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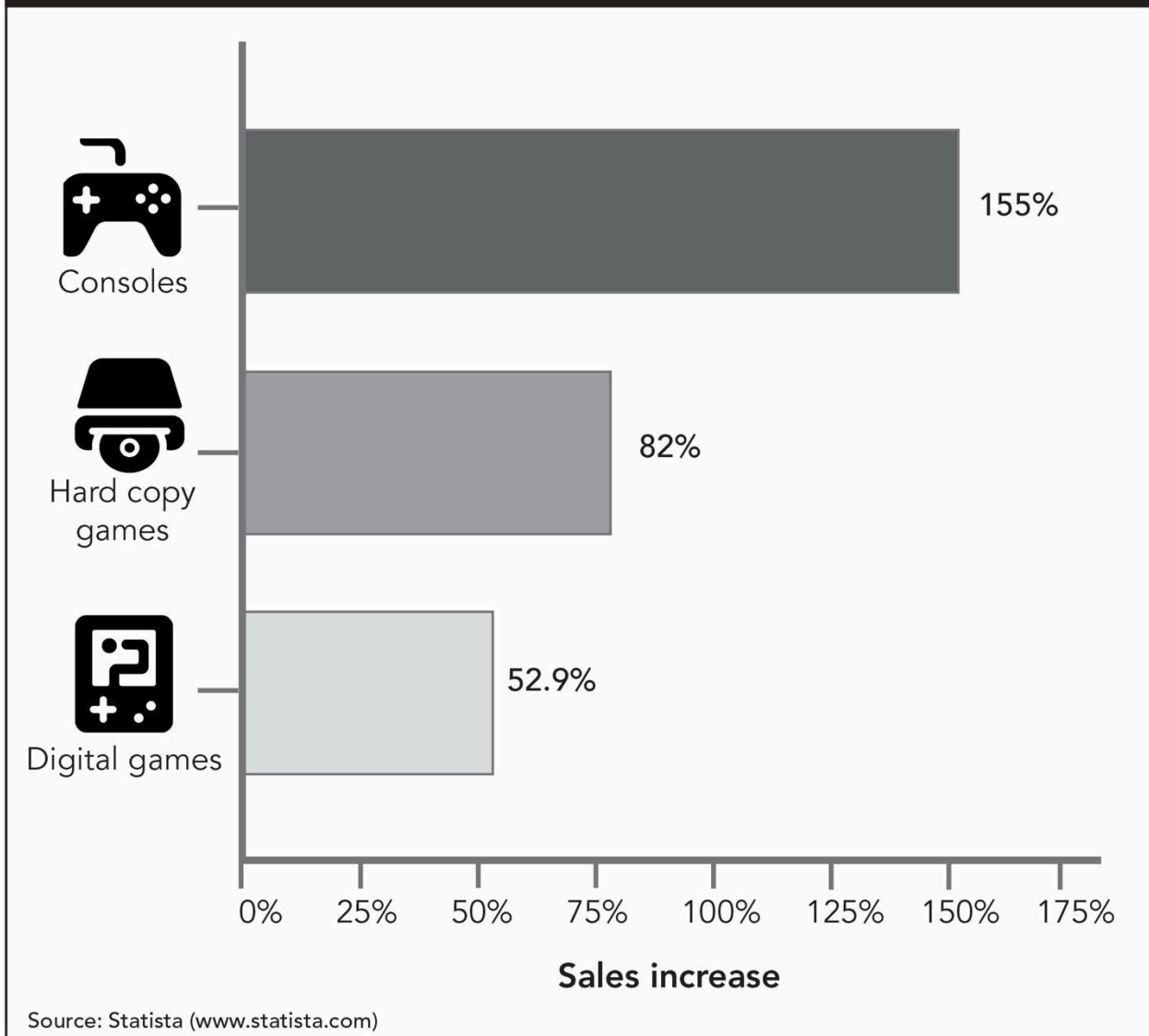
English 4 Standard Benchmark

Read the two selections. Then, choose the best answer to each question.

