

Select Readings, Second Edition

Intermediate, Chapter 14 Test

Read the passage and answer the questions that follow.

Living Lefty

What do Ronald Reagan, George H. W. Bush, Bill Clinton, and Barack Obama all have in common? Of course they have all been president of the United States. But there is something else. They are all left-handed.

Depending on where you get your information, left-handed people make up only about 10 to 20 percent of the population. However, recent studies show that a higher percentage of people with IQs over 140 are left-handed.

Four of the five original Macintosh computer designers were lefties. Musical geniuses Kurt Cobain and Jimi Hendricks were both left-handed. Speaking of geniuses, Albert Einstein, Isaac Newton, Benjamin Franklin, and the artist Michelangelo were also all left-handed. And the list goes on and on.

Throughout history, left-handers have achieved greatness in many areas. Lefties seem to be particularly outstanding in creative, sporting, and artistic fields, possibly because lefties appear to have a greater natural talent for lateral thinking¹ and creativity. The reason for this might be that the right side of the brain, which controls the left side of the body, is dominant², and thus more developed than that of right-handed people.

Being left-handed, however, isn't always a gift. Left-handed people have to suffer through countless daily problems simply because they are left-handed. So much in our world assumes that everyone is right-handed. That can be frustrating for left-handed people. The design of such mundane items as school desks, scissors, computer mice and keyboards, and even power tools can be a real challenge to use for lefties, since they are normally designed with the right-handed user in mind.

In addition to the obstacles left-handed people face in daily life, for some reason left-handedness has been looked down upon for years. In fact, many cultures have forced their children to become right-handed, even if they were naturally left-handed. Luckily, this has changed in recent times.

Though being left-handed can be difficult at times, there is no denying that there is something mysterious and fascinating about left-handed people. Despite the hardships many left-handed people face, it is clear that left-handedness can be a benefit, and not a disadvantage, as some might believe. Many of the greatest people to have ever lived were left-handed. So if you're left-handed, be proud. It just might lead you to your own greatness.

¹ **lateral thinking** solving problems in a creative, indirect way

² **dominant** stronger

1. The reading is primarily about _____.
 - A. why being left-handed is better than being right-handed
 - B. which famous people are left-handed
 - C. why being left-handed is a problem for many
 - D. both advantages and disadvantages of being left-handed

2. According to the article, left-handed people _____.
 - A. mostly have IQs over 140
 - B. make up around 10–20% of the population
 - C. are more likely to use Macintosh computers
 - D. are dominant in history

3. Which of the following people was not mentioned as left-handed?
 - A. Bill Clinton
 - B. Isaac Newton
 - C. Abraham Lincoln
 - D. Michelangelo

4. The reading infers that lefties might be more creative than right-handed people due to the dominance of _____.
 - A. the right side of the brain
 - B. the left-hand side of the body
 - C. lateral thinking
 - D. their creativity

5. In paragraph 6, the pronoun “they” in “even if they were naturally left-handed,” refers to _____.
 - A. cultures
 - B. children
 - C. people
 - D. obstacles

6. The design of the following items is mentioned as problematic for lefties except _____.
 - A. cell phones
 - B. power tools
 - C. scissors
 - D. keyboards

7. In paragraph 5, the pronoun “they” in “they are normally designed,” refers to _____.
 - A. lefties
 - B. mundane items
 - C. right-handed people
 - D. problems

8. According to the article, the world assumes that _____.
 - A. left-handed people are more creative
 - B. being left-handed is a gift
 - C. most people are right-handed
 - D. left-handed people are frustrated

9. In the last paragraph, we can infer that _____.
 - A. the author feels being left-handed can be an advantage
 - B. the situation is getting better for left-handed people nowadays
 - C. most left-handed people are proud of being left-handed
 - D. most left-handed people don’t realize how mysterious and fascinating they are

10. The overall tone of this reading is _____.
- A. serious and academic
 - B. light and silly
 - C. light and informative
 - D. scientific and technical