

A number of staple crops are today quite commonplace in much of the world and feed much of today's population. These staple crops of today originated in different eras and in different parts of the world before spreading throughout the rest of the globe.

Wheat was probably the earliest cereal to have been grown and most likely was a hybrid of wild grasses rather than a single wild grass. It is known to have been cultivated by Mediterranean civilizations 10,000 years ago and was being used as a primary ingredient in baked goods in Mesopotamia as early as 8000 B.C.

Beans are a diverse family of plants that have been cultivated for 8,000 years. Certain types of beans, such as mung and soy, were first cultivated in Asia, while other types of beans, such as string and lima, are thought to have originated in the Americas.

Other crops that originated in the Americas are potatoes and maize, a relative of corn; maize was used extensively beginning around 5000 B.C. in civilizations in what is today Mexico, while the cultivation of the potato developed in civilizations in the Andes at least as early as 100 B.C. Maize and potatoes were staples of the diets of their respective cultures long before they were introduced to Europe in the sixteenth century by European explorers who had discovered them in the Americas.

The cultivation of rice is not as old as the cultivation of wheat, beans, and maize. Rice was first known to have been cultivated in India around 3000 B.C. From there, it later spread to China, Japan, and various countries in Southeast Asia, which are today major producers of the crop.

1. Which of the following best expresses the subject of the passage?
 - (A) The history of wheat and rice
 - (B) How today's world eats
 - (C) Which crops feed today's world
 - (D) The origin of today's crops

2. How is the information in the passage organized?
 - (A) Various classifications of crops are described.
 - (B) A series of events is presented in chronological order.
 - (C) The causes of a certain effect are explained.
 - (D) Opposing ideas are contrasted.

3. Which paragraph describes the first of the cultivated crops?

- (A) The first paragraph
- (B) The second paragraph
- (C) The third paragraph
- (D) The fourth paragraph

What is the topic of the fifth paragraph?

- (A) Where rice is eaten today
- (B) The development of rice as a cultivated crop
- (C) Cultivated crops that are older than rice
- (D) Various crops that developed outside the Americas

The number thirteen has long been regarded as an omen of misfortune, and examples of the negative superstition attached to this number abound. Most tall buildings in the United States, for example, do not have a thirteenth floor, and airplanes often bypass a thirteenth row. In addition, many towns will give the street between 12th and 14th a name other than 13th. Fear of the number thirteen has even been accorded its own psychological jargon: triskaidekaphobia.

Even though American culture contains numerous examples of its tradition of suspicion of the misfortunes caused by the number thirteen, this number is also held in high esteem. The reason for the esteem that the United States holds for the number thirteen is that the United States consisted of thirteen colonies at its inception. The seal of the United States, found on the back of the modern bill, includes thirteen stars and thirteen stripes as well as a bald eagle holding thirteen arrows in one claw and a laurel branch, with thirteen leaves and thirteen berries in the other. This abundant use of the number thirteen in the seal of the United States, of course, commemorates the country's thirteen original colonies.

1. The main idea of the passage is that
 - (A) the United States has some positive associations to the number thirteen
 - (B) there are positive and negative feelings about the number thirteen
 - (C) it is difficult to treat triskaidekaphobia
 - (D) there are many negative superstitions about the number thirteen

2. What is the overall organization of information in the passage?
 - (A) An extended definition of triskaidekaphobia is presented.
 - (B) A chronological history of changing feelings about the number thirteen is outlined.
 - (C) Two contrasting views of the number thirteen are presented.
 - (D) Various reasons for negative feelings about the number thirteen are presented.

3. The first paragraph mainly presents
 - (A) an explanation and examples of triskaidekaphobia
 - (B) positive associations with the number thirteen
 - (C) ways that certain towns react to the number thirteen
 - (D) various psychological fears, including fear of the number thirteen

4. What is the topic of the second paragraph?
- (A) Various examples of suspicions about the number thirteen
 - (B) Symbolism on U.S. currency
 - (C) A history of the thirteen original U.S. colonies
 - (D) An explanation for positive feelings about the number thirteen in the United States

Caleb Bradham, called "Doc" Bradham by friends and acquaintances, was the owner of a pharmacy at the end of the nineteenth century. In his pharmacy, Doc Bradham had a soda fountain, as was customary in pharmacies of the time. He took great pleasure in creating new and unusual mixtures of drinks for customers at the fountain.

Like many other entrepreneurs of the era, Doc Bradham wanted to create a cola drink to rival Coca-Cola. By 1895, Coca-Cola was a commercial success throughout the United States, and numerous innovators were trying to come up with their own products to cash in on the success that Coca-Cola was beginning to experience. In his pharmacy, Doc Bradham developed his own version of a cola drink, and Doc's drink became quite popular at his soda fountain. The drink he created was made with a syrup consisting of sugar, essence of vanilla, cola nuts, and other flavorings. The syrup was mixed at the soda fountain with carbonated water before **it** was served.

