2019 SAN ANTONIO CLASSICAL SOCIETY  
TSJCL AREA B ACADEMIC OLYMPICS

READING COMPREHENSION LEVELS ½ & I TEST

**Directions: Read the passages carefully for comprehension. Answer the questions according to what is stated or implied in the passage. Mark the letter of the best answer on your answer sheet.**

THE SIBYLLINE BOOKS

Tarquinius Superbus inter Rōmānōs ultimus regnābat. ad Tarquinium Sibylla, fēmina rūgōsa, advenit, et novem librōs portat. “ō tyranne”, inquit, “novem librōs sacrōs habeō.” “cūr ad mē librōs portās?” rogat tyrannus. “librōs ad tē portō”, Sibylla Tarquiniō respondet, quod deōrum ōrācula habent. sī mihi pecūniam dabis, librōs habēbis, deōrum ōrācula nōn iam ignōrābis.” Tyrannus rīdet et fēminam dīmittit, quod magnum pretium rogat. tum Sibylla trēs librōs 5

incendit, cum reliquīs revenit, sed pretium nōn dēminuit. iterum Tarquinius rīdet, iterum fēminam dīmittit. Sibylla, ubi iterum revenit, trēs librōs habet, sed nunc quoque pretium nōn dēminuit. iam fēminae constantia Tarquinium movet; nōn iam rīdet sed assentit. librōs trēs reliquōs emit, et magnā dīligentiā conservat. ōrācula deōrum populum Rōmānum saepe adiuvābant. 10

1. Tarquinius Superbus is remembered as the...  
   a. first Roman king b. last Roman king   
   c. greatest Roman king d. wisest Roman king
2. His name suggests that Tarquin was…  
   a. wise b. strong  
   c. proud d. humble
3. In line 1, the Sibyl is described as…  
   a. young b. old  
   c. ugly d. wrinkled
4. What did the Sibyl bring to Tarquin in line 2?  
   a. new books b. ancient books  
   c. divine books d. nine books
5. What did the books contain, according to the Sibyl?  
   a. stories about the gods b. religious instruction  
   c. divine prophecies d. a record of the past
6. What did the Sibyl demand in return for the books (line 4)?  
   a. an answer b. a sacrifice  
   c. power d. money
7. How did Tarquin respond to the Sibyl’s request (line 5)?  
   a. he granted it b. he ignored it  
   c. he laughed at her d. he thanked her
8. Why did Tarquin respond in this way?  
   a. the price was too high b. he didn’t want the books  
   c. he wanted to think about it d. he didn’t believe in the gods
9. What did the Sibyl do with the books?  
   a. she read them b. she returned them  
   c. she burned some of them d. she burned all of them
10. How many books did the Sibyl bring to her next meeting with Tarquin?  
    a. three books b. six books  
    c. seven books d. nine books
11. How much did she ask for these remaining books?  
    a. a lower price b. a higher price  
    c. the same price d. she gave them away
12. How did Tarquin respond to the Sibyl’s second offer?  
    a. he accepted it b. he rejected it  
    c. he offered a smaller amount d. he took the books from her without paying
13. How many books did the Sibyl have on her third visit to Tarquin?  
    a. three books b. six books  
    c. nine books d. no books
14. How much did she ask for these remaining books?  
    a. a lower price b. a higher price  
    c. the same price d. she wouldn’t sell them
15. How did Tarquin respond to the Sibyl’s final offer?  
    a. he bought the books b. he stole the books  
    c. he laughed at her d. he sent her away
16. What convinced him to do so?  
    a. he wanted to read them b. he wanted to burn them  
    c. he was afraid she would burn them d. he was impressed by her consistency
17. What did the Roman people gain from this transaction?  
    a. help from the oracles b. religious instruction  
    c. philosophical insight d. protection from their enemies
18. Which statement best characterizes the moral of the story?  
    a. Money can’t buy happiness. b. The best things in life are free.  
    c. Time is money. d. You can’t negotiate with fate.

