

Directions: In this section, you are going to read a passage with ten statements attached to it. Each statement contains information given in one of the paragraphs. Identify the paragraph from which the information is derived. You may choose a paragraph more than once. Each paragraph is marked with a letter. Answer the questions by marking the corresponding letter on *Answer Sheet 2*.

In the real world, nobody cares that you went to an Ivy League school

- A) As a high school junior, everything in my life revolved around getting into the right college. I diligently attended my SAT, ACT, and Advanced Placement test preparation courses. I juggled(尽力应付) cross-country and track schedules, newspaper staff, and my church's youth group and drama team. I didn't drink, party, or even do much dating. The right college, I thought, was one with prestige, one with a name. It didn't have to be the Ivy League, but it needed to be a "top school."
- B) Looking back now, nine years later, I can't remember exactly what it was about these universities that made them seem so much better. Was it a curriculum that appeared more rigorous, perhaps? Or an alumni network that I hoped would open doors down the line? Maybe. "I do think there are advantages to schools with more recognition," notes Marybeth Gasman, a professor of higher education at the University of Pennsylvania. "I don't necessarily think that's a reason to go to one."
- C) In reflection, my firm belief in the power of the brand was naive, not to mention a bit snobby. I quickly passed over state schools and southern schools, believing their curriculums to be automatically inferior to northeastern or western counterparts. Instead, I dreamed of living in New York City and my parents obliged me with a visit to New York University's (NYU) campus. During the tour, tuition fees were discussed. (NYU is consistently ranked one of the country's most expensive schools, with room and board costs totaling upwards of \$64,000 a year.) Up until then, I hadn't truly realized just how expensive an education can be. Over the next few months, I realized not only could I not afford my dream school, I couldn't even afford the ones where I'd been accepted. City University of New York (CUNY), Rutgers University, and Indiana University were out of reach as were Mississippi State and the University of Alabama, where I would have to pay out-of-state fees. Further complicating my college search was a flourishing track career—I wanted to keep running but my times weren't quite fast enough to secure a scholarship.
- D) And so, at 11 pm on the night of Georgia State University's (GSU) midnight deadline, I applied online. Rated No. 466 overall on Forbes' Lists Top Colleges, No. 183 in Research Universities, and No. 108 in the South, I can't say it was my top choice. Still, the track coach had offered me a walk-on spot, and I actually found the urban Atlanta campus a decent consolation prize after New York City.
- E) While it may have been practical, it wasn't prestigious. But here's the thing: I loved my "lower-tier"(低层次的) university. (I use the term "low-tier" cautiously, because GSU is a well-regarded research institution that attracts high quality professors and faculty from all over the country.) We are taught to believe that only by going to the best schools and getting the best grades can we escape the rat race and build a better future. But what if lower-tier colleges and universities were the ticket to escaping the rat race? After all, where else can you leave school with a decent degree—but without a lifetime of debt?
- F) My school didn't come prepackaged like the more popular options, so we were left to take care of ourselves, figuring out city life and trying to complete degree programs that no one was championing for us to succeed

in. What I'm saying is, I loved my university because it taught us all to be resourceful and we could make what we wanted out of it.

- G) I was lucky enough to have my tuition covered by a lottery-funded scholarship called HOPE (Helping Outstanding Pupils Educationally). When I started college, the HOPE scholarship was funded by the state of Georgia and offered to graduating high school seniors with a GPA of 3.0 or higher. Living costs and books I paid for with money earned during high school, supplemented by a small college fund my deceased grandfather left for me and a modest savings account my parents created when I was born.
- H) So what about all that name recognition? Sure, many of my colleagues and competitors have more glamorous alma maters(母校) than I do. As a journalist, I have competed against NYU, Columbia, and Northeastern graduates for jobs. And yet, not a single interviewer has ever asked me about my educational background. In fact, almost every interview I've ever had was due to a connection—one that I've gained through pure determination, not a school brand.
- I) According to The Boston Globe, students who earned their bachelor's in 2012 have an average monthly loan payment of \$312, which is one-third more than those who graduated in 2004. Ultimately, that's the thing universities don't want to admit. Private universities are money-making institutions. If you can afford to buy prestige, that's your choice. For the rest of us, however, our hearty lower-tiered universities are just fine, thank you.
- J) Wealthy universities talk up the benefits their name will give graduates: namely, strong alumni networks, star faculty, and a résumé boost. But you needn't attend an Ivy League school to reap those rewards. Ludacris and the former CEO of Bank of America Ken Lewis are alumni of my college, as well as VICE's first female editor-in-chief, Ellis Jones. Successful people tend to be successful no matter where they go to school, and lower-tier schools can have alumni networks just as strong as their big name counterparts. In fact, lower-tier school alumni networks are arguably stronger, because fellow alumni recognize that you didn't necessarily have an easy path to follow. They might be more willing to offer career help, because your less famous school denotes that, like them, you are also full of energy and perseverance.
- K) The Washington Post reported on a recent study by Princeton economists, in which college graduates who applied to the most selective schools in the 12th grade were compared to those who applied to slightly less selective schools. They found that students with more potential earned more as adults, and the reverse held true as well, no matter where they went to school.
- L) Likewise, star faculty are not always found where you'd expect. Big name schools are not necessarily the best places for professors; plus, many professors split teaching time between multiple colleges and/or universities. This means, for instance, a CUNY student could reasonably expect to receive the same quality of instruction from a prestigious professor as they would if they were enrolled in the same class at NYU.
- M) It's possible that some hiring managers may be drawn to candidates with a particular educational résumé, but it's no guarantee. According to a 2012 survey described in The Atlantic, college reputation ranked lowest in relative importance of attributes in evaluating graduates for hire, beaten out by top factors like internships, employment during college, college major, volunteer experience, and extracurriculars.
- N) Maybe students who choose less prestigious universities are bound to succeed because they are determined to. I tend to think so. In any case, if I could do it again, I'd still make the same choice. Today I'm debt-free, resourceful—and I understand that even the shiniest packaging can't predict what you'll find on the inside.

36. Modest institutions can also have successful graduates and strong alumni networks.

37. The money the author made in high school helped pay for her living expenses and books at college.
38. The author came to see how costly college education could be when she was trying to choose a university to attend.
39. A recent study found that a graduate's salary is determined by their potential, not the university they attended.
40. The author cannot recall for sure what made certain top universities appear a lot better.
41. None of the author's job interviewers cared which college she went to.
42. The author thinks she did the right thing in choosing a less prestigious university.
43. In order to be admitted to a prestigious university, the author took part in various extracurricular activities and attended test preparation courses.
44. The author liked her university which was not prestigious but less expensive.
45. Colleges are reluctant to admit that graduates today are in heavier debt.