

Directions: This part consists of passages from various nonfiction selections and questions on their content, form, and style. After reading each passage, choose the best answer to each question.

Note: Pay particular attention to the requirement of questions that contain the words NOT, LEAST, or EXCEPT.

Passage 1, Questions 1-10. Read the following passage from “Brainworms, Sticky Music, and Catchy Tunes” from *Musicophilia* by Oliver Sacks carefully before you choose your answers.

Sometimes normal musical imagery crosses a line and becomes, so to speak, pathological, as when a certain fragment of music repeats itself incessantly, sometimes maddeningly, for days on end. These repetitions—often a short, well-defined phrase or theme of three or four bars—are apt to go on for

(5) hours or days, circling in the mind, before fading away. This endless repetition and the fact that the music in question may be irrelevant or trivial, not to one’s taste, or even hateful, suggest a coercive process, that the music has entered and subverted a part of the brain, forcing it to fire repetitively and autonomously (as may happen with a tic or a seizure).

(10) Many people are set off by the theme music of a film or television show or an advertisement. This is not coincidental, for such music is designed, in the terms of the music industry, to “hook” the listener, to be “catchy” or “sticky,” to bore its way, like an earwig, into the ear or mind, hence the term “earworms” — though one might be inclined to call them “brainworms” instead. (One

(15) newsmagazine, in 1987, defined them, half facetiously, as “cognitively infectious musical agents.”)

A friend of mine, Nick Younes, described to me how he had been fixated on the song “Love and Marriage,” a tune written by James Van Heusen. A single hearing of this song—a Frank Sinatra rendition used as the theme song of the television show *Married . . . with Children*—was enough to hook Nick. He “got

(20) trapped inside the tempo of the song,” and it ran in his mind almost constantly for ten days. With incessant repetition, it soon lost its charm, its lilt, its musicality and its meaning. It intervened with his schoolwork, his thinking, his peace of mind, his sleep. He tried to stop it in a number of ways, all to no avail:

(25) “I jumped up and down. I counted to a hundred. I splashed water on my face. I tried talking loudly to myself, plugging my ears.” Finally it faded away—but as he told me this story, it returned and went on to haunt him again for several hours.

Though the term “earworm” was first used in the 1980s (as a literal

(30) translation of the German *Ohrwurm*), the concept is far from new. Nicolas Slonimsky, a composer and musicologist, was deliberately inventing musical forms or phrases that could hook the mind and force it to mimicry and repetition, as early as the 1920s. And in 1876, Mark Twain wrote a short story (“A Literary Nightmare,” subsequently retitled “Punch, Brothers, Punch!”) in

(35) which the narrator is rendered helpless after encountering some “jingling rhymes”:

They took instant and entire possession of me. All through breakfast they went waltzing through my brain. I fought hard for an hour, but it was

(40) useless. My head kept humming. I drifted downtown, and presently discovered that my feet were keeping time to that relentless jingle. [I] jingled all through the evening, went to bed, rolled, tossed, and jingled all night long.

Two days later, the narrator meets an old friend, a pastor, and inadvertently “infects” him with the jingle; the pastor, in turn, inadvertently infects his entire