

## Reading Selection

### Reading Selection Comprehension Checklist

Whether or not you agree with the ideas presented in the reading selection below, make sure to:

- ☐ briefly scan the entire selection.
- ☐ look at the questions for the selection before reading it.
- ☐ carefully read the selection.
- ☐ understand the purpose or reason the selection was written.
- ☐ understand the main idea and the details that support it.

Complete the Multiple-choice and Written Answers that follow this reading selection.

## 1 Cleopatra: Beyond the Myth

by Rossella Lorenzi, Discovery News



March 26 — Cleopatra, the most seductive queen of the ancient world, was in reality a short, fat and ugly woman, says a forthcoming exhibition at the British Museum. The scathing portrait emerged with the re-discovery of 11 previously unrecognized images of the queen — all statues done in the Egyptian style.

Thought to portray other queens, the statues have now been acknowledged as being of Egypt's last pharaoh and will be displayed at the exhibition "Cleopatra of Egypt: From History to Myth" in April.

They depict the alluring and ambitious queen of the Nile as an ordinary looking woman with slightly bucked bad teeth, slightly severe in her appearance.

"We have been able to identify the Egyptian statues as Cleopatra principally by the triple version of the royal uraeus (a rearing cobra that signifies protection) worn on the headdress above the brow. The triple uraeus also appears above the head of Cleopatra on a tiny glass gem in the British Museum collections, portraying her in naturalistic Greek style, wearing the Ptolemaic royal diadem," says Susan Walker, the museum's Deputy Keeper of Greek and Roman Antiquities and the exhibition curator.

Other factors in the identification were face shape

and expression, pose of the arms, and the double cornucopia, which appears on the reverses of Cleopatra's coins minted in Cyprus.

The revised portrait contrasts sharply with the picture of the tragic heroine of Hollywood legend, who wooed Julius Caesar and Marc Antony with her enchanting beauty.

According to Walker, this image is based on "myth and probably mostly nonsense."

While we are most familiar with Cleopatra as a beautiful, tragic romantic figure — a view widely propounded in the Renaissance and later — in ancient times, Cleopatra was renowned for something else.

"Her actual beauty was not in itself so remarkable that none could be compared with her, or that no one could see her without being struck by it, but the contact of her presence, if you lived with her, was irresistible; the attraction of her person, joining with the charm of her conversation, and the character that attended all she said or did, was something bewitching," wrote the ancient Greek biographer Plutarch.

Beauty was in the eye of the beholder also in the 1st century B.C., it seems: Cleopatra enthralled men with her intelligence, capability and charm.

"She was an exceptional woman. She had a unique personality, was cultivated and spoke eight languages. No wonder they found her irresistible," says Guido Bastianini, a classical scholar and papyrologist at Florence's University.

## Multiple-choice

### Multiple-choice Instructions

On the actual test, these questions will be on a sheet of paper separate from your test booklet and will be marked by a computer. Make sure to completely fill in the circle of the answer you choose.

**IMPORTANT:** Do NOT use an "X", check mark, half circle fill, nor a partial circle fill.

- ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☒ Correct form  
☐ X ☐ ✓ ☐ ◐ ☐ ◑ ☐ Incorrect form

Choose the best or most correct answer. To indicate your answer fill in the circle completely.

3.1 Based on the description of Cleopatra in the first sentence of the article, what is the best meaning for the word "scathing" in the second sentence?

- A complimentary  
 B unpleasant  
 C critical  
 D insensitive

☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D

3.2 What was the exhibition curator's principal clue in identifying the Egyptian statues as Cleopatra?

- A her "slightly severe" appearance  
 B her face shape and expression  
 C the triple version of the royal uraeus  
 D her bad teeth

☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D

3.3 Where was this new picture of Cleopatra developed?

- A The British Museum  
 B Cyprus  
 C Hollywood  
 D Florence

☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D

3.4 What was it about Cleopatra that caused the ancient Greek biographer Plutarch to call her "bewitching"?

- A her beauty  
 B her personality  
 C her wealth  
 D her contact

☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D

3.5 Why does Susan Walker, the exhibition curator, state that the usual image of Cleopatra is based on "myth"?

- A It is a distorted version of the truth.  
 B It is a Hollywood legend.  
 C Cleopatra was a romantic figure.  
 D Cleopatra lived in the 1st century B.C.

☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D

3.6 According to the article, why was Cleopatra attractive to men?

- A Her conversation.  
 B Her face shape and expression.  
 C Her naturalistic Greek style.  
 D Her intelligence, capability and charm.

☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D

3.7 What is the best meaning of the word, "enthralled"?

- A imprisoned  
 B captivated  
 C acknowledged  
 D attended

☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D