

SUGGESTED READING COMPREHENSION TIPS



READ THE INSTRUCTIONS CAREFULLY

- ▶ Before you can expect to answer any question correctly, you've got to make sure you know exactly what you are being asked to do. Don't rush through the instructions.
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DON'T GET STUCK ON A WORD

- ▶ Difficult words become easier to comprehend when you read through the sentences surrounding them.
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KEEP TRACK OF THE TIME

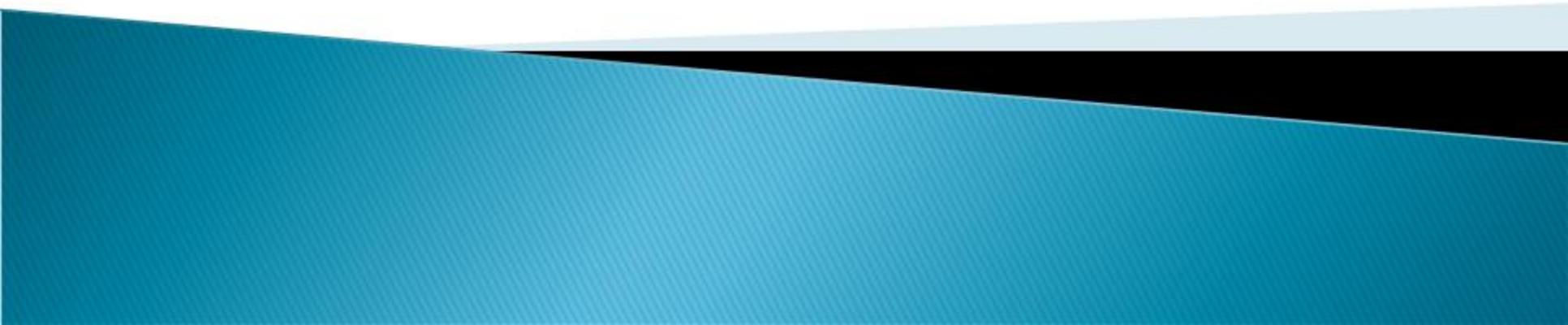
- ▶ Reading comprehension tests are timed tests, so use your time to answer first as many of the easiest questions as possible.
 - ▶ You do not want to run out of time before you have a chance to answer all the “easy” questions first.
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DO NOT ADD ANY FACTS

- ▶ Base your answers on facts and information contained in the reading passage.

SUGGESTED READING COMPREHENSION

TIPS AND STRATEGIES



READING THE PASSAGE

- ▶ A common mistake among reading comprehension test takers is the assumption that they do not need to read the whole passage.
 - ▶ While it may be possible to skip to the questions and then go back and attempt to answer each question individually, this tactic may cause you to have a hazy understanding of the passage and can lead to confusion.
 - ▶ For this reason it is a good idea to read the passage at least once, even if that read is brief.
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TIME MANAGEMENT

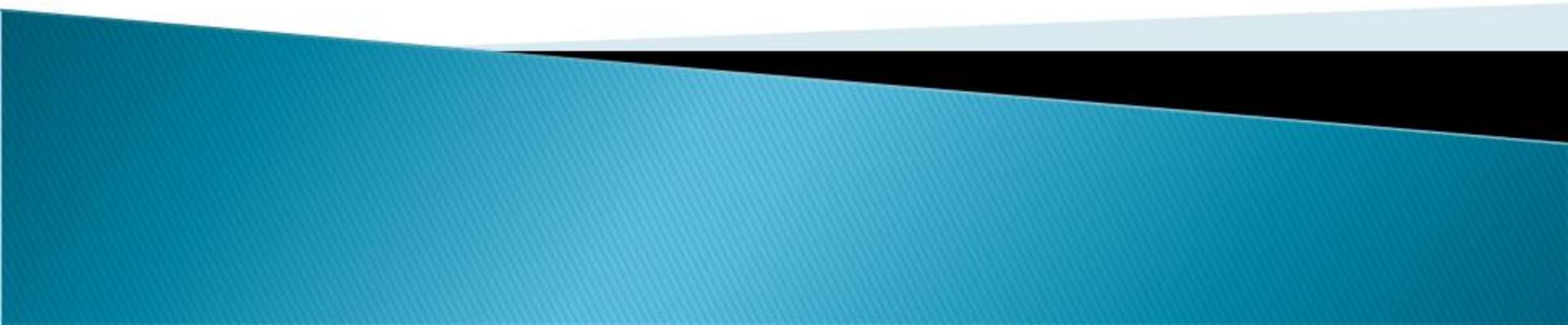
- ▶ Most standardized tests have time limits for each section. Time constraints can be particularly troublesome for reading comprehension sections.
 - ▶ It is important to know how many passages you have to read and roughly how many questions there are for each passage before you begin the exam.
 - ▶ If you run into a particularly difficult question, consider skipping it and coming back later if time allows. Wasting too much time on one question may hurt you later in the test.
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OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- ▶ There's no better way to increase reading comprehension scores than to practice doing it.
 - ▶ Take practice tests to improve your reading comprehension skills and to determine what type of questions are normally asked and how long it takes you to complete passages.
 - ▶ Practicing helps you increase your test taking speed and allows you to pinpoint the areas that you need to work on the most.
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READING COMPREHENSION QUIZ

