TEST-TAKING STRATEGY INSTRUCTION IN THE NATIONAL UNIVERSITY ENTRANCE EXAMINATION (NUEE) ENGLISH SECTION

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ABSTRACT

This study attempted to investigate the effect of test-taking strategy training on Iranian students' performance on English section of the National University Entrance Examination (NUEE). To do so, 160 fourth grade high school students were randomly assigned to the control and experimental groups. The experimental group received 8 hours of test-taking strategy training along with samples of the NUEE exams, while control group only practiced the samples of the NUEE exams without being imposed to these strategies. Participant's performance on school exams which were very similar to the NUEE English section was also measured through a multiple-choice test which was used as the pre and post-test. Results revealed that the experimental group outperformed the control group in both high stake test of NUEE and the post-test. Moreover, there was a positive relationship between the participants' general point average (GPA) in their school final exams and their test taking strategy use. The findings provide empirical support for encouraging language teachers to instruct test-taking strategies in language classes, especially the strategies which help students in stressful exams like NUEE.

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Keywords: English test-taking strategy training, Test performance, National university entrance examination (NUEE), GPA.

Contribution/ Originality

This study is one of few studies which have studied the effect of training test taking strategies on high school students' performance in a National University Entrance Examination in an EFL context.

1. INTRODUCTION

In almost all educational systems and academic institutions, tests are commonly used as evaluating tools and their significance goes beyond schools since numerous vital decisions affecting students' lives are made completely based on them. Important decisions like college admission, certification, personal selection, or specific behavior is typically made according to scores in specific tests like language tests (Pour-Mohammadi and Jafre, 2011). As a consequence, how to perform better on tests has become a main concern for teachers and students. There are many cognitive and psychological factors which have an impact on students' scores and test-taking strategies, also known as test-wiseness are among them (Hambleton *et al.*, 1991).

Test-taking strategies are considered as those processes which the respondents have selected consciously, at least to some degree (Bayram, 2013). These strategies, also can result in improving test validity and reliability (Dodeen, 2009). Similar to learning strategies, test-taking strategies are not intrinsically effective or ineffective, since their successful application depends on whether they are suitable for a specific task and appropriately used while doing it Cohen (2006). In this regard, test-taking strategies are close to language learning strategies, but they are in a common set of strategies triggered for the coming task (Cohen, 1998; 2006). Cohen (1998) has defined test-taking strategies as the consciously selected processes that test-takers employ for confronting language issues and the item-response demands in the test-taking tasks. This definition has two important elements: *consciousness* and *goal-orientation*

Consciousness is one of the controversial issues in the test-taking strategies related literature. According to Cohen (1998) if the learners cannot recognize any strategy related to it as it is unconscious, the behavior would be a common process, not a strategy. Ellis (1994) also maintained that if strategies become so automatic that learners are not conscious of using them, they cannot be accessible for explanation and lose their importance as strategies. Supporting this, Phakiti (2003) argued that the strategies recognized may become processes for some students but remain strategies for others. On the other hand, any behavior without clear and planned goal is worthless and test-taking strategies are no exception. One major purpose of test-taking strategies is to improve test taker's performance on exams. According to Al Fraidan and Al-Khalaf (2012) the goals of test-taking strategies have two components: *facilitation* (strategies that facilitate a given process, which happens relatively without difficulty), and *problem-solving* (strategies that play a role when a problem encountered). However, neither strategy is guaranteed to be effective. For instance, L1 translation can be both facilitating and problem solving, however, it does not inevitably bring about success in realizing the correct answer.

In the literature of test-taking strategies, cognitive and metacognitive strategies have been distinguished. Purpura (1997) was among the first who looked at this distinction. He investigated the relationship between cognitive and metacognitive strategy-use and language-test performance. The results revealed that cognitive processing was a multidimensional construct containing a set of comprehension, memory, and retrieval strategies. In contrast, findings showed that metacognitive strategy use was a one-dimensional construct including a single set of assessment processes (e.g., goal-setting, planning, monitoring, self-evaluating, and self-testing).

