

## **BILL GATES Reading Comprehension**

William Henry Gates III (Bill) was born on October 28, 1955, in Seattle, Washington. Bill was the second of three children in an upper-middle class family. He enjoyed playing games with the family and was very competitive. He also loved to read. Bill became bored in public school, so his family sent him to Lakeside School, a private school, where he excelled in math and science and did well in drama and English.

Gates became interested in computer programming when he was 13, during the era of giant mainframe computers. His school held a fund-raiser to purchase a teletype terminal so students could use computer time that was donated by General Electric. Using this time, Gates wrote a tic-tac-toe program using BASIC, one of the first computer languages. Later he created a computer version of Risk, a board game he liked in which the goal is world domination. At Lakeside, Bill met Paul Allen, who shared his interest in computers. Gates and Allen and two other students hacked into a computer belonging to Computer Center Corporation (CCC) to get free computer time but were caught. After a period of probation, they were allowed back in the computer lab when they offered to fix glitches in CCC's software. At age 17, Gates and Allen were paid \$20,000 for a program called Traf-O-Data that was used to count traffic.

In early 1973, Bill Gates served as a congressional page in the U.S. House of Representatives. He scored 1590 out of 1600 on the SAT and was accepted by Harvard University. Steve Ballmer, who became CEO of Microsoft after Bill retired, was also a Harvard student. Meanwhile, Paul Allen dropped out of Washington College to work on computers at Honeywell Corporation and convinced Gates to drop out of Harvard and join him in starting a new software company in Albuquerque, New Mexico. They called it Micro-Soft. This was soon changed to Microsoft, and they moved their company to Bellevue, Washington.

In 1980, IBM, one of the largest technology companies of the era, asked Microsoft to write software to run their new personal computer, the IBM PC. Microsoft kept the licensing rights for the operating system (MS-DOS) so that they earned money for every computer sold first by IBM, and later by all the other companies that made PC computers. Microsoft grew quickly from 25 employees in 1978 to over 90,000 today. Over the years, Microsoft developed many new technologies and some of the world's most popular software and products such as Word and PowerPoint. Although some have criticized Gates for using questionable business practices, he built Microsoft into one of the largest companies in the world. He has been described as brilliant but childlike, driven, competitive, intense, fun, but lacking in empathy.

Bill Gates is one of the richest men in the world. In 2012, his \$61 billion in assets made him the world's second-richest man according to Forbes Magazine. In 2006, Gates announced that he would cut back his involvement at Microsoft to spend more time on philanthropy and his foundation. The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation supports many causes including the quest to eradicate polio, fighting AIDS, malaria, and tuberculosis; providing vaccinations for children; and even reinventing the toilet, among many other things.

**1.) The second to last paragraph describes...**

- a.) how Microsoft became a bigger company than IBM.
- b.) the technical details of MS-DOS.
- c.) how Bill Gates became a billionaire.
- d.) how Microsoft rose to a major corporation.

**2.) Where was Steve Ballmer a student?**

- a.) Harvard University
- b.) Albuquerque, New Mexico
- c.) Washington College
- d.) The passage doesn't say.

**3.) Microsoft earned money every time...**

- a.) Traf-O-Data was used
- b.) IBM built a computer.
- c.) IBM sold a computer running MS-DOS.
- d.) CCC used its software.

**4.) What question is answered in the second-to-last paragraph?**

- a.) How rich is Bill Gates?
- b.) How many people work for Microsoft today?
- c.) What does empathy mean?
- d.) What new technologies, besides MS-DOS, did Microsoft develop?

**5.) What does the word "philanthropy" mean in the last paragraph?**

- a.) computer technology
- b.) charity
- c.) wealth
- d.) business

**6.) If the entire passage was limited to the last paragraph, what would an appropriate name for the passage be?**

- a.) Microsoft and its Billionaires
- b.) Microsoft and its Software
- c.) The Rise of Microsoft
- d.) The Business Practices of Microsoft

**7.) In which of the following ways were Bill Gates and Paul Allen NOT alike?**

- a.) They both went to the same college.
- b.) They both liked computers.
- c.) They both dropped out of college.
- d.) They went to the same school.

**8.) Which is NOT true about Bill Gates in the first paragraph?**

- a.) He was competitive.
- b.) He was born in Seattle, Washington.
- c.) He enjoyed public school.
- d.) He was involved in drama.

**9.) Which of the following was the EFFECT of Bill hacking into the CCC computer?**

- a.) They were allowed back on the computer eventually.
- b.) He lost computer privileges.
- c.) He wrote a tic-tac-toe program.
- d.) He met Paul Allen.

**10.) Which of the following WAS NOT a program written by Bill Gates or Paul Allen?**

- a.) A computerized version of Risk
- b.) Traf-o-Data
- c.) A computerized version of tic-tac-toe
- d.) BASIC