



CUNYASSESSMENT TEST IN READING (CATR) Practice 4

“Cold or Flu?”

Read the passage below and then answer the multiple choice questions which follow. Check your answers with the answer key.

Every winter, at least in cold climates, people begin to become ill, with sneezing, sore throat, and stuffed-up head a few of the most common symptoms. Sometimes other conditions, such as severe cough, are also present, and people wonder whether they have simply caught a cold or are suffering from flu. Since the two illnesses have several common characteristics, the confusion is understandable. Colds are generally rather mild annoyances, but flu can be quite serious and lead to pneumonia. So it is wise to be aware of the differences.

Sneezing, stuffy nose, and sore throat are the most common symptoms of colds, and they are often, but not always, present with flu as well. Chest discomfort and coughing may also accompany both ailments, but in flu they have a tendency to become severe, with heavy, hacking coughing that may last for weeks afterward.

The symptoms which mark the presence of flu, which are rarely if ever present with the common cold, are headache, high fever, aches and pains all over the body, a general weakness, and exhaustion. Often the illness begins with vague body pains and headache, then quickly escalates as the victim's temperature becomes elevated and extreme fatigue sets in. Sufferers may find themselves in bed for several days, sleeping much of the time and battling temperatures of 102-104 degrees. Waking moments may be spent coughing uncontrollably.

Though there is presently no cure for the common cold, antibiotics can counteract certain strains of flu. And getting a flu shot at the beginning of each season is a particularly good idea.

1. The main idea of this passage is
 - a. Flu can be a very serious illness.
 - b. People who do not want to suffer from colds or flu should move to warmer climates.
 - c. One can often determine whether one has a cold or the flu by what symptoms one has.
 - d. Many diseases have similar symptoms.
2. A very severe cough
 - a. is one of the ways one can distinguish a cold from flu.
 - b. can be dangerous for older people.
 - c. is always accompanied by chest discomfort.
 - d. occurs more often in a cold than it does in flu.
3. We can conclude that
 - a. both a cold and flu are serious diseases.
 - b. people who think that they are suffering from flu should see a doctor.
 - c. there is nothing to do about a cold or flu except wait for it to pass.
 - d. People who live in colder climates much more likely to have flu than to have a simple cold.
4. As used in the passage, the word elevated means
 - a. moved to another location.
 - b. changed.
 - c. raised.
 - d. unimportant.

ANSWER KEY AND EXPLANATIONS

- A** is incorrect. While it is stated in the passage that flu can be a serious illness, that is just one fact that is mentioned, not the main idea.

B is incorrect. It is implied that cold and flu occur more often in cold climates, but that is not the main idea of the passage.

C is correct.

D is incorrect, because while it is true, it is too general to be the main idea of the passage.
- A** is correct.

B is incorrect, because it is not mentioned or implied in the passage.

C is incorrect. While coughing may be accompanied by chest discomfort, the passage does not state or imply whether this is always the case.

D is incorrect, because the passage states that the opposite is the case -- severe coughing is more likely to indicate flu than it is to indicate a simple cold.
- A** is incorrect. While flu can be serious, the passage states that “Colds are generally rather mild annoyances.”

B is correct.

C is incorrect, as the last paragraph explains that antibiotics can be useful against flu.

D is incorrect. While there is an implication that people in colder climates are more likely to get colds and flu, the passage does not imply that they are more likely to get one than another.
- A** is incorrect. One’s temperature cannot be moved to another location.

B is incorrect, as the word as used means changed in a specific way – that is, made higher.

C is correct.

D is incorrect. One would not say that a person’s temperature was unimportant in a discussion of disease.