Selection 1: Video Gaming Sales Spike

- 1 In the United States, when people have to stay home, whether it's due to a pandemic or bad weather, they seek new and various forms of entertainment, and businesses such as the video game industry are ready and waiting to deliver. "People are at home, they have nothing to do, they are not commuting," observes one analyst, "and they have more time and they're bored." It's that simple: Bored people stuck indoors often welcome the distraction of video games.
- 2 The giants in this industry thrive when people are limited in where they can go and what they can do. During the first half of 2020, when many people were under lockdown due to the coronavirus pandemic, every platform—streaming, physical games, subscriptions, multiplayer engagement—reported dramatic increases in revenues, some as much as 75%.
- 3 Not every segment of the industry gained ground during that time, however. Some development studios had to decrease their output or postpone rollouts due to social distancing requirements, employee status changes, supply chain challenges, production delays, and retail closures. In addition, modern games often use motion capture technologies that require an entire cast of actors and crew to be present on a set, which was prohibited in many states.
- 4 Still, the gaming industry as a whole flourished during the first half of 2020. With the cancellation of sporting events, concerts, and other forms of public entertainment, video games were there to fill in the gaps. A surge of interest such as this one has long-term benefits for the gaming industry, since it means many people who had never played video games before are introduced to them. New gamers mean new audiences and new sales—and these gains can last long beyond the unfortunate conditions that led them to begin playing.

Increases in Video Games Sales: March 16, 2020–March 22, 2020



Selection 2: The Benefits of Video Gaming

- 1 For years, critics have warned that excessive video game playing can lead to everything from attention deficits to social isolation, stunting young people's mental and social growth. Balancing out such views, some recent studies suggest that playing video games can be a healthy way to socially engage that offers many benefits to both children and adults. Here are just a few.
- 2 **Gaming improves your brain.** A study done at the Max Planck Institute in Germany asked 23 adults to play a popular video game for 30 minutes each day for two months. When they took MRI images of their brains and compared them to the brains of a control group, whose members did not play the game, the gaming group showed an increase in neurons in areas of the brain associated with memory, strategic planning, and fine motor skills of the hands.

- 3 **Gaming slows the aging process.** A study at the University of Iowa observed the effect of gaming on 681 healthy individuals, ages 50 and older. Playing brain-teasing video games for two hours a week slowed the decline of mental decay associated with natural aging.
- 4 **Gaming relieves pain.** In 2010, the American Pain Society presented evidence that video games reduce pain caused by medical procedures by rates of 30 to 50 percent. Gaming allows the brain to stay busy using other senses instead of focusing on pain.
- 5 **Gaming improves your eyesight.** A 2009 study at the University of Rochester found that playing certain video games can boost your ability to notice visual changes. This ability is important to drivers, for example, or doctors who study X-rays and other images.
- 6 **Gaming increases happiness.** A study at Oxford University that observed nearly 5000 children ages 10 to 15 concluded that children who spend an hour or less each day playing video games tended to be better adjusted and happier people. In addition to enjoying the skill-building challenges of the games, children enjoy the opportunities that games offer to explore, relax, and socialize.
- 7 **Gaming teaches that intelligence builds over time.** Video game players are rewarded for persistence and long-term investment of effort. Building a high score means completing task after task and overcoming obstacle after obstacle successfully. Players learn that excellence is not something that just happens but rather something that builds over time, and each level and layer is a step in a long process.
- 8 **Gaming teaches social skills.** Seventy percent of gamers play with other people, which means that gamers learn to both cooperate and compete. They also often teach each other how to get better at the game, a collaborative skill that easily translates into other areas of life.
- 9 As with any pursuit, video game use can grow excessive, and there is the danger for both children and adults that immoderate amounts of gaming can serve as an unhealthy refuge—a way of escaping from challenges that can't be negotiated with a joystick or a fast click. Everyone needs a break from screen time! But the implication of these recent studies is that video gaming, when not excessive, offers clear benefits.

