the financial markets.
18. It can be inferred from the final paragraph that human errors of judgment:

- A. Are entirely the result of complex modern financial systems.
- B. Can never be changed or influenced by technology.
- C. May be biological limitations that humans can learn to overcome.
- D. Only occur in individuals who have not studied economics.

19. Look at the four squares [A, B, C, D] in Paragraph 2. Where would the following sentence best fit?

"The team distributed these tokens to the monkeys and taught them the rules of the exchange."

- A. [A] B. [B] C. [C] D. [D]

20. [Summary] Select 3 sentences that summarize the most important ideas of the passage.

- a. Humans and monkeys both exhibit a bias toward risk-taking when facing losses.
- b. Capuchin monkeys are excellent subjects for studying innate biological traits.
- c. Metal discs are more effective than grapes for teaching primates about value.
- d. The Yale study suggests that certain human financial errors have evolutionary roots.
- e. Grapes were the primary motivator for the monkeys in the market experiment.
- f. Identifying human limitations is the first step toward designing better technology.

Solutions - Section I

1. **(B)** In the context of the history of distillation, "pioneered" means to be the first to open up or introduce a new method or area of knowledge.
2. **(B)** Paragraph 1 states that they developed distillation in alcohol, which "allowed for smaller amounts of raw materials to be used," making the process more efficient.
3. **(C)** "Putrid" is used to describe substances used in tanning that require masking; it means decaying or smelling very unpleasant.
4. **(A)** The text mentions cinnamon as a "pleasant fragrance" that people inhaled to avert the "bad odor" they thought caused the plague.
5. **(B)** The author explains that the tanning of leather involved "putrid substances," and therefore the gloves were "scented before they were sold."
6. **(B)** The text mentions that knowledge from Islamic civilizations was "carried back to European monasteries during the Crusades."
7. **(B)** The original sentence highlights the foul smell of tanning and the resulting need for scent. Option B captures this "cause-effect" relationship clearly.
8. **(D)** Square [D] is correct because the previous sentences discuss the "miasma" theory and the use of cinnamon; the inserted sentence summarizes how this changed the purpose of perfumery.
9. **(A)** Paragraph 6 in the source (rephrased here) mentions a Napoleonic ordinance requiring ingredient declaration for internal products, leading perfumers to focus on "external use" to protect their secrets.
10. **(a, b, d)** These capture the cross-cultural history (a), the medicinal era (b), and the industrial/craft origins in France (d).

Solutions - Section II

11. **(B)** "Imbedded" (or embedded) refers to something fixed firmly and deeply in a surrounding mass; in biology, this means it is "rooted" in the DNA/evolution.
12. **(C)** Paragraph 1 explains they were chosen because they are intelligent but "not influenced by any of the technological or cultural environments" of humans.
13. **(B)** Paragraph 2 states they identified bargains by preferring the researcher who offered "two grapes for one disc."
14. **(B)** The author uses the monetary example to define for the reader the specific bias (Prospect Theory) that is being tested in the monkeys.
15. **(B)** The original sentence states that monkeys mirrored human behavior by being risky in losses and safe in gains. Option B captures this essential similarity.

16. **(C)** In economics, "irrationality" refers to making choices that do not maximize gain or that change based on how a situation is framed rather than the logic of the numbers.
17. **(B)** The first paragraph states the goal was to see if mistakes are cultural or "imbedded in our biology," which relates to the "origins of human errors."
18. **(C)** The final paragraph states that humans are "fully capable of overcoming limitations once we have identified them."
19. **(A)** Square [A] is the logical place because the sentence introduces the physical "tokens" and "exchange rules" before the text describes the monkeys actually performing the exchange.
20. **(a, b, d)** These summarize the shared risk-bias (a), the suitability of the test subjects (b), and the evolutionary conclusion of the research (d).