As Phakiti (2003) stated, the fundamental concept of metacognition is the notion of thinking about thinking. For instance, translation in a reading comprehension test is a cognitive strategy, while making a decision about whether to translate or not is a metacognitive strategy. Consequently, metacognition monitors, guides, and regulates translation as a cognitive strategy in order to achieve the purpose of reaching correct answers. In sum, considering the above discussion, metacognition has significant and straight effects on cognitive processes, while cognitive processes directly affect test performance. Hence, the effect of cognitive strategies on performance is simplified by metacognitive strategies.

1.1. Related Studies

So far, several studies have investigated the effects of test-taking strategies on test performance (Bialystok, 1983; Cohen, 1984; Nevo, 1989; Phakiti, 2008; Radojevic, 2009; Pour-Mohammadi and Jafre, 2011; Harris, 2014) study examined the uses of strategies by 12-year-old learners and adults in an oral picture reconstruction task. Though the findings did not show any steady correlation between test-taking strategy use and test performance, they contributed to a better classification of communication strategies.Moreover, Scharnagl (2004) also conducted an experimental study to investigate the effect of test-taking strategy training on reading achievement of low-performing third-grade students. Findings indicated that the students who received instruction in test-taking strategies those who received regular instruction only. In another study, Phakiti (2008) investigated the relationship between test-takers' use of cognitive and metacognitive strategies and their performance on reading comprehension test. The results revealed a positive relationship between the use of cognitive and metacognitive strategies and the reading test performance. Results also showed that highly successful test-takers considerably used higher metacognitive strategy than the moderately successful ones. Harris (2014) conducted a study to determine if a test-taking skills intervention could reduce test anxiety and progress test performance in 4th grade students. Results showed that the test-taking skills intervention resulted only in a slight reduction in test anxiety that maintained at 1-month follow-up and impacts on test performance were mixed promptly after the intervention. On the other hand, some other studies have reinforced the effectiveness of research-based strategy instruction as a device for improving metacognitive awareness (Thiede and Dunlosky, 1994; El-Hindi, 1996; Caverly et al., 2004). For example, Caverly et al. (2004) investigated the amount of metacognitive awareness of students before and after a strategic reading instruction intervention called PLAN (Predict Step, Locate Step, Add Step, and Note Step). Participants were 36 first-year college students enrolled in reading developmental course. Findings revealed that students not only increased their metacognitive awareness after the instructional intervention, but also successfully used the reading strategies in the correct context. Regarding test-taking strategies and high-stakes standardized tests in the context of Iran, (Razmjoo and Heidari Tabrizi, 2010) conducted a content analysis of the Iranian National University Entrance Exam in 2007. The study aimed to analyze the content of the MA exam in TEFL (Teaching English as a Foreign Language) to see if there was any pattern in the process of devising such exams. The study also attempted to identify and describe the problems with this exam and to give some suggestions to remove them. The findings revealed that the validity of the exam was not

strongly established because of the elimination of or de-emphasis over the content categories received significant credit in the B.A. program. In another study, Salehi and Yunus (2012) examined the effects of the Iranian University Entrance Exam on the high school English teachers. To explore the teachers' perceptions of the University Entrance Exam, a sample of 132 high school English teachers received a survey questionnaire. The results of data analysis proved that little attention was given to the speaking, writing, and listening skills in classrooms since these skills were not tested by University Entrance Exam. Besides, University entrance Exam negatively and indirectly influenced English teachers to train the test format. Although several studies have been conducted on the National University Entrance Exam (NUEE) that is called Konkoor in Iran, there is currently a scarcity of investigation on its English test section to see the effects test-taking strategy instruction on improving the candidates' scores. Therefore, as the above discussion shows, research on test-taking strategies and the high-stakes test is still in its beginning ages and requires more work on different learning situations. Moreover, the present study has also attempted to investigate if there was any relationship between using these strategies and students' general point average (GPA) obtained from their scores in all courses they had to pass to get the grade certificate.

