**阅读理解——说明文作拓展提升作业**

**1.2018朝阳期末C**

**The Domestication (驯化) of Cats**

For centuries, the common view of how domestication had occurred was that prehistoric people, realizing how useful it would be to have animals kept for food, began catching wild animals and breeding (繁殖) them. Over time, by allowing only animals with “tame”（驯养） characteristics to produce their babies, human beings created animals that were less wild and more dependent upon people. Eventually this process led to the domestic farm animals and pets that we know today, having lost their ancient survival skills and natural abilities.

Recent research suggests that this view of domestication is incomplete. Prehistoric human beings did catch and breed useful wild animals, but specialists in animal behavior now think that domestication was not simply something people did to animals—the animals played an active part in the process. Wolves and wild horses, for example, may have taken the first steps in their own domestication by hanging around human settlements, feeding on people’s crops and getting used to human activity. The animals which were not too nervous or fearful to live near people produced their babies that also tolerated humans, making it easier for people to catch and breed them.

In this version, people succeeded in domesticating only animals that had already adapted easily to life around humans. Domestication required an animal that was willing to become domestic. The process was more like a **dance** with partners than a victory of humans over animals.

At first glance, the taming of cats seems to fit nicely into this new story of domestication. A traditional theory says that after prehistoric people in Egypt invented agriculture and started farming, rats and mice gathered to feast on their stored grain. Wildcats, in turn, gathered at the same places to hunt and eat the rats and mice. Over time, cats got used to people and people got used to cats. Some studies of wildcats, however, seem to call this theory into question. Wildcats don’t share hunting and feeding areas, and they don’t live close to people. Experts do not know whether wildcats were partners in their own domestication. They do know that long after people had acquired domestic dogs, sheep and horses, they somehow acquired domestic cats. Gradually they produced animals with increasingly tame qualities.

43. What is suggested in recent research?

A. Animals were less afraid than thought.

B. Animals had an active role in their domestication.

C. Wolves and horses were the first to be domesticated.

D. Domestication meant something people did to animals.

44. The word “dance” is used in Paragraph 3 to show that \_\_\_\_\_\_.

A. animals and humans were close B. control over animals was easy

C. animals were independent of humans D. domestication was like a game

45. What probably attracted cats to human settlements?

A. Other cats. B. Warmth. C. Humans. D. Food.

46. What causes a problem for the theory that cats were domesticated like wolves were?

A. Cats were not friendly to people.

B. Cats were not as fierce as wolves.

C. Cats had the characteristic of independence.

D. Cats showed cleverness when they were hunting.

**2. 2018东城期末C**

**Ig Nobel Prize**

Having a meal is an easy and delightful process for most people. However, for a woodpecker（啄木鸟）, it’s not that simple. To get dinner, a woodpecker has to hit its head against a tree numerous times per day. Yet, amazingly, it never suffers any ill effects like brain damage. According to research, it is the woodpecker’s thick head bones that protect it from the impact of the blows. For explaining that, Ivan Schwab won an Ig Nobel Prize.

Ig Nobel Prizes are organized by *The Annals of Improbable Research*, an American magazine that celebrates the funny side of science. Each year, ten winners are awarded prizes in honor of their “achievements that first make people laugh, and then make them think”. Most of the award-winning research, like Schwab’s, may seem unusual, but it usually grabs people’s attention indeed. And no matter how ridiculous the research sounds, people can find it inspiring and amusing.

Brian Wansink’s research might interest you. He took home an Ig Nobel Prize for looking into the influence of visual factors on people’s appetites. He used specially designed bowls that refilled themselves with soup while people were eating. Since these people had no idea this was happening, they just kept eating from these “bottomless bowls”. They said they didn’t feel full because their bowls were not empty yet. People in this experiment ate 73 percent more soup than normal. Owing to these results, Wansink concluded that it’s not people’s stomachs that decide when they have eaten enough, but their eyes.

Ig Nobel Prizes also give attention to science and technology that is a part of our daily lives. Take the karaoke machine for example. Its inventor Daisuke Inoue was employed at a nightclub, playing the piano for the customers who wanted to sing. He wasn’t skillful enough to play all the songs properly. To clear up the problem, he created the karaoke machine. To Inoue’s surprise, the machine caused considerable changes in entertainment worldwide. The Ig Nobel Prize was awarded to Inoue not only because his invention was entertaining, but also because it brought about “an entirely new way for people to learn to tolerate each other”.

