

• Beginning Critical Reading – Soaps and Detergents

Soaps and detergents are used for washing. Soaps and detergents are used for cleaning. People usually use detergent to wash clothes. People usually use detergent to wash dishes. People usually use soap to wash their bodies.

5 Soap has a long history. There was soap in Ancient Babylon. There was soap in Ancient Egypt. Some people think there was soap before people wrote history.

Soap and detergent are similar, but soap and detergent are not exactly the same. Soaps are made of natural products. Detergents are made of man-made products.

10 In some cases, soap is better than detergent. For example, soap is milder on the skin. Soap is milder on the environment. Soap is biodegradable – nature’s processes clean soap up. Soap does not build up in rivers. Soap does not cause pollution in rivers. Soap does not build up in streams. Soap does not cause pollution in streams.

15 In some cases, detergent is better than soap. For example, soap builds up in clothes after many washings. Detergent does not build up in clothes after many washings. Soap loses its cleaning power in clothes over time. Detergent does not lose its cleaning power in clothes over time.

Questions

1. According to the passage, which of the following statements is/are true?

- I) Soap is made of natural or man-made products.
- II) Detergents are less mild than soaps.
- III) Detergent washes out of clothing.
- IV)

- 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 soaps and detergents are made
- B) What soap and detergent are used for
- C) Which product causes less pollution
- D) How soap loses its cleaning power
- E) When detergent is better than soap

3. In line 9, *biodegradable* most closely means

- A) man-made
- B) dangerous
- C) permanent
- D) easy to clean up
- E) hard to clean up

Answers and Explanations

1. The correct answer is **E**.

- I) Incorrect. Line 7 states that “Soaps are made of natural products. Detergents are made of man-made products.”
- II) Correct. Lines 8-9 state that “For example, soap is milder on the skin. Soap is milder on the environment.” Since soap is milder than detergent, detergent is less mild than soap.
- III) Correct. Line 14 states that “Detergent does not build up in clothes after many washings.” Since detergent does not build up, or stay, in clothing, it must wash out.

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

2. The correct answer is **E**.

- A) Incorrect. Line 7 in the *third* paragraph explains *how soap and detergent are made of different products*, when it states that “Soaps are made of natural products. Detergents are made of man-made products,” the *fifth* paragraph gives examples of ways in which detergent is sometimes better than soap. For example, the *fifth* paragraph states that “Soap loses its cleaning power in clothes over time. Detergent does not lose its cleaning power in clothes over time.”
- B) Incorrect. While lines 1-2 explain the *uses of soaps and detergents* when they state that “Soaps and detergents are used for washing. Soaps and detergents are used for cleaning,” the *fifth* paragraph gives examples of ways in which detergent is sometimes better than soap. For example, the *fifth* paragraph states that “Soap loses its cleaning power in clothes over time. Detergent does not lose its cleaning power in clothes over time.”
- C) Incorrect. While lines 9-11 explain that *soap causes less pollution* when they state that “Soap is milder on the environment. Soap is biodegradable – nature’s processes clean soap up. Soap does not build up in rivers. Soap does not cause pollution in rivers. Soap does not build up in streams. Soap does not cause pollution in streams,” the *fifth* paragraph gives examples of ways in which detergent is sometimes better than soap. For example, the *fifth* paragraph states that “Soap loses its cleaning power in clothes over time. Detergent does not lose its cleaning power in clothes over time.”
- D) Incorrect. While line 14 states that “Soap loses its cleaning power in clothes over time,” it does **not** tell *how* soap loses its cleaning power.
- E) Correct. The *fifth* paragraph gives examples of ways in which *detergent is sometimes better than soap*. For example, the *fifth* paragraph states that “Soap loses its cleaning power in clothes over time. Detergent does not lose its cleaning power in clothes over time.”

3. The correct answer is **D**.

- A) Incorrect. Since line 7 states that “Soaps are made of *natural products*,” and line 9 states that “Soap is *biodegradable*,” the word *biodegradable* **cannot** mean *man-made*.
- B) Incorrect. Since lines 8-9 state that “soap is *milder* on the skin. Soap is *milder* on the environment,” and line 9 states that “Soap is *biodegradable*,” the word *biodegradable* **cannot** mean *dangerous*.
- C) Incorrect. Since lines 9-10 state that “nature’s processes *clean soap up*,” the word *biodegradable* **cannot** mean *permanent*.
- D) Correct. Since lines 9-10 state that “nature’s processes *clean soap up*,” the word *biodegradable* **probably means** *easy to clean up*.
- E) Incorrect. Since lines 9-10 state that “nature’s processes *clean soap up*,” the word *biodegradable* probably **doesn’t** mean *hard to clean up*.