The drink that Doc Bradham created was originally called "Brad's Drink" by those in his hometown of New Bern who visited the soda fountain and sampled his product. Those who tasted the drink claimed not only that it had a refreshing and invigorating quality but also that it had a medicinal value by providing relief from dyspepsia, or upset stomach. From this reputed ability to relieve dyspepsia, Doc Bradham created the name of Pepsi-Cola for his drink. Doc Bradham eventually made the decision to mass-market his product, and in 1902 he founded the Pepsi-Cola Company. The advertising for this new product, of course, touted the drink as an "invigorating drink" that "aids digestion."

1. Which of the following best expresses the title of the passage?
 - (A) Doc Bradham's Cola Creation
 - (B) Caleb Bradham's Pharmacy
 - (C) Coca-Cola versus Pepsi-Cola
 - (D) The Medicinal Value of Pepsi
2. The passage states that Doc Bradham
 - (A) was a member of Caleb Bradham's family
 - (B) bought his pharmacy from friends and acquaintances
 - (C) had a water fountain in his pharmacy
 - (D) enjoyed making up new drink combinations

3. The second paragraph is mainly about
- (A) the history of Coca-Cola
 - (B) Doc Bradham's efforts to develop a product
 - (C) Doc Bradham's pharmacy
 - (D) effects from drinking Doc Bradham's creation
4. What is stated in the passage about Coca-Cola?
- (A) It was invented by Doc Bradham.
 - (B) It was created in 1895.
 - (C) It had become a successful product by the end of the nineteenth century.
 - (D) It was originally called Brad's Drink.
5. Which of the following is NOT listed as an ingredient of Doc Bradham's syrup?
- (A) A sweetener
 - (B) Vanilla extract
 - (C) A specific type of nut
 - (D) Bicarbonate of soda
6. The pronoun "it" in paragraph 2 refers to
- (A) sugar
 - (B) syrup
 - (C) soda fountain
 - (D) carbonated water
7. What did people who tried Doc Bradham's drink claim about the product?
- (A) It had a stimulating effect.
 - (B) It caused dyspepsia.
 - (C) It was not very fresh.
 - (D) It caused upset stomach.

8. What is NOT true about the Pepsi-Cola Company, according to the passage?
- (A) It was established early in the twentieth century.
 - (B) Its purpose was to mass-market Doc Bradham's product.
 - (C) Doc Bradham purchased it.
 - (D) It was named by Doc Bradham.

Opal is a non-crystalline mineral that has been used as a gemstone in numerous cultures for thousands of years. Quantities of high-grade opal have been mined in diverse areas worldwide, including Eastern Europe, Australia, and Mexico, as well as in the states of California, Nevada, and Idaho in the United States.

Some varieties of opal contain flashes of a wide spectrum of colors, while **others** do not. Those types of opal with tiny specks of iridescent color are called precious opal. Varieties without this iridescent coloration throughout are called common opal. It is the precious opal, with its rainbow-like assortment of colors dotting the stone that has been considered gemstone quality over the ages. Precious opal has numerous colors that serve as a background for the iridescent specks, the most valuable of which are black, white, and blue opal, as well as the reddish-brown stone known as fire opal.

In some cultures, precious opal is recognized not only as a gemstone of great attraction but also as an omen of bad luck. Much of the superstition surrounding opal is now believed to have arisen from the tendency of opal to dry out and crack. Opal is a hydrated mineral with a water content that ranges from 1 percent to 21 percent. The hardness of a particular opal depends upon its water content, which can vary and can be particularly low in dry climates. Throughout its long history, the negative superstition surrounding opal has been related to the tendency of opal to crack seemingly spontaneously, without any noticeable justification. A crack in an opal has been viewed as an indication that bad luck is on its way. In reality, though, a seemingly spontaneous crack in a stone is most likely due to a loss of essential water; **it** is less likely due to pure bad luck.

