

21

Data in the graph provide most direct support for which idea in the passage?

- A) Acting on empathy can be counterproductive.
- B) Ethical economics is defined by character.
- C) Ethical economics is still possible.
- D) People fear losses more than they hope for gains.

Questions 22-32 are based on the following passages.

Passage 1 is adapted from Nicholas Carr, "Author Nicholas Carr: The Web Shatters Focus, Rewires Brains." ©2010 by Condé Nast. Passage 2 is from Steven Pinker, "Mind over Mass Media." ©2010 by The New York Times Company.

Passage 1

The mental consequences of our online info-crunching are not universally bad.

Certain cognitive skills are strengthened by our use of computers and the Net. These tend to involve
 5 more primitive mental functions, such as hand-eye coordination, reflex response, and the processing of visual cues. One much-cited study of video gaming revealed that after just 10 days of playing action games on computers, a group of young people had
 10 significantly boosted the speed with which they could shift their visual focus between various images and tasks.

It's likely that Web browsing also strengthens brain functions related to fast-paced problem
 15 solving, particularly when it requires spotting patterns in a welter of data. A British study of the way women search for medical information online indicated that an experienced Internet user can, at least in some cases, assess the trustworthiness and
 20 probable value of a Web page in a matter of seconds. The more we practice surfing and scanning, the more adept our brain becomes at those tasks.

But it would be a serious mistake to look narrowly at such benefits and conclude that the Web is making
 25 us smarter. In a *Science* article published in early 2009, prominent developmental psychologist Patricia Greenfield reviewed more than 40 studies of the effects of various types of media on intelligence and learning ability. She concluded that "every medium
 30 develops some cognitive skills at the expense of others." Our growing use of the Net and other screen-based technologies, she wrote, has led to the "widespread and sophisticated development of visual-spatial skills." But those gains go hand in hand
 35 with a weakening of our capacity for the kind of "deep processing" that underpins "mindful knowledge acquisition, inductive analysis, critical thinking, imagination, and reflection."

We know that the human brain is highly
 40 plastic; neurons and synapses change as circumstances change. When we adapt to a new cultural phenomenon, including the use of a new

medium, we end up with a different brain, says Michael Merzenich, a pioneer of the field of
 45 neuroplasticity. That means our online habits continue to reverberate in the workings of our brain cells even when we're not at a computer. We're exercising the neural circuits devoted to skimming and multitasking while ignoring those used for
 50 reading and thinking deeply.

Passage 2

Critics of new media sometimes use science itself to press their case, citing research that shows how
 "experience can change the brain." But cognitive neuroscientists roll their eyes at such talk. Yes, every
 55 time we learn a fact or skill the wiring of the brain changes; it's not as if the information is stored in the pancreas. But the existence of neural plasticity does not mean the brain is a blob of clay pounded into shape by experience.

60 Experience does not revamp the basic information-processing capacities of the brain. Speed-reading programs have long claimed to do just that, but the verdict was rendered by Woody Allen after he read Leo Tolstoy's famously long novel
 65 *War and Peace* in one sitting: "It was about Russia." Genuine multitasking, too, has been exposed as a myth, not just by laboratory studies but by the familiar sight of an SUV undulating between lanes as the driver cuts deals on his cell phone.

70 Moreover, the effects of experience are highly specific to the experiences themselves. If you train people to do one thing (recognize shapes, solve math puzzles, find hidden words), they get better at doing that thing, but almost nothing else. Music doesn't
 75 make you better at math, conjugating Latin doesn't make you more logical, brain-training games don't make you smarter. Accomplished people don't bulk up their brains with intellectual calisthenics; they immerse themselves in their fields. Novelists read
 80 lots of novels, scientists read lots of science.

The effects of consuming electronic media are likely to be far more limited than the panic implies. Media critics write as if the brain takes on the
 qualities of whatever it consumes, the informational
 85 equivalent of "you are what you eat." As with ancient peoples who believed that eating fierce animals made them fierce, they assume that watching quick cuts in rock videos turns your mental life into quick cuts or that reading bullet points and online postings turns
 90 your thoughts into bullet points and online postings.

22

The author of Passage 1 indicates which of the following about the use of screen-based technologies?

- A) It should be thoroughly studied.
- B) It makes the brain increasingly rigid.
- C) It has some positive effects.
- D) It should be widely encouraged.

23

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

- A) Lines 3-4 ("Certain . . . Net")
- B) Lines 23-25 ("But . . . smarter")
- C) Lines 25-29 ("In a . . . ability")
- D) Lines 29-31 ("She . . . others")

24

The author of Passage 1 indicates that becoming adept at using the Internet can

- A) make people complacent about their health.
- B) undermine the ability to think deeply.
- C) increase people's social contacts.
- D) improve people's self-confidence.

25

As used in line 40, "plastic" most nearly means

- A) creative.
- B) artificial.
- C) malleable.
- D) sculptural.

26

The author of Passage 2 refers to the novel *War and Peace* primarily to suggest that Woody Allen

- A) did not like Tolstoy's writing style.
- B) could not comprehend the novel by speed-reading it.
- C) had become quite skilled at multitasking.
- D) regretted having read such a long novel.

27

According to the author of Passage 2, what do novelists and scientists have in common?

- A) They take risks when they pursue knowledge.
- B) They are eager to improve their minds.
- C) They are curious about other subjects.
- D) They become absorbed in their own fields.

28

The analogy in the final sentence of Passage 2 has primarily which effect?

- A) It uses ornate language to illustrate a difficult concept.
- B) It employs humor to soften a severe opinion of human behavior.
- C) It alludes to the past to evoke a nostalgic response.
- D) It criticizes the view of a particular group.

29

The main purpose of each passage is to

- A) compare brain function in those who play games on the Internet and those who browse on it.
- B) report on the problem-solving skills of individuals with varying levels of Internet experience.
- C) take a position on increasing financial support for studies related to technology and intelligence.
- D) make an argument about the effects of electronic media use on the brain.

30

Which choice best describes the relationship between the two passages?

- A) Passage 2 relates first-hand experiences that contrast with the clinical approach in Passage 1.
- B) Passage 2 critiques the conclusions drawn from the research discussed in Passage 1.
- C) Passage 2 takes a high-level view of a result that Passage 1 examines in depth.
- D) Passage 2 predicts the negative reactions that the findings discussed in Passage 1 might produce.

31

On which of the following points would the authors of both passages most likely agree?

- A) Computer-savvy children tend to demonstrate better hand-eye coordination than do their parents.
- B) Those who criticize consumers of electronic media tend to overreact in their criticism.
- C) Improved visual-spatial skills do not generalize to improved skills in other areas.
- D) Internet users are unlikely to prefer reading onscreen text to reading actual books.

32

Which choice provides the best evidence that the author of Passage 2 would agree to some extent with the claim attributed to Michael Merzenich in lines 41-43, Passage 1?

- A) Lines 51-53 (“Critics . . . brain”)
- B) Lines 54-56 (“Yes . . . changes”)
- C) Lines 57-59 (“But . . . experience”)
- D) Lines 83-84 (“Media . . . consumes”)