

## • Beginning Critical Reading – The Flu

5 The flu is the common name for influenza. The flu is a respiratory sickness. The flu can be mild. The flu can be bad. Sometimes the flu can even cause death. Each year in the U.S., 5% - 20% of people get the flu. Each year in the U.S., up to 60 million people get the flu. Each year in the U.S., about 200,000 people go to the hospital because of the flu. Each year in the U.S., about 36,000 people die from problems related to the flu.

The flu is caused by a virus. A virus is a germ. People can spread the virus. The virus can live in tiny drops of liquid. If you have the virus, you can spread it by coughing. You can get the virus by touching a something that has the virus on it and then touching your eyes, nose, or mouth.

10 A flu shot can prevent the flu. The nasal flu mist can also prevent the flu. The shot and the nose spray are vaccines. Talk to your doctor about getting a vaccine. You can get information about the flu shot and nasal spray from your local health department.

15 If you get the flu, you might get a headache. You might have a fever. You might have a cough and a runny nose. You might have a sore throat. You might feel very tired. Your body might hurt all over. Some people have diarrhea and vomiting.

20 You can help stop the spread of the flu virus. The Centers for Disease Control remind you to cover your cough. You should cough into a tissue and throw the tissue away. Or you can cough into the inside of your elbow, into your own clothing. The Centers for Disease Control also remind you to clean your hands. You can use hand sanitizer. You should use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer for the best results. You can use soap and water. You should wash your hands with warm water and soap for at least 20 seconds. Studies show that washing your hands for 2 minutes with hot, soapy water is the best way to get the most germs off your hands. Be sure to wash under your fingernails and between your fingers.

## Questions

1. According to the passage, which of the following statements is/are true?
  - I) At least 5% of the U.S. population gets the flu each year.
  - II) There are three types of flu vaccine.
  - III) Each year in the U.S., about 20% of people who have the flu die from it.
  - A) I only
  - B) II only
  - C) III only
  - D) I and II only
  - E) II and III only
2. What is the main idea of the fifth paragraph?
  - A) How to wash your hands
  - B) How long to wash your hands
  - C) How to stop the spread of the virus
  - D) What studies have shown about hand-washing
  - E) Why you should cough into your elbow
3. In line 11, *vaccine* most closely means
  - A) nose
  - B) health
  - C) protection
  - D) shot
  - E) spray

## Answers and Explanations

1. The correct answer is **A**.

- I)** Correct. Lines 2-3 state that “Each year in the U.S., 5% -20% of people get the flu.” Therefore, the *lowest* percentage of people who gets the flu in the U.S. each year is 5%. That means that *at least* 5% of the U.S. population gets the flu each year.
- II)** Incorrect. Lines 10-11 state that “The shot and the nose spray are vaccines.” The flu shot and the nose spray comprise *two* types of vaccine. While there **may** be three or more types of vaccine, only *two* types of vaccine **are mentioned in the passage**.
- III)** Incorrect. Line 3 states that “Each year in the U.S., up to 60 million people get the flu.” Lines 4-5 state that “Each year in the U.S., about 36,000 people die from problems related to the flu.” **Twelve million** is 20% of 60 million. Since up to 60 million people in the U.S. have the flu each year, **12 million** people in the U.S. would be about 20% of the people in the U.S. who have the flu. Since about **36,000** people die from problems associated with the flu, the statement is **not** correct.

- A) I only
- B) II only
- C) III only
- D) I and II only
- E) II and III only

2. The correct answer is **C**.

- A)** Incorrect. While lines 20-23 state that “You should wash your hands with warm water and soap for at least 20 seconds. Studies show that washing your hands for 2 minutes with hot, soapy water is the best way to get the most germs off your hands. Be sure to wash under your fingernails and between your fingers,” this procedure is outlined as a recommendation of the Centers for Disease Control as a method of stopping the spread of the flu, **not** as the *main idea* of the paragraph.
- B)** Incorrect. While lines 20-23 state that “You should wash your hands with warm water and soap for at least 20 seconds. Studies show that washing your hands for 2 minutes with hot, soapy water is the best way to get the most germs off your hands,” this procedure is outlined as a recommendation of the Centers for Disease Control as a method of stopping the spread of the flu, **not** as the *main idea* of the paragraph.
- C)** Correct. Line 16 states that “You can help stop the spread of the flu virus.” The passage then outlines methods of *stopping the spread of the virus*. These include coughing into a tissue and throwing the tissue away (line 17), coughing into the inside of your elbow (line 18), and cleaning your hands (line 19). The remainder of the paragraph outlines the recommended methods of cleaning your hands.
- D)** Incorrect. While lines 21-22 state that “Studies show that washing your hands for 2 minutes with hot, soapy water is the best way to get the most germs off your hands,” the passage gives this information to **support** the *main idea* that you can help stop the spread of the virus (line 16), and that one way of stopping the spread of the virus is by cleaning your hands (line 19).
- E)** Incorrect. While lines 17-18 state “Or you can cough into the inside of your elbow, into your own clothing,” the **reason** for coughing into your elbow is **not** given.

3. The correct answer is C.

- A) Incorrect. Lines 10-11 state that “The shot and the *nose* spray are *vaccines*.” Since the *nose* spray is a *vaccine*, the word *vaccine* **cannot** mean *nose*.
- B) Incorrect. Lines 10-11 state, “The flu shot can prevent the flu. The nasal flu mist can also prevent the flu. The shot and the nose spray are *vaccines*. Talk to your doctor about getting a *vaccine*.” Since the shot and the nose spray can prevent the flu, they are items which can **promote** *health*. However, they are **not** *health* itself. Therefore, the *vaccine* is **not** *health* itself, but a way of **promoting** good *health*.
- C) Correct. Lines 10-11 state, “The flu shot can prevent the flu. The nasal flu mist can also prevent the flu. The shot and the nose spray are *vaccines*.” Since the shot and the nasal flu mist can both prevent the flu, and both the shot and the nasal flu mist are *vaccines*, it stands to reason that the *vaccine* can *protect* against the flu. Therefore, the *vaccine* is a form of *protection* from the flu.
- D) Incorrect. Line 11 states that “The *shot* and the nose spray are *vaccines*.” While the *shot* is **one type** of *vaccine*, it is **not** the **only** *vaccine*, and there is **no** statement in the text that **all** *shots* are *vaccines*.
- E) Incorrect. Line 11 states that “The shot and the nose *spray* are *vaccines*.” While the *spray* is **one type** of *vaccine*, it is **not** the **only** *vaccine*, and there is **no** statement in the text that **all** *sprays* are *vaccines*.