

Question 1-11 are based on the following passage.

This passage is adapted from a letter written by Thomas Jefferson to James Madison. It was originally written in 1785, when Jefferson was residing in France.

Line
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Seven o'clock, and retired to my fireside, I have determined to enter into conversation with you; this [Fontainebleau] is a village of about 5,000 inhabitants when the court is not here and 20,000 when they are, occupying a valley thro' which runs a brook, and on each side of it a ridge of small mountains most of which are naked rock. The king comes here in the fall always, to hunt. His court attend him, as do also the foreign diplomatic corps. But as this is not indispensably required, and my finances do not admit the expence of a continued residence here, I propose to come occasionally to attend the king's levees, returning again to Paris, distant 40 miles.

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This being the first trip, I set out yesterday morning to take a view of the place. For this purpose I shaped my course towards the highest of the mountains in sight, to the top of which was about a league. As soon as I had got clear of the town I fell in with a poor woman walking at the same rate with myself and going the same course. Wishing to know the condition of the labouring poor I entered into conversation with her, which I began by enquiries for the path which would lead me into the mountain: and thence proceeded to enquiries into her vocation, condition and circumstance. She told me she was a day labourer, at 8. sous or 4 d. sterling the day; that she had two children to maintain, and to pay a rent of 30 livres for her house (which would consume the hire of 75 days), that often she could get no employment, and of course was without bread. As we had walked together near a mile and she had so far served me as a guide, I gave her, on parting 24 sous. She burst into tears of a gratitude which I could perceive was unfeigned, because she was unable to utter a word. She had probably never before received so great an aid.

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This little attendrissement,¹ with the solitude of my walk led me into a train of reflections on that unequal division of property which occasions the numberless instances of wretchedness which I had observed in this country and is to be observed all over Europe. The property of this country is absolutely centered in a very few hands, having revenues of from half a million of guineas a year downwards. These employ the flower of the country as servants, some of them having as many as 200 domestics, not labouring. They employ also a great number of manufacturers, and tradesmen, and lastly the class of labouring husbandmen.² But after all these comes the most numerous of all the classes, that is, the poor who cannot find work. I asked myself what could be the reason that so many should be permitted to beg who are willing to work, in a country where there is a very considerable proportion of uncultivated lands? These lands are kept idle mostly for the aske of game. It

50 should seem then that it must be because of the enormous wealth of the proprietors which places them above attention to the increase of their revenues by permitting these lands to be laboured.

55 I am conscious that an equal division of property is impracticable. But the consequences of this enormous inequality producing so much misery to the bulk of mankind legislators cannot invent too many devices for subdividing property, only taking care to let their subdivisions go hand in hand with the natural affections of the human mind. The descent of property of every kind therefore to all the children, or to all the brothers and sisters, or other relations in equal degree is a politic measure, and a practicable one. Another means of silently lessening the inequality of property is to exempt all from taxation below a certain point, and to tax the higher portions of property in geometrical progression as they rise. Whenever there is in any country, uncultivated lands and unemployed poor, it is clear that the laws of property have been so far extended as to violate natural right. The earth is given as a common stock for man to labour and live on. If, for the encouragement of industry we allow it to be appropriated, we must take care that other employment be furnished to those excluded from the appropriation . . .

¹ emotion

² farmers

1

Jefferson's central claim in the passage is that

- A) the current system of inheritance and ownership is unlikely ever to change.
- B) wealth should be redistributed in a way that benefits the majority of society.
- C) the unemployed should use their energies to work the land, rather than ask for money.
- D) everybody has the natural right to as much property as he or she thinks necessary.

2

Jefferson uses the example of the woman he meets on the road in order to

- A) provide a moving anecdote in order to distract his reader from larger issues.
- B) illustrate his surroundings with an atypical example of the native people.
- C) support the claim that the economic situation is worse than Madison thinks.
- D) transition from his specific experience to a more general argument.

CONTINUE 

3

Over the course of the passage, the main focus shifts from

- A) a description of the locale to a broader discussion of principles.
- B) a humorous anecdote to a position on a popular U.S. debate.
- C) an analysis of the king's situation to an analysis of an unemployed person's.
- D) Jefferson's experiences in France to Madison's experiences in the U.S.

4

The main purpose of the passage's information about Fontainebleau is to

- A) provide a picturesque counterpoint to the terrible poverty that Jefferson witnesses.
- B) describe a foreign land to someone who has never visited France.
- C) contextualize the anecdote and argument that follow.
- D) interest the reader in the narrative before changing topics.

5

Jefferson implies that the initial purpose of his walk was to

- A) better understand the physical geography around him.
- B) get out of the town in order to think more clearly.
- C) understand the condition of non-American laborers.
- D) avoid running into the king and his courtiers.

6

Which choice provides the best evidence for the answer to the previous question?

- A) lines 8–12 (“But as . . . miles”)
- B) lines 13–14 (“This . . . place”)
- C) lines 16–18 (“As soon . . . course”)
- D) lines 18–20 (“Wishing . . . her”)

7

What main effect does the phrase “flower of the country,” line 40, have on the tone of the passage?

- A) It lightens the tone by providing a metaphor of beauty in an otherwise bleak narrative.
- B) It provides an impassioned tone to describe the discrepancy between the relative privilege of the few and the hardship of the many.
- C) It creates a tone of praise by comparing the workers of France to those in the U.S.
- D) It creates an optimistic tone by showing that the people of France are variously employed.

8

As used in line 49, “game” most nearly means

- A) tricks to be played.
- B) play to be undertaken.
- C) sports to be practiced.
- D) animals to be hunted.

9

Which choice best describes Jefferson's attitude towards socio-economic conditions in France?

- A) He approves of the king's policies on most, but not all, issues.
- B) He sees France as an isolated case, with unique conditions not applicable to other countries.
- C) He is affronted by the few opportunities given to the poor.
- D) He is pleased that the United States does not experience the same conditions as France.

10

Jefferson's statement that he is conscious that “an equal division of property is impracticable” (lines 54–55) implies that he

- A) has decided that there is no point in pursuing his goals, because they would ultimately prove impossible to carry out.
- B) knows that his ideals are not entirely realistic, yet still believes that some improvement is possible.
- C) does not care about what is realistically possible, but is only concerned with the way that things should be.
- D) believes that even though property cannot be divided equally, it should still be divided according to a man's abilities.

11

Which choice provides the best evidence for the answer to the previous question?

- A) lines 49–53 (“It should . . . laboured”)
- B) lines 55–56 (“But the consequences . . . mankind”)
- C) lines 57–59 (“legislators . . . mind”)
- D) lines 59–63 (“The descent . . . one”)