JUDGING THE STATEMENT

Every well-written paragraph has one sentence which is more important than the others. It may give a specific answer to a general question; it may define a main term precisely, or it may express the point in a series of details or examples. But mainly, it will sum up the central idea of a paragraph; it is the Main Idea.

Read the paragraphs below and then answer the questions. Judge each statement. A statement may be considered

* Too General - It is too vague or overgeneralized. It is a statement which extends beyond the limits of the specific topic. It is a statement which leaves questions in the reader's mind.

* Too Specific - It is a statement which summarizes only the ideas contained in the topic sentence. It is an incomplete statement which deals with only some of the specific ideas. It is only one fact mentioned in the paragraph.

* Main Idea - It is a statement which includes the ideas in the topic sentence as well as the ideas in the supporting sentences. It states what or who the entire paragraph is about.

* Irrelevant - It is a statement not actually mentioned in the paragraph.

If you were planning to buy a television set, the following advertisement would certainly attract your attention: "Color TV, only $79. Two day sale. Hurry." However, when you go to the store ready to buy, you may discover that the advertisement for the sets had caused a terrific response, and the sets are sold out. But there is a set which is "just right for you." It costs $359. This sales tactic is called "bait and switch." Buyers are baited with a sales offer, and then they are switched to another more costly item. Buying items on sale requires careful consideration of the merchandise and the reasons for the sale.

1. The consumer must be on his guard when purchasing items on sale.
   a. Too general
   b. Too specific
   c. Main idea
   d. Irrelevant

2. Color television sets which sell for $79.00 are sold out quickly.
   a. Too general
   b. Too specific
   c. Main idea
   d. Irrelevant
3. Every family needs a color TV.
   a. Too general
   b. Too specific
   c. Main idea
   d. Irrelevant

4. Many stores use the "Bait and Switch" technique to attract customers.
   a. Too general
   b. Too specific
   c. Main idea
   d. Irrelevant

5. This paragraph could be entitled
   a. Buyers Beware
   b. Closeout Sale
   c. Crime Pays
   d. Buying a TV set

6. Underline the sentence which clearly illustrates the main idea.
   Houdini, the famous magician, began his career with a traveling circus at
   the age of nine. His first trick was to pick up needles with his eyelids while
   he was hanging by his heels, head downwards. He slowly perfected this
   trick in secret in the family woodshed. This humble beginning was a far cry
   from Houdini's role as the master magician who thrilled audiences
   everywhere. He spent many years of long, hard work in preparing for his
   many feats. He was world famous for his escapes - from handcuffs,
   straitjackets, prison cells, and sealed chambers. He escaped from chests
   and barrels of every kind. He even escaped from a grave six feet in the
   ground. When he died on October 31, 1926, he had been a public
   performer for forty-three years.

7. Houdini enjoyed his life.
   a. Too general
   b. Too specific
   c. Main idea
   d. Irrelevant

8. Houdini was a master magician.
   a. Too general
   b. Too specific
   c. Main idea
   d. Irrelevant

9. Houdini began his career with the circus.
   a. Too general
   b. Too specific
   c. Main idea
   d. Irrelevant

10. Houdini toured Europe many times.
    a. Too general
    b. Too specific
    c. Main idea
    d. Irrelevant
11. A major point of the paragraph is that
   a. Magic is difficult to learn.
   b. Public performers are well paid.
   c. Audiences like to be frightened.
   d. Famous people earn their fame through hard work.

12. Underline the sentence that expresses the main idea.

   People the world over recognize the swastika (+) as the symbol of Hitler's tyranny, but few realize that its origin can be traced to prehistoric times. In fact, it was once an American Indian symbol of mercy. During the late 1800's, the Carlsberg Brewery in Denmark adopted the symbol as its trademark. It quickly became synonymous with excellence. In the early 1930's, it became the emblem of Hitler's Germany. It is ironic that a symbol of love and equality was corrupted to represent power and cruelty.

13. The chief vice of authority is corruption.
   a. Too general
   b. Too specific
   c. Main idea
   d. Irrelevant

14. The swastika was once an Indian symbol.
   a. Too general
   b. Too specific
   c. Main idea
   d. Irrelevant

15. There is nothing so evil as the corruption of the best.
   a. Too general
   b. Too specific
   c. Main idea
   d. Irrelevant

16. The swastika was the emblem of Hitler's Germany.
   a. Too general
   b. Too specific
   c. Main idea
   d. Irrelevant

17. What would be an appropriate title for the paragraph?
   a. Hitler's People.
   b. An Ironic Choice.
   c. Symbols of Prehistoric Times
   d. All for One.

18. Underline the sentence that expresses the main idea.
1. c.

2. b.

3. d.

4. a.

5. a.

6. Buying items on sale requires careful consideration of the merchandise and the reasons for the sale.

7. a.

8. c.

9. d.

10. d.

11. d.

12. This humble beginning was a far cry from Houdini's role as the master magician who thrilled audiences everywhere.

13. a.

14. b.

15. c.

16. b.

17. b.

18. It is ironic that a symbol of love and equality was corrupted to represent power and cruelty.