GAIUS MUCIUS SCAEVOLA

tandem Rōmānī Tarquinium propter iniūriās multās ē patriā expulsērunt; sed cum magnīs cōpiīs mox revēnit. adiuvābat Tarquinium Porsena cum multīs Etruscīs et castra prope fluviī rīpam posuērunt. Rōmānī magnopere timēbant; sed Gāius Mūcius in Etruscōrum castra clam properāvit. ibi gladium strinxit et ad Porsenam cucurrit. sed stābat prope Porsenam scrība; Mūcius Porsenam ignōrābat, itaque nōn Porsenam sed scrībam miserum necāvit. 5

statim Etruscī virum comprehendērunt, et Porsena “cũr gladium contrā mē stringis?” postulāvit. Mūcius “Rōmānus sum” respondit; “nec clēmentiam rogō nec lētum timeō.” prope āram stābat ubi ardēbat ignis sacer; subitō dextram in ignem imposuit; dum flammae dextram incendēbant, “trecentī Rōmānī” inquit, “nunc ad castra properant; nec flammās timent nec tē.” constantia virī Porsenam mōvit; līberum dīmīsit Mūcium. Mūciō Rōmānī multa praemia 10 dedērunt, et eum Scaevolam vocābant.

1. What had Tarquin done to offend the Romans?  
   a. injured many people b. expelled many people from the fatherland  
   c. injured his father many times d. committed many acts of injustice
2. Who tried to help Tarquin in his exile?  
   a. the Roman people b. Roman troops  
   c. the Etruscans and their king. d. Gaius Mucius
3. Where did Tarquin and his followers establish their base of operations?  
   a. in Etruria b. in a nearby forest   
   c. on an adjacent hill d. near the banks of the Tiber
4. Who was Gaius Mucius?  
   a. a Roman soldier b. an Etruscan king  
   b. a follower of Tarquin’s d. an Etruscan scribe
5. How did Mucius gain access to the camp?  
   a. he drew his sword b. he killed the guards  
   c. he swam across the river d. he snuck in secretly
6. What was Mucius trying to do in the camp?  
   a. join Tarquin b. warn Tarquin  
   c. kill Porsena d. kill the scribe
7. What made the task difficult for Mucius?  
   a. Tarquin wasn’t there b. Tarquin knew he was coming  
   c. he couldn’t find Porsena d. he didn’t know Porsena
8. Why is the scribe described as *miserum* in line 5?  
   a. because the Etruscans arrested him b. because he didn’t know Porsena  
   c. because Mucius killed him by mistake d. because Tarquin killed him with a sword
9. After Mucius was captured, Porsena asked him...  
   a. who he was b. if the sword belonged to him c. why had drawn the sword d. why he had killed the scribe
10. Mucius “answered” Porsena by…  
    a. giving his name b. identifying himself as a Roman  
    c. admitting what he had done d. asking the king for mercy
11. **prope āram stābat** (lines 7-8) What was already on the altar?  
    a. a sacrificial lamb b. a sacred fire  
    c. the blood of Tarquin d. the sword
12. What did Mucius place upon the altar?  
    a. an offering b. his sword  
    c. his head d. his right hand
13. Why did Mucius do this?  
    a. to swear an oath b. to please the gods  
    c. to distract Porsena d. to show he had no fear
14. What did he say to Porsena as he was doing it (lines 8-9)?  
    a. “I do not ask for mercy.” b. “I do not fear death.” c. “Three hundred Romans are coming.” d. “This really hurts.”
15. How did Porsena react?  
    a. he set Mucius free b. he ran away  
    c. he put out the fire d. he turned away
16. What name did Mucius earn from this exploit?  
    a. “Lucky” b. “Lefty”  
    c. “Torchy” d. “Crazy”
17. Why was this name appropriate?  
    a. he was unlucky b. he was left handed  
    c. he lost his right hand d. he was clearly crazy

Tie breakers:

96. The **tense** of the verbs *dabis*, *habēbis*, and *ignorābis* (first passage, line 4) is…  
 a. present b. imperfect c. perfect d. future

97. The **case** of the noun *deōrum* (first passage, lines 3-4) is…  
 a. nominative b. genitive c. dative d. accusative e. ablative

98. The **case** of the words *magnā diligentiā* (first passage, line 9) is…  
 a. nominative b. genitive c. dative d. accusative e. ablative

99. In the second passage (line 8) the phrase *in ignem* is best translated…  
 a. in the fire b. into the fire c. within the fire d. out of the fire

100. The new name Mucius receives in the second passage will be his…  
 a. praenomen b. nomen c. cognomen d. agnomen