

Passage 4

The invention of the incandescent light bulb by Thomas A. Edison in 1879 created a demand for a cheap, readily available fuel with which to generate large amounts of electric power. Coal seemed to fit the bill, and it fueled the earliest power stations (which were set up at the end of the nineteenth century by Edison himself). As more power plants were constructed throughout the country, the reliance on coal increased. Since the First World War, coal-fired power plants have accounted for about half of the electricity produced in the United States each year. In 1986 such plants had a combined generating capacity of 289,000 megawatts and consumed 33 percent of the nearly 900 million tons of coal mined in the country that year. Given the uncertainty in the future growth of nuclear power and in the supply of oil and natural gas, coal-fired power plants could well provide up to 70 percent of the electric power in the United States by the end of the century.

Yet, in spite of the fact that coal has long been a source of electricity and may remain one for many years (coal represents about 80 percent of United States fossil-fuel reserves), it has actually never been the most desirable fossil fuel for power plants. Coal contains less energy per unit of weight than natural gas or oil; it is difficult to transport, and it is associated with a host of environmental issues, among them acid rain. Since the late 1960's problems of emission control and waste disposal have sharply reduced the appeal of coal-fired power plants. The cost of ameliorating these environmental problems, along with the rising cost of building a facility as large and complex as a coal-fired power plant, has also made such plants less attractive from a purely economic perspective.

Changes in the technological base of coal fired power plants could restore their attractiveness, however. Whereas some of these changes are evolutionary and are intended mainly to increase the productivity of existing plants, completely new technologies for burning coal cleanly are also being developed.

1. What is the main idea of the passage?
 - (A) Coal-fired plants are an important source of electricity in the United States and are likely to remain so.
 - (B) Generating electricity from coal is comparatively recent in the United States.
 - (C) Coal is a more economical fuel than either oil or nuclear power.
 - (D) Coal is a safer and more dependable fossil fuel than oil or gas.
2. Edison's electric light bulb is mentioned in the passage because it
 - (A) replaced gas as a light source
 - (B) increased the need for electrical power
 - (C) was safer than any other method of lighting
 - (D) could work only with electricity generated from coal
3. It can be inferred from the passage that coal became the principal source of electricity in the United States, because it
 - (A) required no complicated machinery
 - (B) was comparatively plentiful and inexpensive
 - (C) was easy to transport
 - (D) burned efficiently
4. In the author's opinion, the importance of coal-generated electricity could increase in the future for which of the following reasons?
 - (A) The possible substitutes are too dangerous.
 - (B) The cost of changing to other fuels is too great.
 - (C) The future availability of other fuels is uncertain.
 - (D) Other fuels present too many environmental problems.

5. Acid rain is mentioned in the passage for which of the following reasons?
- (A) It reduces the efficiency of coal-fired plants
 - (B) It increases the difficulty of transporting coal
 - (C) It is an environmental problem associated with coal use
 - (D) It contains less energy per unit of weight than coal does
6. According to the passage, which of the following is one of the goals of the new technology in coal-fired plants?
- (A) To adapt the plants to other kinds of fuel
 - (B) To reduce the cost of building more plants
 - (C) To lengthen the lives of plants already in use
 - (D) To make the plants already in use more productive
7. Where in the passage is there a reference to the establishment of the first electric power stations?
- (A) Lines 3-4
 - (B) Lines 5-7
 - (C) Lines 9-11
 - (D) Lines 16-18

Passage 5

The military aspect of the United States Civil War has always attracted the most attention from scholars. The roar of gunfire, the massed movements of uniformed men, the shrill of bugles, and the drama of hand-to-hand combat have fascinated students of warfare for a century. Behind the lines, however life was 1e53 spectacular. It was the story of back-breaking labor to provide the fighting men with food and arms, of nerve-tangling uncertainty about the course of national events, of heartbreak over sons or brothers or husbands lost in battle. If the men on the firing line won the victories the means to those victories were forged on the home front.

Never in the nation's history had Americans worked harder for victory than in the Civil War. Northerners and Southerners alike threw themselves into the task of supplying their respective armies. Both governments made tremendous demands upon civilians and, in general, received willing cooperation.

By 1863 the Northern war economy was rumbling along in high gear. Everything from steamboats to shovels was needed-and produced. Denied Southern cotton, textile mills turned to wool for blankets and uniforms. Hides by the hundreds of thousands were turned into shoes and harness and saddles; ironworks manufactured locomotives, ordnance, armor plate. Where private enterprise lagged, the government set up its own factories or arsenals. Agriculture boomed, with machinery doing the job of farm workers drawn into the army.

In short, everything that a nation needed to fight a modern war was produced in uncounted numbers. Inevitably there were profiteers with gold-headed canes and flamboyant diamond stickpins, but for every crooked tycoon there were thousands of ordinary citizens living on fixed incomes who did their best to cope with rising prices and still make a contribution to the war effort. Those who could bought war bonds: others knitted, sewed, nursed or lent any other assistance in their power.

1. With what topic is the passage primarily concerned?
- (A) Why the South lost the Civil War
 - (B) The causes of the Civil War
 - (C) Where the Civil War battles were fought
 - (D) The civilian response to the Civil

2. According to the passage, during the Civil War the South no longer provided the North with
(A) cotton (B) wool (C) hides (D) shoes
3. In line 15, the word "Hides" is closest in meaning to which of the following?
(A) Animal skins (B) Tree trunks
(C) Disguises (D) Shelters
4. In line 21, the word "crooked" could best be replaced by which of the following?
(A) twisted (B) dishonest (C) uneven (D) distorted
5. The author implies that students of the Civil War usually concentrate on the
(A) home front (B) battlefield
(C) government (D) economy
6. Where in the passage does the author mention a contribution made by the government to the war economy?
(A) Line 4 (B) Lines 11-12
(C) Line 17 (D) Lines 19-20