1. **Which sentence in Selection 1 is the most specific supporting evidence for the claim that confinement at home can lead to a huge rise in certain kinds of entertainment?**
 - A. In the United States, when people have to stay home, whether it's due to a pandemic or bad weather, they seek new and various forms of entertainment, and businesses such as the video game industry are ready and waiting to deliver.
 - B. During the first half of 2020, when many people were under lockdown due to the coronavirus pandemic, every platform—streaming, physical games, subscriptions,

multiplayer engagement—reported dramatic increases in revenues, some as much as 75%.

- C. Not every segment of the industry gained ground during this time period, however.
- D. New gamers mean new audiences and new sales—and these gains can last long beyond the unfortunate conditions that led them to begin playing.

2. The author includes the graph in Selection 1 to

- A. suggest that sales will continue to rise over many years if conditions remain the same.
- B. emphasize that the larger increase in sales of consoles means that the future of the video game industry is secure.
- C. provide visual statistical proof that the claims in the text are based on measurable data.
- D. make the distinction among digital games, hard copy games, and gaming consoles as a percentage of total sales.

3. How is the structure in Selection 2 effective in supporting the author’s argument?

- A. The cause-and-effect organization of the text helps to clearly establish the argument that gaming is beneficial as opposed to detrimental, as previously thought.
- B. The cause-and-effect order of the text helps to clearly explain the order of research studies done, establishing the argument that gaming has more benefits than previously thought.
- C. The analysis of the most important studies done in the field of gaming demonstrates that research is a valuable tool in understanding gaming’s benefits.
- D. The analysis of gaming research breaks down results into six main categories, demonstrating research’s role in proving gaming’s benefits.

4. How does the structure of the author’s argument in Selection 2 make the argument convincing?

- A. The author’s orderly presentation of the different research outcomes makes a convincing argument that people who play video games are wiser, live longer, and have better relationships than people who do not.
- B. The author’s description of problems that people suffer from, and the explanation of how video games can eliminate each problem, makes a convincing argument that gaming offers benefits.
- C. The author’s comparison and contrast of video games with other types of entertainment makes a convincing argument that video gaming is superior.
- D. The author’s logical presentation of a series of clear statements, research findings, and statistics provides supporting evidence and makes for a convincing argument that gaming has a number of valuable benefits.

- 5. Which statement validly synthesizes ideas from the text and graph in Selection 1 and the text in Selection 2?**
- A. The video gaming industry has the potential to change the world in ways that people are only beginning to understand and appreciate.
 - B. One cannot measure the lasting effects of a market or industry simply by seeing sales data; one must take long-term effects into consideration, too.
 - C. Having to stay home increases gaming consumption, but that can provide a variety of benefits, some of which are just being discovered.
 - D. What may appear, at first, as a social crisis or emergency can result in the invention of new, beneficial technologies.
- 6. Which of the following offers the best summary of Selection 2?**
- A. A few of the recent studies on gaming reveal potential benefits not previously understood. These range, from slowing signs of aging and pain relief to intelligence-building and greater happiness. However, playing video games too frequently can still result in detrimental side effects.
 - B. Recent studies suggest that video gaming offers a range of benefits. Playing video games can have various benefits, such as improving brain function and memory, and teaching perseverance and social skills. However, it also warns against excessive gaming as it can be used as an unhealthy escape from real-life challenges.
 - C. There are fears over video gaming's impact on health, but they are likely unfounded. Recent studies suggest that many benefits are possible. These include, but are not limited to, a slowing of the aging process, improved eyesight, and an increase in intelligence.
 - D. Research suggests gaming can be healthy for adults and children alike. Specific studies show how gaming helps to relieve pain, improve eyesight, and teach social skills. This leads to building greater excellence over time, in other areas of life as well.
- 7. Based on Selection 1, what inference can be made about the long-term impact of the pandemic on the video game industry:**
- A. The pandemic will have no lasting effect on the video game industry.
 - B. The video game industry is likely to see a decline in new gamers after the pandemic.
 - C. The introduction of new gamers during the pandemic could lead to sustained growth in the video game industry.
 - D. The pandemic will permanently hinder the development of new video games due to production delays.