1. According to the passage, how long has opal been in use as a gemstone?
 - (A) For a hundred years
 - (B) For centuries
 - (C) For a thousand years
 - (D) For several millennia
2. It is mentioned in the passage that opal has been mined in all of the following U.S. states EXCEPT
 - (A) New Mexico
 - (B) California
 - (C) Nevada
 - (D) Idaho

3. The pronoun "others" in paragraph 2 refers to
- (A) varieties
 - (B) flashes
 - (C) colors
 - (D) specks
4. Which of the following statements is true, according to the passage?
- (A) Common opal has specks of color.
 - (B) Gemstone quality opal has specks of color.
 - (C) Precious opal does not have specks of color.
 - (D) Gemstone quality opal does not have specks of color.
5. Which of the following is NOT listed as a potential background color of the most valuable opal?
- (A) Black
 - (B) Blue
 - (C) Red
 - (D) Yellow
6. The superstition surrounding precious opal is that it represents
- (A) good luck
 - (B) a colorful personality
 - (C) misfortune
 - (D) strong attraction
7. What problem does opal have, according to the passage?
- (A) It can cause fires.
 - (B) It can change its color.
 - (C) It can develop colors that detract from its value.
 - (D) It can lose moisture and develop cracks.

8. According to the passage, what is the most important factor in determining the hardness of an opal?
- (A) The number of specks in the stone
 - (B) The location where the stone was mined
 - (C) The percentage of water in the stone
 - (D) The depth of color in the stone
9. The pronoun "it" in paragraph 3 refers to
- (A) crack
 - (B) stone
 - (C) loss
 - (D) water

Weighing a mere 30 to 50 pounds, the wolverine is small, dense, and muscular, yet pound for pound it is the strongest predator in the wilderness of Alaska and Canada. The wolverine belies its family identity, more resembling a small black bear than a member of the weasel family. It has thick, dark fur with golden highlights along its sides and across its broad, stout head and cropped ears.

Traditional legend has typecast the wolverine as a vicious and ravenous carnivore. The Eskimos called this creature cavik or "evil one" because of its habit of raiding caches of food. Even its genus name *Gulo* means glutton. However, these stereotypes are not altogether accurate. The wolverine does have a voracious appetite, but like most predators, its life is one of feast and famine. It gorges itself when it locates a ready supply of food and fasts for days on end until it makes its next find. Wolverines prefer fresh meat, but they are not efficient predators. Although they are quite capable of killing larger prey, they are rarely fortunate enough to get close enough to do so. The wolverine is too slow to catch fleet-footed big game, and it looks comical as it bounces along on its stubby legs. In fact, wolverines are primarily scavengers, eating the carrion of wolf kills—bones, pieces of frozen meat, and hide from moose and caribou. The teeth of wolverines are much stronger than **those** of feline or canine predators such as lynx or wolves, enabling wolverines to gnaw on frozen meat and thick hide without breaking their teeth. The wolverine has interlocking molars that look like pinking sheers with which it both sheers and grinds its frozen feast.

Its reputation for fierceness is also greatly exaggerated. In spite of its notoriety for bravado, the wolverine is incredibly reclusive around man. In fact, one might live a lifetime in wolverine country and never once catch a glimpse of this elusive creature. When confronted by a larger predator such as a bear, the wolverine will square off, raise its hackles, and let out a hissing roar that sounds like a small jet engine. Snarling and baring its teeth, **it** appears so menacing that even a grizzly bear is loathe to tangle with the much smaller rival, though its posturing is for the most part bluff.

1. Which of the following would be the best title for this passage?
 - (A) Predatory Habits of the Wolverine
 - (B) Dispelling Misconceptions about a Much-Maligned Predator
 - (C) The History of Wolverine Research
 - (D) The Fiercest Animal in North America
2. It is stated in the passage that a wolverine
 - (A) has a small appetite
 - (B) eats continuously
 - (C) may spend days without eating
 - (D) lives on plant food

3. According to the passage, wolverines are not good predators because
- (A) they lack speed
 - (B) they are not strong enough
 - (C) they prefer carrion
 - (D) they can stalk prey effectively
4. What is stated in the passage about a wolverine's manner of running?
- (A) A wolverine runs very quickly.
 - (B) A wolverine looks graceful when it runs.
 - (C) A wolverine runs very smoothly.
 - (D) A wolverine looks funny when it runs.
5. The pronoun "those" in paragraph 2 refers to
- (A) moose and caribou
 - (B) teeth
 - (C) wolverines
 - (D) predators
6. All of the following are mentioned in the passage as predators EXCEPT
- (A) lynx
 - (B) bears
 - (C) moose
 - (D) wolverines
7. All of the following are mentioned about wolverines EXCEPT for their
- (A) powerful teeth
 - (B) shy character
 - (C) noises
 - (D) ability to endure cold
8. The pronoun "it" in paragraph 3 refers to
- (A) bear
 - (B) wolverine
 - (C) roar
 - (D) jet engine

9. How is the information in the passage organized?
- (A) Myths are presented and then dispelled.
 - (B) The history of a traditional legend is outlined.
 - (C) The causes of a certain type of action are described.
 - (D) Several different classifications of animals are described and contrasted.