

Directions: *There are 2 passages in this section. Each passage is followed by some questions or unfinished statements. For each of them there are four choices marked A), B), C) and D). You should decide on the best choice and mark the corresponding letter on Answer Sheet 2 with a single line through the centre.*

Passage One

Questions 46 to 50 are based on the following passage.

Some people in the US have asserted that forgiving student loan debt is one way to stimulate the economy and give assistance to those in need. One government proposition is to eliminate \$10,000 of debt for 'economically distressed' students. Some in US Congress have gone so far as to suggest forgiving up to \$50,000 in debt per student borrower, but does forgiving student debt necessarily correlate to helping the economically disadvantaged?

The answer is no. This policy is just giving money away to universities and the most affluent students in attendance. Federal Reserve data reveals that the highest-income 40 percent of households owe approximately 60 percent of outstanding student debt, while the lowest 40 percent owe just under 20 percent. This could be due to a combination of factors: students from high-income households are more likely to go to expensive colleges, less likely to receive financial aid, and more likely to have high incomes post-graduation. Plus, the majority of student debt is held by graduate degree earners, who earn approximately 25 percent more than their undergraduate counterparts. Clearly, giving free reign to banks to forgive student debt is a step in the wrong direction.

Other proposals for broader, long-term student loan plans have some fundamental problems. One idea is to cancel student debt only for undergraduate degrees and for students making less than \$125,000.

This attempts to address the fact that Congress' previously mentioned student loan forgiveness plan largely helps out the wealthy, but is an adverse incentive for universities to keep raising tuition and for students to choose to major in low-earning degree programs. Colleges have no reason to make their programs more affordable if they believe students will just take out more debt. And, students will feel more comfortable making the irresponsible decision to go tens of thousands of dollars in debt to major in impractical or idealistic subjects if they know their loans will be forgiven.

This is especially concerning given the pandemic(大流行病) has rendered a college education practically worthless. Students are paying tens of thousands of dollars per year to live at home and be lectured on the Internet. Do we really want to tell colleges that they can get away with providing below-average service for an outrageous cost?

In the case of any of these student debt plans, working-class Americans who chose not to or could not afford to go to college will be subsidizing the education of the professional class. Plumbers and retail workers will be paying for the degrees of doctors and lawyers.

The US government's effort to help those in debt is commendable but is this really the solution that will help the poor financially recover?

46. Why do some people advocate forgiving student loan debt?
- A) They assert it will narrow the gap between the wealthy and the poor.
 - B) They believe it will benefit both the economy and the underprivileged.
 - C) They claim it will eliminate economic distress among college students.
 - D) They think the cost of education is the responsibility of the government.
47. What do we learn from the Federal Reserve data?
- A) Approximately 60% of student debt remains unpaid.
 - B) Cancelling student debt benefits wealthy families most.
 - C) Forgiving student debt provides little benefit to universities.
 - D) Low-income families owe the biggest amount of student debt.
48. What does the author say students are likely to do if they know they needn't repay their loans?
- A) They will choose to study subjects without considering their job prospects.
 - B) They will be free to pursue their goals without being burdened financially.
 - C) They will over-borrow and live beyond their means.
 - D) They will be able to enroll in expensive universities.
49. What does the author imply about colleges offering online education?
- A) They cannot get away with the serious consequences.
 - B) They have suffered greatly from the current pandemic.
 - C) The tuition they charge is not justified by the quality of their service.
 - D) The tuition they charge has surged outrageously during the pandemic.
50. What will happen if any of the proposed student debt plans is implemented?
- A) Plumbers and retail workers will have a chance of becoming professionals.
 - B) Working-class students will have increasing access to subsidized education.
 - C) Blue-collar workers will have to bear the cost of educating would-be high-earners.
 - D) A growing number of students will be able to earn degrees in medicine and law.