Read the selection, and choose the best answer to each question.

from Washington's Farewell Address

George Washington's Farewell Address is a letter he wrote at the end of his second term as President of the United States. Its main purpose was to announce that he would not seek a third term as President. However, Washington used the address as an opportunity to reflect on political issues. In this passage from the address, Washington gives advice about relationships with foreign nations.

- 1 [A] passionate attachment of one nation for another produces a variety of evils. Sympathy for the favorite nation, facilitating the illusion of an imaginary common interest in cases where no real common interest exists, and infusing into one the enmities of the other, betrays the former into a participation in the quarrels and wars of the latter without adequate inducement or justification. It leads also to concessions to the favorite nation of privileges denied to others which is apt doubly to injure the nation making the concessions; by unnecessarily parting with what ought to have been retained, and by exciting jealousy, ill-will, and a disposition to retaliate, in the parties from whom equal privileges are withheld. And it gives to ambitious, corrupted, or deluded citizens (who devote themselves to the favorite nation) facility to betray or sacrifice the interests of their own country, without odium, sometimes even with popularity; gilding, with the appearances of a virtuous sense of obligation, a commendable deference for public opinion, or a laudable zeal for public good, the base or foolish compliances of ambition, corruption, or infatuation.
- 2 As avenues to foreign influence in innumerable ways, such attachments are particularly alarming to the truly enlightened and independent patriot. How many opportunities do they afford to tamper with domestic factions, to practice the arts of seduction, to mislead public opinion, to influence or awe the public councils! Such an attachment of a small or weak towards a great and powerful nation dooms the former to be the satellite of the latter.
- 3 Against the insidious wiles of foreign influence (I conjure you to believe me, fellow-citizens) the jealousy of a free people ought to be constantly awake, since history and experience prove that foreign influence is one of the most baneful foes of republican government. But that jealousy to be useful must be impartial; else it becomes the instrument of the very influence to be avoided, instead of a defense against it. Excessive partiality for one foreign nation and excessive dislike of another cause those whom they actuate to see danger only on one side, and serve to veil and even second the arts of influence on the other. Real patriots who may resist the intrigues of the favorite are liable to become suspected and odious, while its tools and dupes usurp the applause and confidence of the people, to surrender their interests.
- 4 The great rule of conduct for us in regard to foreign nations is, in extending our commercial relations, to have with them as little political connection as possible. So far as we have already formed engagements, let them be fulfilled with perfect good faith. Here let us stop. Europe has a set of primary interests which to us have none; or a very remote relation.

Hence, she must be engaged in frequent controversies, the causes of which are essentially foreign to our concerns. Hence, therefore, it must be unwise in us to implicate ourselves by artificial ties in the ordinary vicissitudes of her politics, or the ordinary combinations and collisions of her friendships or enmities.

- 8. How does Washington develop ideas about foreign attachments and their influence in the passage?**
 - A. Washington uses historical facts, logical reasoning, and a compare-and-contrast structure to develop his ideas.
 - B. Washington uses relevant examples, vivid imagery, and a cause-and-effect structure to develop his ideas.
 - C. Washington uses sensory details, emotional appeals, and a compare-and-contrast structure to develop his ideas.
 - D. Washington uses emotional appeals, logical reasoning, and a cause-and-effect structure to develop his ideas.

