**Beginning Critical Reading – The White House**

The White House is the home and office of the President of the United States. The White House is located at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington, D.C. The first president to live in the White House was John Adams. He moved into the White House in 1800. Now President Barack Obama lives in the White House.

An architect named James Hoban made the plans for the White House. Hoban won a design contest held by Pierre Charles L’Enfant. L’Enfant was the main architect for the capital city of Washington, D.C. The White House was built between 1792 and 1800. It was built of limestone and painted white.

During the War of 1812, the British Army set fire to the White House. President James Madison moved out while the house was rebuilt. In 1817, James Monroe moved into the White House.

At first, people called the building the “President’s Palace.” However, because kings and queens live in palaces, “President’s Palace” was not a good name for the house. President Theodore Roosevelt gave the building the name it has today – The White House.

**Questions**

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

   I) All the Presidents of the United States have lived in the White House.
   II) The White House was painted white to cover up marks left from the fire.
   III) James Madison was President of the United States during the War of 1812.

   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 second paragraph?

   A) The main architect of the capital city
   B) The design and construction of the White House
   C) The building materials and color of the White House
   D) The years of White House construction
   E) The reasons for building the White House

3. In line 12, *palace* most closely means

   A) office
   B) castle
   C) home
   D) building
   E) tower
Answers and Explanations

1. The correct answer is C.

I) Incorrect. Lines 2-4 state that “The first president to live in the White House was John Adams. He moved into the White House in 1800. Now President Barack Obama lives in the White House. Lines 9-11 state that “During the War of 1812, the British Army set fire to the White House. President James Madison moved out while the house was rebuilt. In 1817, James Monroe moved into the White House. While other Presidents may have lived in the White House, only these four Presidents are said in the passage to live or have lived there.

II) Incorrect. Line 8 states that “The house was built of limestone and painted white.” Line 9 states that “During the War of 1812, the British Army set fire to the White House.” While the House may have been repainted to cover the marks of the fire, there is no mention of this idea in the passage.

III) Correct. Lines 9-10 state that “During the War of 1812, the British Army set fire to the White House. President James Madison moved out while the house was rebuilt.”

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

2. The correct answer is B.

A) Incorrect. While lines 6-7 explain that Pierre Charles L’Enfant was the main architect of the capital city, this information is background information to explain the selection of Hoban as the White House architect; it is not the main idea.

B) Correct. The entire paragraph is about the design and construction of the White House. The only sentence which is not directly about the design and construction of the White House is in lines 6-7: “L’Enfant was the main architect for the capital city of Washington, D.C.” This sentence is background information to explain the selection of the White House architect.

C) Incorrect. While line 8 states that “The house was built of limestone and painted white,” this information is only part of the main idea of the paragraph, which is the design and construction of the White House.

D) Incorrect. While lines 7-8 state that “The White House was built between 1792 and 1800,” this information is only part of the main idea of the paragraph, which is the design and construction of the White House.

E) Incorrect. While lines 5-6 explain the reason that James Hoban was selected as the White House architect, there is no mention in the paragraph of the reason for building the White House.

3. The correct answer is B.

A) Incorrect. While line 1 states that “The White House is the home and office of the President of the United States,” the word palace cannot mean office. A phrase in line 13
states that “kings and queens live in palaces.” Since kings and queens do not live in offices, this cannot be the correct response.

B) Correct. A phrase in line 13 states that “kings and queens live in palaces.” Since kings and queens live in castles, it stands to reason that palaces are the same as castles.

C) Incorrect. While line 1 states that “The White House is the home and office of the President of the United States,” the word palace probably does not mean home. A phrase in line 13 states that “kings and queens live in palaces.” Since kings and queens usually do not live in typical homes, this is probably not the correct response.

D) Incorrect. The word palace probably does not mean building. A phrase in line 13 states that “kings and queens live in palaces.” Since kings and queens do not live in generic buildings, this is probably not the correct response.

E) Incorrect. The word palace probably does not mean tower. A phrase in line 13 states that “kings and queens live in palaces.” Since kings and queens do not live in towers, this is probably not the correct response.