1.2. Research Questions

This study attempts to answer the following research questions:

1. Does test-taking strategy training have any significant effect on high school students' English test performance?
2. Is there any meaningful relationship between high school students GPA and test-taking strategy use?
3. Does test-taking strategy training have any significant effect on high school students' performance on English section of National University Entrance Examination (NUEE)?

2. METHOD

2.1. Participants

This study recruited two hundred and seventy three male and female high school EFL learners in Iran based on convenience sampling. They had 7 years of formal English study in their junior and senior high school with an average age of 17.4. Since 13 learners had already participated in a similar test-taking training, they were excluded from the study. Therefore, 160 learners were divided into two groups, one control and the other experimental group randomly.

2.2. Instructional Package and Testing Materials

2.2.1. Instructional Package

Some general test-taking strategies, some specific test-taking techniques related to the multiple choice tests and some tips related to the exam preparation were used in the treatment package. It should be mentioned that this package was prepared in the learners' first language (Persian).The validity of the instructional package was ensured by two experienced EFL lecturers and three high school English language teachers. Reliability was also ensured through piloting the package with a group of 32 high school students with characteristics similar to those of the real participants.

2.2.2. Testing Materials

In order to gather data, three instruments were employed in this study: a researcher- compiled English test of NUEE (as the pre and post-test), a test-taking strategy use questionnaire, and English section of NUEE.

Test-taking strategy use questionnaire

This questionnaire consisted of 22 items developed based on Rezaei (2005) guidelines. The items were designed to be answered in a 5-point Likert scale with 1 (Never), 2 (Rarely), 3 (Sometimes), 4 (Frequently) and 5 (Always). Its reliability was estimated by running Cronbach's Alpha to the results through a pilot study with 32 high school students. The value of Cronbach's Alpha was .82 showing that the instrument could be considered as the reliable tool for the main study (see Appendix A).

A researcher- compiled English test of NUEE

This 25-item sample which was collected from the previous NUEE (Years 2009-2013) was administered as the pre-test and post-test. *It* included 25 multiple choice items designed to test students grammar, vocabulary and reading comprehension knowledge. Reliability of this test was calculated through using KR-20 formula and the value was .91 (see Appendix B).

English section of NUEE exam

This test is designed by Sanjesh Organization in Iran Annually. Since it is a standardized test, it has an established validity. It also included 25 multiple choice items.

2.3. Procedure

At first, all the participants were asked to complete the test-taking strategy use questionnaire. Then, both groups were participated in an English pretest. After being ensured about the homogeneity of the groups regarding their scores on the pretest, test-taking strategy training was started in the experimental group which lasted for a two-day workshop. Each workshop lasted for four hours. In these sessions, the researcher explicitly explained about how each strategy must be used in the processes of answering the items in the NUEE exams. After treatment, the posttest was administered to both control and experimental groups. Then, all participants took again the test-taking strategy questionnaire in order to see if there was any change in using these strategies. Finally, with the permission of the school principals, students' previous and current semesters GPA and their percentages on English section of NUEE exam were collected too.

3. RESULTS

3.1. Results from the Researcher- Compiled English Test of NUEE

In order to answer the first research question (Does test-taking strategy training have any significant effect on high school students' English test performance?), first the normality of the data was assured through using Kolmogorov- Smirnov test. Then, an independent-samples t-test was run to the data obtained from the pre-test to see if there was significant difference in the mean

scores for the two groups. The results did not show any significant difference between the groups (.07). The scores from the post-test were also analyzed through using another independent t-test.