- 9. How does Washington describe the interaction between “excessive partiality for one foreign nation” and the political consequences within the United States?**
 - A. Excessive partiality leads to enhanced diplomatic relations, and strengthens the nation’s global standing.
 - B. Excessive partiality causes the nation to adopt the foreign nation’s enemies as its own, resulting in unnecessary wars and domestic strife.
 - C. Excessive partiality promotes unity among the citizens by fostering a shared sense of international camaraderie.
 - D. Excessive partiality encourages economic growth by prioritizing trade with the favored nation.

- 10. How does Washington’s style contribute to the persuasiveness of his argument?**
 - A. Washington uses complex legal terminology to appeal to experts in foreign policy.
 - B. Washington employs emotional language and vivid imagery to create a sense of urgency and patriotism.
 - C. Washington presents a balanced view by discussing both the pros and the cons of foreign attachments.
 - D. Washington uses personal stories to illustrate his points.

- 11. What perspective does Washington convey about the role of public opinion in foreign policy?**
 - A. Public opinion is often misguided and should not influence foreign policy decisions.
 - B. Public opinion is crucial and should always align with the interests of the favorite foreign nation.
 - C. Public opinion is vulnerable to manipulation, making it unreliable in forming foreign policy.
 - D. Public opinion is the most reliable guide for ensuring successful foreign relations.

12. In paragraph 4, Washington states:

Against the insidious wiles of foreign influence (I conjure you to believe me, fellow-citizens) the jealousy of a free people ought to be constantly awake, since history and experience prove that foreign influence is one of the most baneful foes of republican government.

A good interpretation of this sentence is that Americans should be alert to the serious threat of foreign influence, which has proven throughout history to be one of the greatest dangers to democracy. Which sentence offers the best evidence from the passage to support this interpretation?

- A. Americans should be aware that foreign influence “tampers” with their affairs because all foreign countries want to “mislead public opinion” and to “influence or awe the public councils.”
- B. Those who are alert to “one foreign nation” and have “excessive dislike” for another are able to recognize the “danger only on one side.”
- C. Foreign influence uses “tools” and “dupes” to overtake the “confidence of the people” to give up their interests.
- D. Foreign influence can lead “ambitious, corrupted, or deluded citizens” to “betray or sacrifice the interests of their own country.”

13. **Which statement best assess the reasoning behind Washington’s argument that excessive partiality towards a foreign nation can lead to misguided public opinion and influence?**

- A. The reasoning is sound because Washington demonstrates how foreign influence can corrupt national interests and policies.
- B. The reasoning is flawed because Washington relies on hypothetical scenarios rather than actual evidence.
- C. The reasoning is irrelevant because public opinion does not play a significant role in foreign policy decisions.
- D. The reasoning is insufficient because the author does not address potential safeguards against foreign influence.

- 14. What is Washington’s central purpose, and how does he use language to build rhetorical power in the text?**
- A. Washington’s central purpose is to advise the nation about how it should deal with foreign powers. He uses logic, with words such as “evil,” “betray,” and “alarming” to argue his claim that foreign attachments should be feared.
 - B. Washington’s central purpose is to scare citizens into avoiding contact with outside nations. He uses irony to highlight the contrast between the seeming benefits of foreign influence and their actual outcomes.
 - C. Washington’s central purpose is to criticize America’s dependence on and jealousy of foreign nations. He uses logic, repeating phrases such as “betray,” “jealousy,” “foolish,” and “corruption” to argue his claim that overconfidence will be the cause of the country’s downfall.
 - D. Washington’s central purpose is to convince Americans to eschew all foreign influence. He uses repetition in phrases such as “the truly enlightened and independent patriot” and “real patriots,” to portray those who are careful about foreign influence as true supporters of the country.
- 15. How do the author’s ideas about foreign influence and national unity interact and build on each other throughout the passage?**
- A. The author uses examples of successful foreign alliances to illustrate the benefits of unity.
 - B. The author argues that foreign influence undermines national unity, thereby weakening the nation's ability to maintain its sovereignty and independent policy.
 - C. The author describes how national unity can be strengthened by adopting foreign policies and practices.
 - D. The author separates the discussion of foreign influence and national unity, suggesting they are unrelated issues.
- 16. Why is Washington’s Farewell Address considered an important document in American history?**
- A. It provides detailed plans for future economic policies.
 - B. It lays the groundwork for American foreign policy and emphasizes national unity.
 - C. It focuses on the benefits of strong political parties.
 - D. It argues for the United States to seek alliances with foreign nations.

