

# GRE VERBAL READING COMPREHENSION PASSAGES



... THE MOST FEARED AND DREADED RC!

**An Example of How Carefully You are To Answer the Question According Only to the Evidence in the Text!**

**Question 11 is based on the following reading passage.**

*A Small Place* is Jamaica Kincaid's memoir of growing up in Antigua as well as an indictment of the Antiguan government and Britain's colonial legacy in Antigua. Kincaid blames colonial rule for many of Antigua's current problems, including drug dealing and selling off land for tourist properties. Kincaid's critics question why, if the British are responsible for

5 the Antiguan government's corruption, the British government itself isn't more corrupt. Kincaid has responded that there must have been some good people among the British, but that they stayed home.

Consider each of the answer choices separately and indicate all that apply.

11. Based on the information in the passage, which of the following would Kincaid most likely agree with?

- ☐ A government can bring about a degree of corruption abroad that the government itself does not suffer from at home.
- ☐ Britain has caused corruption in governments throughout its former colonial empire.
- ☐ Selling off land for tourism-related purposes is a problem for Antigua.

**Questions 111–115 are based on the following reading passage.**

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In traditional theater forms, the roles of performer and audience are completely separate, so that performance space can be said to encompass an actors' sphere and a spectators' sphere. Even when performers move out into the audience or when there is scripted audience interaction, spectators do not become performers. Finally, while stories may open up the imagination or excite audiences, according to Augusto Boal, they discourage political action by providing catharsis. The passive spectator follows the play's emotional arc and, once the action concludes, finds the issue closed. Boal reminds us that our theater etiquette creates a kind of culture of apathy where individuals do not act communally, despite shared space, and remain distanced from art.

Workshop theater, such as Boal's Image Theatre and Forum Theatre, is a response to that. In the workshop form, performance space is created for a select group of people, but the performers' sphere and the audience's sphere are collapsed: everyone is at once theater maker and witness. In Image Theatre, participants will come up with a theme or issue and arrange themselves into a tableau that depicts what that issue looks like in society today, versus what the ideal situation would be. They then try to transition from the current image to the ideal image in a way that seems plausible to all the participants. Forum Theatre, on the other hand, creates a narrative skit depicting a certain problem. After the actors have gone through the action of the play once, a facilitator, known as the joker (like the one in a pack of cards), encourages those who have watched the story to watch it again and to

stop it at any time to

- 20 take the place of the protagonist. The aim is to find a solution to the problem, realizing along the way all of the obstacles involved. In Forum Theatre, just as in Image Theatre, there is not always a solution. The main goal of this form, then, is to engage in the action, to reflect, and to understand particular issues as being part of a larger picture, thus using art to re-cast what seem like private troubles in a public, political light.

- 25 The main reason Boal developed these workshop styles was to grant audiences **agency** so that they may create ways to free themselves of oppression. Because he found theater audiences to be locked into a passive role—just like he found the oppressed coerced into a subservient role in relation to their oppressors—he created the “spect-actor,” or someone who simultaneously witnesses and creates theater.

111. The second paragraph of the passage serves to

- (A) elaborate on the topic of the first paragraph
- (B) provide a rationale for an artistic endeavor
- (C) discuss an artistic answer to a passive culture
- (D) explain the theater’s lack of appeal
- (E) evaluate two contrasting styles of theater

112. The author uses the word *agency* to mean

- (A) profit
- (B) organization
- (C) publicity
- (D) power
- (E) hegemony

113. Which of the following would Boal consider a “spect-actor”?

- (A) a person who engages in political action
- (B) an audience member who finds catharsis in a play
- (C) any person placed in a subservient role
- (D) any actor
- (E) a participant in an Image workshop

114. According to Boal, all of the following are disadvantage of traditional theater forms EXCEPT:

- (A) Such productions prevent the actors from going into the audience.
- (B) Such productions provide catharsis.
- (C) Such productions discourage communal activity.
- (D) Such productions obstruct political change.
- (E) Such productions distance the audience from the art.

115. All of the following would be characteristic of a Forum workshop EXCEPT:

- (A) Productions begin with a narrative script.
- (B) Different people often play the protagonist.
- (C) Some performances do not achieve catharsis.
- (D) Participants arrange themselves into a tableau.
- (E) Performances are guided by a mediator.



Without a doubt, one of the pinnacle achievements of modern physics is the development of Maxwell's equations. Their beauty lies in their elegant simplicity, while the breadth and depth of Maxwell's equations speak for themselves. These four simple equations, coupled with the Lorenz Force Equation, form a full basis for modeling the behavior of an

entire branch of physics: classical electrodynamics and optics. Further, despite their deceptive simplicity, Maxwell's equations have withstood the test of time. While equations modeling most other fields of physics have been modified to accommodate new experimental results and theories, Maxwell's equations have not been altered since their original conception in 1861. Take, for instance, Einstein's theory of general relativity, first published in 1916. Although the equation governing general relativity was also elegant and powerful, and laid the framework for most modern astrophysics, Einstein himself did not realize and correct an error within his equation until nearly fifteen years

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later. Newtonian mechanics has given way to more powerful theoretical frameworks and analytical mechanics has bent under the weight of quantum theory, but Maxwell's equations stand as originally written, tried and true.