**The following test can be found in the
Firefighter Information Tutorial Booklet**



Natural Born Killers

By Kurt Loft

of The Tampa Tribune

Scientists hope to take the sting out of those dreaded killer bees. A team of researchers has isolated a gene responsible for the aggressive behavior of Africanized honey bees, which have terrorized people and animals in their slow migration into the southern United States.

Scientists located DNA markers on the chromosomes of the mean bees and compared the genes with those of nonaggressive species. Their research may lead to the origins of a trait that could help “predict the probability of queen bees having the African version of stinging genes so it will be easier for breeders to avoid using them,” says Robert E. Page, an entomologist at the University of California at Davis.

Borrowing techniques from crop genetics, the team ultimately hopes to turn killers into kinder, gentler insects. Bees are essential to honey production, and a third of the food grown in the United States comes from plants pollinated by honey bees. The U.S. Department of Agriculture in 1993 committed nearly \$1.8 million to Africanized bee research, and the current study was funded by the National Institutes of Health.

Killer bees are known to swarm in larger numbers than typical honey bees, releasing a pheromone odor that stimulates the rest of the colony. The odor comes from the stinger itself, which dislodges from the insect's abdomen upon stinging.

Swarms of killer bees are 20 times more likely to sting than normal honey bees, and leave eight times as many stingers in a victim in the first 30 seconds, researchers say.

The first fatality attributed to killer bees in this country happened in July 1993, when 82-year-old Lino Lopez was stung at his ranch near Rio Grande City, Texas. In October of that year, a swarm of 30,000 killer bees terrorized a neighborhood in Peoria, Arizona, for nine hours, with three people injured from stings and three dogs killed. Authorities in Mexico, where killer bees concentrate, have reported roughly 20 deaths a year since 1986, mostly in areas with poor medical care.

Killer bees were imported to Brazil from Africa more than 40 years ago. The idea was to crossbreed African and South American species to produce a gentle bee with high honey production. African bee colonies can produce five times as much honey as their South American cousins. As a result, Brazil rose from 27th to fourth in the world's honey production, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Unfortunately, a Brazilian scientist accidentally released some of the captive insects from Africa. The mean bees soon mated with indigenous colonies and their aggressive behavior spread.

They moved into Central America and were documented in Mexico in 1988. Within three years, scientists think, most wild bees in Mexico contained DNA from the African species, and killers were found in California, Texas, New Mexico and Arizona.

Bee stings aren't so much "aggressive" behavior as defensive says Greg Hunt, an entomologist at Purdue University in Indiana. "Different insects use various methods to protect themselves from predators. Bee stings are a response to predation by mammals – bee venom is specialized for causing pain."

END OF PASSAGE



1.

- ▶ The author's purpose in writing this article was to
 - **A** – explain what bee researchers have found.
 - **B** – warn people about the dangers of killer bees.
 - **C** – Describe the movement of bees around the world
 - **D** – inform people about the harmful nature of bee stings

2.

- ▶ An entomologist has described the stinging behavior of bees as
 - A. aggressive
 - B. defensive
 - C. speculative
 - D. destructive

3.

- ▶ How will scientist use DNA markers to help breeders?
 - **A.** to determine which queen bees have aggressive genes
 - **B.** to determine which queen bees have nonaggressive genes
 - **C.** to determine which queen bees will produce larger colonies
 - **D.** to determine which queen bees will produce smaller colonies

4.

- ▶ Scientist hope to stop killer bees by?
 - A. using poison
 - B. controlling breeding
 - C. removing their stingers
 - D. importing bees from Africa
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5.

- ▶ What triggers the swarming behavior of killer bees?
 - A. Heat
 - B. Light
 - C. Smell
 - D. Sound

6.

- ▶ The release of pheromones results in
 - A. The dislodgment of the stinger.
 - B. A chain reaction of aggressiveness.
 - C. The stimulation of typical honey bees.
 - D. A larger number of stingers left in a victim.

7.

- ▶ Why did Brazilian scientist import African bees?
 - **A.** To produce a gentle bee with low honey production
 - **B.** To produce a gentle bee with high honey production
 - **C.** To produce an aggressive bee with low honey production
 - **D.** To produce an aggressive bee with high honey production
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8.

- ▶ According to the article, what was the movement pattern of killer bees after Africa?
 - A. Central America, South America, United States
 - B. Central America, United States, South America
 - C. South America, United States, Central America
 - D. South America, Central America, United States