Read the two selections. Then, choose the best answer to each question.

Selection 1: In the Old Age of the Soul

by Ezra Pound

- I do not choose to dream; there cometh on me
Some strange old lust for deeds.
As to the nerveless hand of some old warrior
The sword-hilt or the war-worn wonted helmet
5 Brings momentary life and long-fled cunning,
So to my soul grown old—
Grown old with many a jousting, many a foray,
Grown old with many a hither-coming and hence-going—
Till now they send him dreams and no more deed;
10 So doth he flame again with might for action,
Forgetful of the council of elders,
Forgetful that who rules doth no more battle,
Forgetful that such might no more cleaves to him
So doth he flame again toward valiant doing.

Selection 2: A Lady

by Amy Lowell

- You are beautiful and faded,
Like an old opera tune
Played upon a harpsichord;
Or like the sun-flooded silks
5 Of an eighteenth-century boudoir¹. In your eyes
Smolder the fallen roses of outlived minutes,
And the perfume of your soul
Is vague and suffusing²,
With the pungence of sealed spice-jars.
10 Your half-tones delight me,
And I grow mad with gazing
At your blent colors.
My vigor is a new-minted penny,
Which I cast at your feet.
15 Gather it up from the dust
That its sparkle may amuse you.

¹ **boudoir**: a woman's bedroom or private room

² **suffusing**: gradually spread throughout

17. Reread lines 7–17 from Selection 1.

10 Grown old with many a jousting, many a foray,
Grown old with many a hither-coming and hence-going—
Till now they send him dreams and no more deed;
So doth he flame again with might for action,
Forgetful of the council of elders,
Forgetful that who rules doth no more battle,
Forgetful that such might no more cleaves to him
So doth he flame again toward valiant doing.

Which best describes the structure of this section and how it contributes to the overall structure of the poem?

- A. The lines are written in blank verse, lacking both rhyme and meter. The shift from the more formal or traditional verse structure in lines 1–6 marks the speaker’s growing freedom of imagination and expression.
- B. The lines are examples of the use of enjambment, mimicking everyday speech. The shift from the more formal or chanting style in lines 1–6 marks the speaker’s growing ease in addressing the reader.
- C. The lines are characterized by the repetition of several words and phrases. The shift from the more discursive or conversational style in lines 1–6 marks the speaker’s growing passion or urgency.
- D. The lines are in iambic pentameter—accented syllables followed by unaccented ones. The shift from the free verse in lines 1–6 marks the speaker’s new decisiveness or courage.

18. Which statement best explains how the choice regarding the structural shift identified in Question 17 contributes to the meaning and impact of the poem?

- A. The shift in structure creates heightened drama, making it easier for the reader to picture the speaker, an older man passionately announcing his desire for action and complaining about the restrictions of age.
- B. The shift in structure creates heightened intimacy, making it easier for the reader to understand and sympathize with the speaker, an older man wishing for a friendly ear to confide in.
- C. The shift in structure creates a dreamlike atmosphere, making it easier for the reader to appreciate the speaker, an older man whose imagination can overcome the limitations of time and space.
- D. The shift in structure creates a sense of stirring events and bold actions, making it easier for the reader to be concerned about the speaker, an older man whose physical abilities are not equal to his determination.

19. Lowell uses figurative language to compare a woman to an operatic song in the first three lines of Selection 2. What is the effect of this choice?

- A. It creates a sense of wonder and magic.
- B. It creates a sense of nostalgia and elegance.
- C. It creates a sense of excitement and anticipation.
- D. It creates a sense of admiration and respect.

