

READING COMPREHENSIONS_20

Read the following passage carefully and answer the questions given below it. Certain words have been printed in bold to help you locate them, while answering some of the questions.

Though the US prides itself on being a leader in the World community, a recent report shows that it lags far behind other industrialised countries in meeting the needs of its youngest and most **vulnerable** citizens. The US has a higher infant mortality rate, a higher proportion of low birth weight babies, a smaller proportion of babies immunised against childhood diseases and a much higher rate of adolescent pregnancies. These findings, described as a “quiet crisis” requiring immediate and far reaching action, appeared in a report prepared by a task force of educators, doctors, politicians and business people. According to the report, a fourth of the nation’s 12 million infants and toddlers live in poverty. As many as half **confront** risk factors that could harm their ability to develop intellectually, physically and socially. Child immunisations are too low, more children are born into poverty, more are in **substandard** care, while their parents work and more are being raised by single parents. When taken together, these and other risk factors can lead to educational and health problems that are much harder and more costly to reverse.

The crisis begins in the womb with unplanned parenthood. Women with unplanned pregnancies are less likely to seek pre natal care. In the US 80% of teenage pregnancies and 56% of all pregnancies are unplanned. The problems continue after birth, where unplanned pregnancies and unstable partnerships often go hand in hand. Since 1950, the number of single parent families has nearly tripled. More than 25% of all births today are to unmarried mothers. As the number of single parent families grows and more women enter the work force, infants and toddlers are increasingly in the care of people other than their parents.

Most disturbingly, recent statistics show that American parents are increasingly neglecting or abusing their children. In only four years from 1987- 1991, the number of children in foster care increased by over 50%. Babies under the age of one are the fastest growing category of children entering foster care. This crisis affects children under the age of three most severely, the report says. Yet, it is this period – from infancy through preschool years – that sets the stage for a child’s future.

1. The main focus of the passage is on the plight of

- a) Orphaned children
- b) Teenage mothers
- c) Low birth weight babies
- d) None of these

2. Which of the following does not constitute 'quiet crisis' in the US as per the task force report?

- a) Lower proportion of new born babies with normal weight
- b) Higher incidence of adolescent girls becoming mothers
- c) Lower rate of babies surviving childhood diseases
- d) Increasing cases of teenage couples getting divorced

3. Which of the following statements is not true in the context of the passage?

- a) The number of single parent families today is approximately three times that four decades ago
- b) The number of children in the US entering foster care has decreased after 1991
- c) In the US, the number of infants living in poverty is about 3 million
- d) Only 20% of all the pregnancies in the US are planned

4. The number of children born to married mothers in the US is approximately, how many times the number of children born to unwed mothers?

- a) 1.5 times
- b) 2 times
- c) 3 times
- d) 3.5 times

5. The task force report seems to be based on the data pertaining to the period

- a) 1987-91
- b) 1950 onwards till data
- c) 1987 onwards till data

d) 1950-91

6. Choose the word which is most nearly the same in meaning to the given word given in bold as used in the passage.

Confront

- a) Face
- b) Tolerate
- c) Succumb
- d) Eliminate

7. Choose the word which is most nearly the same in meaning to the given word given in bold as used in the passage.

Vulnerable

- a) Insecure
- b) Indispensable
- c) Risky
- d) Promising

8. Choose the word which is most opposite in meaning to the given word in bold as used in the passage.

Severely

- a) Drastically
- b) Intensely
- c) Minutely
- d) Slightly

9. Choose the word which is most opposite in meaning to the given word in bold as used in the passage.

Substandard

- a) Impoverished
- b) Compassionate

c) Excellent

d) Valuable

Answer :-

1. Answer: D

2. Answer: D

3. Answer: B

4. Answer: C

5. Answer: D

6. Answer: A

7. Answer: A

8. Answer: D

9. Answer: C