Table-1. Independent Samples Test for the Control and Experimental Groups on English Posttest

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means							
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		
									Lower	Upper	
posttest	Equal variances assumed	.067	.79	6.12	258	.00	13.78	2.25	9.35	18.21	
	Equal variances not assumed			6.12	258	.00	13.78	2.24	9.35	18.21	

As it is shown in Table 1, results of Levene's test indicated the equality of variances. Since the Sig. value (.79) for Levene's test was larger than (.05), it means that the assumption of equal variances was not violated. Moreover, since the value (.00) in the Sig. (2-tailed) column was less than .05, there was a significant difference in the mean scores on post-test scores. For computing the effect size the Eta squared was used and the result (.125) showed that the magnitude of the differences in the means was relatively small. Therefore, first null hypothesis was rejected indicating that test-taking strategy training had significant effect on high school students' English test performance.

3.2. Results from the Students' General Point Average

In order to answer the second research question (Is there any meaningful relationship between high school students GPA and test-taking strategy use?), participants were divided in two groups of high and low average groups based on their scores in all courses of the final exams including, mathematics, physics, literature, and English language. In Iran, the maximum average is 20 and the learners who get above the average point of 15 are placed in the high achiever group and below 15 placed in the under achiever group. Pearson Correlation test was run and results revealed a strong, positive correlation between the two variables for the high average group, $r = +.583$, $n = 172$, $p < .05$, and more test-taking strategy use. Furthermore, for the low average group, there was a medium, positive correlation between the two variables, $r = +.409$, $n = 88$, $p < .05$. Thus, the second null hypothesis was rejected.

Table-2. Pearson Product-Moment Correlations between Students' GPA and test-taking strategy use

Group		Test-taking strategy use
High Average	Pearson Correlation	.583[**]
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	172
Low Average	Pearson Correlation	.409[**]
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	88

3.3. Results from the NUEE

In order to answer the third research question (Does test-taking strategy training have any significant effect on high school students' performance on English section of NUEE?) an independent-samples t-test was used to compare the control and experimental groups performance. The results are presented in Table 3.

Table-3. Independent Samples Test for the Groups performance on English Section of NUEE

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
English percent	Equal variances assumed	.27	.599	4.11	258	.00	9.32	2.26	4.85	13.78
	Equal variances not assumed			4.10	256.8	.00	9.32	2.26	4.85	13.78

The results of the Levene's test which was run for uniformity of variances settled the correct t-value. Since the Sig. value for Levene's test (.59) was greater than (.05), the assumption of similar variances was observed. Moreover, as the value (.00) in the Sig. (2-tailed) column was less than (.05), there was a significant difference in the mean scores on the dependent variable for each of the two groups. In this study, the Sig. (2-tailed) value was (.00). Therefore, it could be inferred that there was a statistically significant difference in the mean of English section of NUEE for control and experimental groups. The calculated eta squared (.015) was small, hence the third null hypothesis was rejected indicating that test-taking strategy training had significant effect on high school students' performance on English section of NUEE.

4. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In line with studies that found the positive effects of test-taking strategy instruction (Amer, 1993; Hirano, 2009) the finding of the present study supports using these strategies in EFL classrooms. Moreover, findings revealed that there is a positive relation between students' general points average in their school final exams (all courses) which is an indicator of being a successful student and using these strategies. This supports Cohen (2006) results that high scorers use test-taking strategies they are taught in an auxiliary manner. According to Cohen, one of the major points in research on test-taking strategies is the effect of participants' general language abilities on the frequency of the strategies they use. Results of this study also showed that there is a positive correlation between learners' GPA and using test-taking strategies.

According to Nourdad (2015) some possible reasons for positive effect of test-taking strategies in helping test-takers resolve problems while taking tests are altering their attitudes toward testing and reducing their test anxiety as a result. Studies in general education (Kalechstein *et al.*, 1998) and applied linguistics (Elkhafaifi, 2005; Golchi, 2012) have shown that test anxiety co-vary with testwiseness.

Moreover, as Arnold (2000) has stated, practicing test-taking strategies is a kind of *systematic desensitization*, which cuts down the amount of anxiety. In other words, frequent exposure to the anxiety-making factors assists language learners obtain emotional and mental control, and ultimately they can take part in the situation successfully.

