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Stream : Literature and Philosophy

PART ONE : READING (15 points)

Read the text carefully then do the activities.

From 1200 to 800 BC the Phoenicians lived and prospered in the Mediterranean coast north of Palestine. Their chief cities were Tyr and Sidon. They gained fame as sailors and traders. They occupied a string of cities along the Mediterranean coast, in what is today Lebanon.

The coastal land was fertile and supported farming. Still, the resourceful Phoenicians became best known for manufacturing and trade. They made glass from coastal sand. From a tiny sea snail, they produced a widely admired purple dye, called "Tyrian purple" after the city of Tyr, which became their trademark. It became the favourite colour of royalty.

Phoenicians also used papyrus from Egypt to make rolls of paper, for books. The words bible and bibliography come from the Phoenician city of Byblos. Phoenicians traded with peoples all around the Mediterranean sea. To promote trade, they set up colonies from North Africa to Sicily and Spain.

Due to their sailing skills, the Phoenicians served as missionaries of civilization, bringing eastern Mediterranean products and culture to less advanced people. A few Phoenician traders braved the stormy Atlantic and sailed as far as England. There, they exchanged goods from the Mediterranean for tin.

As merchants, the Phoenicians needed a simple alphabet to ease the burden of keeping records. They therefore invented a phonetic alphabet consisting of 22 letters. After alterations by the Greeks and Romans, this alphabet became the one we use today.

Adapted from Phoenicians Overviews
<http://www.lost-civilizations.net/> Phoenicians

A. Comprehension (7 pts)

1. Circle the letter corresponding to the right answer.
-The text is:
 - a. an extract from a history books
 - b. a web article
 - c. a newspaper article
2. In which paragraph is it mentioned that the Phoenicians:
 - a. were well-known as seamen ?
 - b. invented the alphabet?
3. Answer the following questions according to the text.
 - a. Where and when did the Phoenicians live and prosper?
 - b. What did they do in order to promote trade?
 - c. What achievements did the Phoenicians make?
 - d. What continents did they have contact with?
4. What do the underlined words refer to in the text?
 - a. It became the favourite colour of royalty. (§2)
 - b. There, they exchanged goods. (§4)

B. Text exploration (8 pts)

1. Find in the text words opposite in meaning to the following.
 - a. declined (§1)
 - b. arid (§2)
 - c. narrowly (§2)
 - d. complex (§5)

2. Fill in the table with the missing word category.

| VERB | NOUN | ADJECTIVE |
|-------|-------|------------|
| | | admired |
| | | prosperous |

3. Join these pairs of sentences using the appropriate connector from the box.

Whereas – which - as soon as - despite the fact that

- a. It rarely rained in Mesopotamia. The Sumerians developed a strong system of irrigation.
 - b. The Phoenicians arrived in Phoenicia. They became town-dwellers.
 - c. The Phoenicians developed a phonetic alphabet of 22 letters. The alphabet was adapted from the Egyptian hieroglyphics.
 - d. Egyptians brought improvements in farming, agriculture, medicine and writing. Phoenicians developed ship-building, international trade and sailing across seas.
4. Give the correct form of the verbs between brackets.
- a. Howard Carter (discover) the tomb of Tutankhamun in 1922.
 - b. The Muslim (leave) Andalusia in 1492
5. Reorder the following sentences to get a coherent paragraph.
- a. they did not keep these inventions for themselves.
 - b. This enrichment is often the result of contacts of various kinds.
 - c. History shows that the civilizations enrich one another.
 - d. For example, though Ancient Egyptians had invented many things and achieved important scientific successes on their own,
6. Classify these verbs according to the pronunciation of their final “s”.
- a. successes b. changes c. merchants d. skills

PART TWO : WRITING (5points)

Choose one of the following topics.

Topic one.

All civilizations such as the Egyptian, Indus, Greek, Roman, Phoenician, Sumerian, Babylonian etc. rose, fell and then vanished because of wars, epidemics etc. How about our modern civilization? What, in your opinion, threatens the world today?

Use the following ideas to write an essay of about 20 lines :

- nuclear wars
- diseases
- climate change
- pollution
- economic collapse
- natural catastrophes etc.

Topic two.

Among all the civilizations you read about and studied, which one are you most fascinated by ? **Write an essay of about 20 lines.**