

Reading SAT Practice Test 21

Questions 1-10 are based on the following passage.

This passage is adapted from Saki, "The Scharz-Metterklume Method." Originally published in 1911.

Lady Carlotta stepped out on to the platform of the small wayside station and took a turn or two up and down its uninteresting length, to kill time till the train should be pleased to proceed on its way. Then, in the roadway beyond, she saw a horse struggling with a more than ample load, and a carter of the sort that seems to bear a sullen hatred against the animal that helps him to earn a living. Lady Carlotta promptly betook her to the roadway, and put rather a different complexion on the struggle. Certain of her acquaintances were wont to give her plentiful admonition as to the undesirability of interfering on behalf of a distressed animal, such interference being "none of her business." Only once had she put the doctrine of non-interference into practice, when one of its most eloquent exponents had been besieged for nearly three hours in a small and extremely uncomfortable may-tree by an angry boar-pig, while Lady Carlotta, on the other side of the fence, had proceeded with the water-colour sketch she was engaged on, and refused to interfere between the boar and his prisoner. It is to be feared that she lost the friendship of the ultimately rescued lady. On this occasion she merely lost the train, which gave way to the first sign of impatience it had shown throughout the journey, and steamed off without her. She bore the desertion with philosophical indifference; her

friends and relations were thoroughly well used to the fact of her luggage arriving without her.

30 She wired a vague non-committal message to her destination to say that she was coming on "by another train." Before she had time to think what her next move might be she was confronted by an imposingly attired lady, who seemed to be taking a
35 prolonged mental inventory of her clothes and looks.

"You must be Miss Hope, the governess I've come to meet," said the apparition, in a tone that admitted of very little argument.

40 "Very well, if I must I must," said Lady Carlotta to herself with dangerous meekness.

"I am Mrs. Quabarl," continued the lady; "and where, pray, is your luggage?"

45 "It's gone astray," said the alleged governess, falling in with the excellent rule of life that the absent are always to blame; the luggage had, in point of fact, behaved with perfect correctitude. "I've just telegraphed about it," she added, with a nearer approach to truth.

50 "How provoking," said Mrs. Quabarl; "these railway companies are so careless. However, my maid can lend you things for the night," and she led the way to her car.

During the drive to the Quabarl mansion Lady Carlotta was impressively introduced to the
55 nature of the charge that had been thrust upon her; she learned that Claude and Wilfrid were delicate, sensitive young people, that Irene had the artistic temperament highly developed, and that Viola was

something or other else of a mould equally
60 commonplace among children of that class and type
in the twentieth century.

“I wish them not only to be TAUGHT,” said Mrs.
Quabarl, “but INTERESTED in what they learn. In
their history lessons, for instance, you must try to
65 make them feel that they are being introduced to the
life-stories of men and women who really lived, not
merely committing a mass of names and dates to
memory. French, of course, I shall expect you to talk
at meal-times several days in the week.”

70 “I shall talk French four days of the week and
Russian in the remaining three.”

“Russian? My dear Miss Hope, no one in the
house speaks or understands Russian.”

75 Lady Carlotta coldly.
“That will not embarrass me in the least,” said

Mrs. Quabarl, to use a colloquial expression, was
knocked off her perch. She was one of those
imperfectly self-assured individuals who are
magnificent and autocratic as long as they are not
80 seriously opposed. The least show of unexpected
resistance goes a long way towards rendering them
cowed and apologetic. When the new governess
failed to express wondering admiration of the large
newly-purchased and expensive car, and lightly
85 alluded to the superior advantages of one or two
makes which had just been put on the market, the
discomfiture of her patroness became almost abject.
Her feelings were those which might have animated a
general of ancient warfaring days, on beholding his
90 heaviest battle-elephant ignominiously driven off the
field by slingers and javelin throwers.

1

Which choice best summarizes the passage?

- A) A woman weighs the positive and negative aspects of accepting a new job.
- B) A woman does not correct a stranger who mistakes her for someone else.
- C) A woman impersonates someone else to seek revenge on an acquaintance.
- D) A woman takes an immediate dislike to her new employer.

2

In line 2, “turn” most nearly means

- A) slight movement.
- B) change in rotation.
- C) short walk.
- D) course correction.

3

The passage most clearly implies that other people regarded Lady Carlotta as

- A) outspoken.
- B) tactful.
- C) ambitious.
- D) unfriendly.

4

Which choice provides the best evidence for the answer to the previous question?

- A) Lines 10-14 (“Certain . . . business”)
- B) Lines 22-23 (“It is . . . lady”)
- C) Lines 23-26 (“On this . . . her”)
- D) Lines 30-32 (“She . . . train”)

5

The description of how Lady Carlotta “put the doctrine of non-interference into practice” (lines 14-15) mainly serves to

- A) foreshadow her capacity for deception.
- B) illustrate the subtle cruelty in her nature.
- C) provide a humorous insight into her character.
- D) explain a surprising change in her behavior.

6

In line 55, “charge” most nearly means

- A) responsibility.
- B) attack.
- C) fee.
- D) expense.

7

The narrator indicates that Claude, Wilfrid, Irene, and Viola are

- A) similar to many of their peers.
- B) unusually creative and intelligent.
- C) hostile to the idea of a governess.
- D) more educated than others of their age.

8

The narrator implies that Mrs. Quabarl favors a form of education that emphasizes

- A) traditional values.
- B) active engagement.
- C) artistic experimentation.
- D) factual retention.

9

As presented in the passage, Mrs. Quabarl is best described as

- A) superficially kind but actually selfish.
- B) outwardly imposing but easily defied.
- C) socially successful but irrationally bitter.
- D) naturally generous but frequently imprudent.

10

Which choice provides the best evidence for the answer to the previous question?

- A) Lines 49-50 (“How . . . careless”)
- B) Lines 62-68 (“I wish . . . memory”)
- C) Lines 70-73 (“I shall . . . Russian”)
- D) Lines 77-82 (“She was . . . apologetic”)