The finding of this study revealed that the learners in the experimental group outperformed the learners in the control group in National University Entrance Examination, which is a well-known and extremely challenging exam, in Iran and in their final exams. So the findings support training EFL classroom teachers to offer training in test-taking strategies. English section in NUEE exam is made of grammar, vocabulary and reading comprehension items which are very demanding in nature and answering them correctly is a complex process in which test-takers need to actively use strategies. Therefore, instructing specific test-taking strategy in high school classes is necessary. Such training, however, is not usually involved in the curriculum and instruction. Test-taking strategy training should move away from being theoretical and abstract, instead it should be highly useful, explicit, and practical. Teacher education programs can provide teachers with opportunity of taking relevant courses or workshops and attending professional seminars.

Doing task analysis of the test-taking strategies is also very useful. It means that teachers should dwell on how a particular strategy can be applied in specific contexts in the best way. Observing students while they are performing English tests is very helpful in determining their strengths and weaknesses regarding strategy use which consequently result in providing efficient and suitable strategy instruction. Since strategic competence in the recent decades has been emphasized theoretically and practically, curriculum developers, syllabus designers, and material developers should consider planning proper tasks to expand this competence.

One limitation of the current study is teaching the strategies in only two treatment sessions due to time limitation. However, it is much better to teach them over an entire academic year to see whether students can use and practice them in the opportunities they will find. Additionally, the students' anxiety was not measured in this study. This leads directly into additional suggestions for future research. Also, it is better to find the extent to which the patterns of using test-taking strategies found in Tehran (capital of Iran) would happen in other geographical and cultural locations of this vast country. In the present study, test-taking strategy instruction was examined among senior high school students. Investigating the effect of test-taking strategy training and English test performance among students in all high school levels is also worthy.

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Appendix A

Full name: .... Name of high school: ....

Dear student, would you please read each of the following statements carefully and choose one of the choices, which correspond to what you do in answering the questions in a test. Please remember that the correctness or incorrectness of the statements is not important; I would like you to mark what you exactly do in taking a test. Your answers in this questionnaire are not used in evaluating your knowledge of English.

1. The best time for preparing for a test is the night before the test.
    1. never   2. rarely   3. sometimes.   4.frequently   5. always

2. While answering the questions in a test, if I know what I should do I do not spend my time reading the directions of the different parts of the test.
    1. never   2. rarely   3. sometimes.   4.frequently   5. always

3. I answer the easy questions first and I leave the difficult questions until last.
    1. never   2. rarely   3. sometimes.   4.frequently   5. always

4. I try to eliminate the options that I am sure are incorrect and then I choose the correct answer from among the remaining options.
    1. never   2. rarely   3. sometimes.   4.frequently   5. always

5. If two options imply the correctness of each other, I choose neither or both of them.
    1. never   2. rarely   3. sometimes.   4.frequently   5. always

6. In a four-option multiple-choice test, I choose one of the two options which is correct and implies the incorrectness of the other one.
    1. never   2. rarely   3. sometimes.   4.frequently   5. always

7. I restrict my choice to those options which encompass all or two or more given statements known to be correct.
    1. never   2. rarely   3. sometimes.   4.frequently   5. always

8. In answering a particular question, I utilize relevant content information in other test items and options.

    1. never   2. rarely   3. sometimes.   4.frequently   5. always

9. If two alternatives are correct, then I look for a third which includes these two. I choose that option as a correct answer.

    1. never   2. rarely   3. sometimes.   4.frequently   5. always

10. I look for similarities among options and identify these as incorrect. The remaining one may be the correct answer.

    1. never   2. rarely   3. sometimes.   4.frequently   5. always

11. In Reading Comprehension questions, I certainly review the questions before I read the text

    1. never   2. rarely   3. sometimes.   4.frequently   5. always

12. In Reading Comprehension questions, if a question asks for a number or a name, I scan the text to find the correct answer.