Maxwell's four equations, the majority of which are less than twenty characters, are the mathematical formulation of four very simple ideas. First, any free electric charge will result in an electric field. Second, magnets do not have free charges, but are always paired together with a positive and negative end, yielding a magnetic field that has a looped structure. Third, a magnetic field that changes in time will result in an electric field and, fourth, an electric current or changing electric field will produce a magnetic field. It is truly amazing that these four simple rules, unmodified, have been used to model all electric, magnetic, and optics studies for more than 150 years.

7. Which of the following best expresses the author's intent in writing the passage?

- (A) To argue that Maxwell's equations are the most important equations in all of physics
- (B) To explain the significance and meaning of Maxwell's equations
- (C) To argue that Maxwell is a more important name in physics than Einstein
- (D) To describe the implications of each of Maxwell's four equations
- (E) To advocate further studies in the field of electromagnetism and optics

8. The author references Einstein's theory of general relativity for which of the following reasons?

- (A) To argue that the equations of electricity and magnetism are more important than the equations of relativity
- (B) To provide an example of an equation that has been unwavering in time
- (C) To advocate that Maxwell was a more important historical figure than Einstein
- (D) To show that the implications of Maxwell's equations are far more powerful than General Relativity
- (E) To provide an example of an important equation that has been modified over time

9. Which of the following is not mentioned as a rule in any of Maxwell's four equations?

- (A) The looped structure of a magnetic field results from coupled charges.
- (B) A magnetic field that changes in time results in an electric field.
- (C) Any free electric charge results in an electric field.
- (D) Magnetic fields are generated by unpaired magnetic charges.
- (E) An electric current will produce a magnetic field.

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Consider each of the answer choices separately and indicate all that apply.

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10. Which of the following can be correctly inferred from the passage?

- ☐ Maxwell's four equations form a full basis for modeling the behavior of classical electrodynamics and optics.
- ☐ Einstein's original equations of general relativity were incorrect as originally written in 1916.
- ☐ Newtonian mechanics has been modified by quantum theory.



# RC Hack 1: Map The Passage

Mentally break the passage down:

1. Understand the Key Concepts
2. See each paragraph as a bullet point of the argument
3. Break down difficult sentences by locating the subject of the grammatical sentence.
4. Identify the Writer's Perspective – Understand and Read from the Writer's Perspective
5. Identify points to ignore -- forget the dependent clause of a sentence.

# RC Hack 2: Find the Right Answer Without the Passage

## Find the Right Answer *Without* the Passages

Here is an experiment for you to try: TLaL and see if you can guess which answer choices wouldn't stand up in court, even though you haven't read the passage! This is a question from the Manhattan Prep practice exams.

*The passage implies that:*

- (A) the Monteverde area may be home to toad or frog species that have not yet been noted by researchers*
- (B) the Monteverde Cloud Forest Preserve was not large enough to protect the golden toad*
- (C) only Costa Rican amphibians living near Monteverde have disappeared since the 1980s*
- (D) if amphibians did not have permeable skin, then they could not act as biological harbingers*
- (E) more than one third of the world's amphibian species have become extinct*

Without knowing anything except that the passage was about amphibians, you should still be able to eliminate most of the wrong answers if you TLaL:

(A) “may be” sounds vague and noncommittal – that would be hard to prove wrong. Sounds good!

(B) “was not large enough.” That sounds really definitive. When we’re talking about protecting a species, is there ever one definitive cause? Probably not. A lawyer would probably phrase it as “may not have been large enough,” or “its small size was likely a factor,” etc.

(C) The word “only” is a *major* dealbreaker! It seems pretty unlikely that the passage would prove that *no* other amphibians disappeared in the entire country.

(D) This one is hypothetical. Consider this statement: “If I didn’t teach the GRE, I could not have written blog articles.” Well, in that alternate universe, I might be writing other kinds of blog articles! We can almost never make definitive declarations about hypothetical realities (unless the passage stated that it was the *only* way for something to have happened).

(E) This one is awfully specific. “More than one third” implies that we have data on all of the exact numbers. Unlikely! A lawyer might say “perhaps as much as one third” or “some scientists theorize that it could be more than a third,” etc.

As it turns out, the correct answer was in fact A! Many of the other answer choices were tempting based on the content of the passage (you’ll just have to take my word for it), but we could eliminate them based on language alone.