These research results of Ig Nobel Prizes may not be as great as Edison’s light bulb or Newton’s laws of motion. However, they do show people’s willingness to take action and to try new ways to solve problems. According to Marc Abrahams, a founder of the Ig Nobel Prizes, “If you win one, it means that you have done something.”

43. Why did Ivan Schwab win an Ig Nobel Prize?

A. His discovery can be applied in daily life.

B. His research result benefits the environment.

C. He invented a new way to avoid the impact of blows.

D. He found why woodpeckers could be free from brain damage.

44. What is mainly talked about in Paragraph 3?

A. Why Ig Nobel Prizes can get people’s trust.

B. Why people’s eyes decide their stomachs.

C. Why Wansink won an Ig Nobel Prize.

D. Why visual research interests people.

45. The Ig Nobel Prize awarded to Daisuke Inoue suggests \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

A. Ig Nobel Prize’s inventions can easily become popular

B. Ig Nobel Prize winners are familiar with entertainment

C. most Ig Nobel Prize’s inventions are created by accident

D. Ig Nobel Prizes may go to inventions with global influence

46. What do the research results of Ig Nobel Prizes have in common?

A. They are related to everyday life.

B. They solve problems in people’s work.

C. They seem unexpected but meaningful.

D. They are ridiculous and hard to understand.

**3. 2018西城期末C**

 In some islands north of Scotland, head lice, which live on the hair or skin of people or animals, were a part of life. If the lice left their host, he became sick and feverish. Therefore, sick people had lice put in their hair intentionally. There was a method to their madness: As soon as the lice had settled in again, the patient improved. The story explains the confusion of cause and effect. If the lice leave the sick, it is because he has a fever and they simply get hot feet. When the fever breaks, they return. We may laugh at this story, but false causality misleads us practically every day.

 Consider the headline: “Fact: Women Who Use Shampoo XYZ Every Day Have Stronger Hair.” This statement says very little—least of all, that the shampoo makes your hair stronger. It might simply be the other way round: Women with strong hair tend to use Shampoo XYZ—and perhaps that’s because it says “especially for thick hair” on the bottle.

 A further example: Scientists found that long periods in the hospital did harm to patients. This was music to health insurers’ ears, who, of course, are keen to make stays as brief as possible. But, clearly, patients who are dismissed immediately are healthier than those who must stay on for treatment.

 Recently I read that students get better grades at school if their homes contain a lot of books. This study was surely a shot in the arm for booksellers, but it is also an example of false causality. This simple truth is that educated parents tend to value their children’s education more than uneducated ones do. Plus, educated parents often have more books at home. In short, a dust-covered copy of War and Peace alone isn’t going to influence anyone’s grades; what counts is parents’ education levels, as well as their genes.

 Another example of false causality was the supposed relationship between the birth rate and the numbers of stork (鹳) pairs in Germany. Both were in decline, and if you plot them on a graph, the two lines of development from 1965 to 1987 appeared almost the same. Does this mean the stork actually does bring babies? Obviously not, since this was a purely accidental connection.

 In conclusion: Connection is not causality. Take a closer look at linked events: Sometimes what is presented as the cause turns out to be the effect, or just the other way around. And sometimes there is no link at all—just like with the storks and babies.

63. Which is an example of false causality?

 A. Women with strong hair tend to use a certain shampoo.

 B. Birth rate and the stork population are connected.

 C. Longer periods in the hospital benefit patients.

 D. Lice can make a person sick and feverish.

64. The underlined phrase “a shot in the arm” in Paragraph 4 means \_\_\_\_\_.

 A. pain B. defeat

C. guidance D. encouragement

65. According to the author, students get better grades probably because \_\_\_\_\_.

 A. their homes are full of books

 B. they have read War and Peace

 C. their educated parents value education

 D. their parents are successful booksellers

66. It can be concluded from the passage that \_\_\_\_\_.

 A. connections are pure accidents

 B. cause and effect are interdependent

 C. connections are mostly cause and effect

 D. linked events may turn out to be unrelated

**4. 2018海淀期末C**

As the world’s population grows, farmers will need to produce more and more food. And large farms are increasingly using precision farming to increase yields (产量), reduce waste, and reduce the economic and security risks that inevitably accompany agricultural uncertainty.

Traditional farming relies on managing entire fields—making decisions related to planting, harvesting, irrigating, and applying pesticides and fertilizer (农药和化肥)—based on regional conditions and historical data. Precision farming, by contrast, combines sensors, robots, GPS, mapping tools and data-analytics software to customize the care that plants receive without increasing labor. Robot-mounted sensors and camera-equipped drones (无人机) wirelessly send images and data on individual plants to a computer, which looks for signs of health and stress. Farmers receive the feedback in real time and then deliver water, pesticide or fertilizer in adjusted doses(剂量) to only the areas that need it. The technology can also help farmers decide when to plant and harvest crops.