    1. never   2. rarely   3. sometimes.   4.frequently   5. always

13. While reading a text, I try to keep in mind all the details as in answering the questions I may not find any time to go back and scan it.

    1. never   2. rarely   3. sometimes.   4.frequently   5. always

14. In order to get a general idea of the text I survey it before reading it carefully.

    1. never   2. rarely   3. sometimes.   4.frequently   5. always

15. Punctuation Marks are very important for me in understanding a text completely.

    1. never   2. rarely   3. sometimes.   4.frequently   5. always

16. I scrutinize options which are noticeably longer than the others in the set as these may be the correct answers.

    1. never   2. rarely   3. sometimes.   4.frequently   5. always

17. I look for an association, usually semantic or grammatical, between a word or phrase in the stem and a word or phrase in one of the options which cues the answer.

    1. never   2. rarely   3. sometimes.   4.frequently   5. always

18. I pay close attention to an adverb (time, place, manner ,…) as it can help me find the correct answer in a test of grammar.

    1. never   2. rarely   3. sometimes.   4.frequently   5. always

19. In a test of grammar, first I read the stem carefully in order to find a clue and then I answer the question. Then I go through the options to find the one option which corresponds to my answer.

    1. never   2. rarely   3. sometimes.   4.frequently   5. always

20. In tests of vocabulary, I must know the meanings of all words as the punctuation marks and discourse markers cannot be of any help to me.

    1. never   2. rarely   3. sometimes.   4.frequently   5. always

21. Analysis of the structure of words (prefix, suffix and stem) helps me finding the meanings of unknown words in tests on vocabulary.

    1. never   2. rarely   3. sometimes.   4.frequently   5. always

22. Transition words in a sentence help me to get the meaning of a particular word or the whole sentence.

    1. never   2. rarely   3. sometimes.   4.frequently   5. always

Appendix B

Full name: ....   Name of high school: ....   Time: 20 minutes

Part A: Grammar and Vocabulary

Questions 1-11 are incomplete sentences. Beneath each sentence you will see four words or phrases marked (1), (2), (3), and (4). Choose the one word or phrase that best completes the sentence. Then mark the correct choice on your answer sheet.

1- Does Mary know whom ----------- at the last party?

1) they met   2) they meet   3) do they meet   4) did they meet

2- The teacher was ----------- tired that she could not continue teaching.

1) s   2) too   3) such   4) very

3- A: What's up? You look worried.

B: I am. My wife is sick. I think she ----------- wrong medicine.

1) may take   2) should take   3) may have taken   4) should have taken

4) I have never had a good ----------- for learning poems.

1) report   2) memory   3) hobby4) influence

5- She is very good at ----------- her duties.

1) winning   2) releasing   3) following   4) handling

6- Few people would ----------- that something should be done to reduce the level of the crime.

1) distract   2) disagree   3) suffer   4) react

7- "I am going to ask each of you to give a/an -----------," the teacher said.

1) extinction   2) permission   3) presentation   4) communication

8- Vitamins cannot be ----------- by our bodies.

1) observed   2) explored   3) forwarded   4) manufactured

9- Our professor is always ----------- to talk to his students.

1) probable   2) flexible   3) advisable   4) available

10- This building had ----------- been used as a hotel.

1) similarly   2) previously   3) reasonably   4) interchangeably

11- They found a rock with gold in it, ----------- buried in the earth's surface.

1) straightly   2) efficiently   3) rapidly   4) deeply

Part B: Cloze Test

Directions: Questions 12-16 are related to the following passage. Read the passage and decide which choice (1), (2), (3), or (4) best fits each space. Then mark your answer sheet.