20. Reread lines 1–9 of Selection 2. How does the figurative language contribute to the development of the theme of the poem?

You are beautiful and faded,
Like an old opera tune
Played upon a harpsichord;
Or like the sun-flooded silks
5 Of an eighteenth-century boudoir. In your eyes
Smolder the fallen roses of outlived minutes,
And the perfume of your soul
Is vague and suffusing,
With the pungence of sealed spice-jars.

- A. The simile comparing an older woman’s eyes to burning embers that consume the memories of past moments lends a sense of gravity and value that contributes to the development of the theme, “The eyes are the window to the soul.”
- B. The metaphor comparing an older woman to an “old opera tune” and “sun-flooded silks” creates a sense of magic and wonder that contributes to the development of the theme, “Beauty worsens with age.”
- C. The personification of a harpsichord as “beautiful and faded” contributes to the theme, “Beauty is in the eye of the beholder.”
- D. The similes comparing an older woman to a “beautiful and faded” opera tune and “sun-flooded silks” contribute to the theme, “Great beauty can be found in that which is aged or faded.”

21. Which statement best describes Selection 1’s perspective on growing old?

- A. the speaker contrasts his youthful experiences with his aging memories
- B. the speaker wishes he could escape his old age and relive the past
- C. an aspiring warrior imagines life as a ruler who has earned his place
- D. the speaker is haunted by dreams of his own earlier heroism

22. Which statement best describes Selection 2’s perspective on growing old?

- A. the older woman is elegant, contrasted with someone with the vigor of a “new-minted penny”
- B. the speaker reveres an older woman more than youth, a coin tossed at her feet
- C. an older woman reflects on the wealth she has accumulated
- D. the speaker reflects on the elegant woman she has become as she has grown older and wiser

23. How do both poems address the theme of aging?

- A. Both poems celebrate the vigor and accomplishments of youth.
- B. Both poems express a longing for the past and reflect on the beauty that remains despite aging.
- C. Both poems emphasize the wisdom and respect that come with old age.
- D. Both poems portray aging as a time of regret and lost opportunities.

24. In what way do both poems use imagery to convey their themes?

- A. Both poems use images of war and battle to symbolize the struggles of aging.
- B. Both poems use musical and artistic imagery to highlight the contrast between past vitality and present decay.
- C. Both poems describe natural landscapes to illustrate the passage of time.
- D. Both poems rely on images of modern technology to express the disconnect between past and present.

Passage Estimated Lexile Range

Grade 11-12 Band: 1130L - 1440L

- Video Gaming Sales Spike/The Benefits of Gaming **1210L - 1400L**
- Washington's Farewell Address **1410L - 1600L**
- Poetry **N/A**

Answer Key/Standards Guide

1. **B; RI.1 - Text Evidence**
2. **C; RI.7 - Analyze Media**
3. **A; RI.5 - Text Structure**
4. **D; RI.5 - Text Structure**
5. **C; RI.7 - Analyze Media**
6. **B; RI.2 - Summary**
7. **C; RI.1 - Inference**
8. **D; RI.3 - Development of Ideas**
9. **B; RI.3 - Development of Ideas**
10. **B; RI.6 - Rhetoric**
11. **C; RI.6 - Perspective**
12. **D; RI.8 - Argument**
13. **A; RI.8 - Argument**
14. **A; RI.9 - Analyze Foundational U.S. Documents**
15. **B; RI.3 - Development of Ideas**
16. **B; RI.9 - Analyze Foundational U.S. Documents**
17. **C; RL.5 - Poetic Structure**
18. **A; RL.5 - Poetic Structure**
19. **B; RL.4 - Figurative Language**
20. **D; RL.4 - Figurative Language**
21. **A; RL.6 - Perspective**
22. **A; RL.6 - Perspective**
23. **B; RL.9 - Comparing Texts**
24. **B; RL.9 - Comparing Texts**