As a result, precision farming can improve time management, reduce water and chemical use, and produce healthier crops and higher yields—all of which benefit farmers’ bottom lines and conserve resources while reducing chemical runoff.

Many small businesses are developing new software, sensors, and other tools for precision farming, as are large companies such as Monsanto, John Deere, Bayer, Dow and DuPont. The U.S. Department of Agriculture, NASA and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration all support precision farming, and many colleges now offer course work on the topic.

In a related development, seed producers are applying technology to improve plant characteristics. By following individual plants over time and analyzing which ones flourish in different conditions, companies can relate the plants’ response to their environments with their genomics(基因组学). That information, in turn, allows the companies to produce seed varieties that will grow well in specific soil and weather conditions. This advanced technology may also help to improve crop nutrition.

Farmers do not universally welcome precision agriculture for various reasons, such as high equipment costs and lack of access to the Internet. The technology may bring great challenges to experienced farmers who are not good at computers. And large systems will also be beyond the reach of many small farming operations in developing nations. But less expensive, simpler systems could potentially be applied. For others, though, cost savings in the long run may reduce the financial concerns. And however reticent some farmers may be to adopt new technology, the next generation of farmers are likely to warm to the approach.

63. Precision farming differs from traditional farming partly because it \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

A. provides real time information about target crops

B. relies on regional conditions and historical data

C. offers plenty of water, pesticides and fertilizer

D. guarantees high yields with more labor

64. About precision farming, we can learn that\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

A. the government holds a cautious attitude

B. it draws positive responses from businesses

 C. seed producers have already made huge profits

D. large systems will soon be built in developing nations

65. The underlined word “reticent” in the last paragraph probably means \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

 A. disappointed B. confused

 C. shocked D. unwilling

66. What is the best title for the passage?

A. Precision Farming Increases Crop Yields

B. More Challenges Faced by Modern Farmers

C. Development of Farming Systems in the U.S.

D. Traditional Farming is Gradually Disappearing

**5. 2018丰台期末C**

Researchers at Brigham found about one in five teenagers now have some degree of hearing damage. The researchers did not say why hearing loss has risen, but other experts have strong suspicions. One likely culprit, they say, is MP3 players.

An MP3 player can be dangerous to hearing when its decibel level is turned up too high. High-decibel sounds can damage nerve endings, called hair cells. If a sound is loud enough, the damage can be permanent. A loud sound can shake the membrane(薄膜) on which the hair cells sit— “like an earthquake”. That shake can break or even uproot hair cells. When that happens, the hair cells are finished. Human ears cannot regrow hair cells. Therefore, when listening to an MP3 player, set a volume limit and avoid exposure to loud sounds.

On the other hand, the loudness of today’s music may not be totally under your control. Music companies have been purposely turning up the volume. It’s a trend called the fight for loudness.

Play a CD from the 1990s. Then play a newly released tune. Don’t touch the volume control. You’ll probably notice that the new CD sounds louder than the old one. Why? Sound engineers who create CDs are using dynamic range compression(压缩), a technology that makes the quiet parts of a song louder and the loud parts quieter. The overall effect of compression is a louder recording.

Many musicians and sound engineers aren’t pleased. They say that compression is driving down the quality of today’s music, making it sound flat and blaring. Gray Hobish, a sound engineer, explains that music should be a combination of loudness and softness. But music companies want to make music louder so it will stand out. That’s important in the competition among recording companies.

What about listeners? Many teenagers listen to music on the go in noisy places and through headphones, all of which reduce sound quality. So young listeners may not notice the poorer quality of modern recordings. “To their ears,” says Hobish, “the music sounds fine. And they are not aware of the hidden threat of the music they are enjoying.”

44．The phrase “like an earthquake” in Para. 2 aims to explain \_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

A．that volume can strongly affect parts of the ear

B．how our body is unable to regrow hair cells

C．how much damage the ear can avoid

D．that hair cells are easily damaged

45．What can we learn about today’s music business?

A．New technology improves the quality of music.

B．Young listeners today prefer louder sound.

C．Music companies sacrifice quality for loudness.

D．Sound engineers face tough competition.

46．What is probably the best title for the passage?

A．The Loudness War

B．Your Hearing Is Going!

C．The Damaged Ears

D．Are You a Good Listener?