Try (12) ----------- make your oral report too long. Include only the most important points. Work hard on your introduction and conclusion. These are what your (13) ----------- will remember most. The most important thing is to practice. Read your report out load. If it is long, (14) ----------- it carefully to realize how to make it shorter. Try changing the tone of your voice and the speed of your speaking. Next, read it to a small group of friends. Ask them to (15) what they think you can do to make it better. If you want to be successful, these are the steps you need to take whether you like it (16) ----------- .

12-   1) do not   2) you not   3) to not   4) not to

13-   1) audience   2) issues   3) sample   4) realities

14-   1) release   2) predict   3) examine   4) magnify

15-   1) bother   2) suggest   3) enhance   4) concentrate

16-   1) or you not   2) not   3) does not   4) or not

Part C: Reading Comprehension Directions

In this part of the test, you will read two passages. Each passage is followed by four questions. Answer the questions by choosing the best choice (1), (2), (3), or (4). Then mark your answer sheet.

PASSAGE 1:

The first time I came to the Herault, after a ten-hour train ride from Paris to Montpellier, I caught a bus to the old village where my friend Sarah had bought a house. When I got there an hour and a half later, despite the fact that I'd been riding on a modern bus, I had the sense that I'd moved back 700 years. Sarah's house is made of stone, a few hundred years old, typical of the kind of place for sale cheaply here. Like actually all the village houses it's attached to the neighboring ones ─ so although the village is small it feels heavily populated, everybody living close together, always somebody leaning out of the window or sitting in front of the door. Inside, it is dark and cool. When Sarah bought the house, it had cold running water, some missing floors, and the fireplace didn't work.

17- How long did it take the writer to get to the place where her friend's house was?

1) Ten hours   2) Longer than a day

3) One and a half hours   4) Eleven and a half hours

18- All of the following are true about Sarah's house EXCEPT that it was ---------.

1) made of stone   2) built over 700 years ago

3) connected to other houses   4) located in a crowded village

19- It can be understood from the passage that people living in the village ----------.

1) didn't seem to know Sarah   2) offered their houses for sale at a low price

3) were probably friendly towards each other 4) went into their house when the writer arrived

20- It can be understood from the passage that when Sarah bought her house it was ---------.

1) good enough to live in   2) required some repairs

3) in the same condition as the other houses 4) older than the other houses in the village

21- Which of the following questions does the passage answer?

1) Did anyone help Sarah to fix her house?

2) How did the author happen to know Sarah?

3) Why did the author travel 700 years back in time?

4) Did the author walk from Montpellier to her friend's house?

PASSAGE 2:

To obtain power from the sun's rays is to use nuclear power developed at no expense in a laboratory 93 million miles away. For the bright energy of the sun is maintained by nuclear transformation of chemical elements occurring in the sun's interior at temperatures of many million degrees, and at pressures of many million atmospheres. The resources of solar power are enormous. If 100 per cent efficiency could be secured in the transformation of radiant solar energy into mechanical work, a horsepower per square yard of ground surface would be available under cloudless skies. The expense of collecting solar energy still prevents its competition with the usual power sources. Yet, unless the vague promise of safe thermonuclear power from oceans becomes realized, solar power must supply the enormous and growing requirements of children within two centuries. Because the ground sources (coal, oil and uranium) may be used up soon, they will become more costly than solar power.

22- According to the reading, what do we need to convert sunrays to energy?

1) Thermonuclear power sources.

2) A constant resource of chemicals.

3) A laboratory millions of miles away.

4) A cloudless sky at temperatures of enormous degrees.

23- The writer points out that solar energy is not used on a large scale -----------.

1) though it is clean and safe

2) because the expense of controlling it is enormous

3) because it can create some dangers to the environment

4) since it is costly and less cost-effective than other sources of energy

24- Which of the following is the best topic for the reading?

1) Solar energy: an impossible energy source 2) Solar energy: facts and realities

3) Expenses of using solar energy 4) Different sources of energy

25- According to the reading, an alternative to solar energy can be -----------.

1) ocean thermonuclear power   2) energy from fossils

3) radiant energy   4) nuclear power