Passage Twenty-three
(Women and Fashions)Whenever you see an old film, even one
made as little as ten years ago, you cannot help being struck by the
appearance of the women taking part. Their hair-styles and make-up
look dated. their skirts look either too long or too short. their general
appearance is, in fact, slightly ludicrous. The men taking part in the
film, on the other hand, are clearly recognizable. There is nothing
about their appearance to suggest that they belong to an entirely
different age.This illusion is created by changing fashions. Over the
year, the great majority of men have successfully resisted all attempts
to make them change their style of dress. The same cannot be said for
women. Each year a few so- called top designers in Paris or London
lay down the law and women the whole world over rush to obey. The
decrees of the designers are unpredictable and dictatorial. This year,
they decide in their arbitrary fashion, skirts will be short and waists
will be high. zips are in and buttons are out. Next year the law is
reversed and far from taking exception, no one is even mildly
surprised.If women are mercilessly exploited year after year, they
have only themselves to blame. Because they shudder at the thought
of being seen in public in clothes that are out of fashion, they are
annually black-mailed by the designers and the big stores. Clothes,
which have been worn, only a few times have to be discarded because
of the dictates of fashion. When you come to think of it, only a

women is capable of standing in front of a wardrobe packed full of clothes and announcing sadly that she has nothing to wear.Changing fashions are nothing more than the deliberate creation of waste. Many women squander vast sums of money each year to replace clothes that have hardly been worn. Women, who cannot afford to discard clothing in this way, waste hours of their time altering the dresses they have. Hem-limes are taken up or let down. waist-lines are taken in or let out. neck-lines are lowered or raised, and so on.No one can claim that the fashion industry contributes anything really important to society. Fashion designers are rarely concerned with vital things like warmth, comfort and durability. They are only interested in outward appearance and they take advantage of the fact that women will put up with any amount of discomfort, providing they look right. There can hardly be a man who hasn't at some time in his life smiled at the sight of a woman shivering in a flimsy dress on a wintry day, or delicately picking her way through deep snow in dainty shoes.When comparing men and women in the matter of fashion, the conclusions to be drawn are obvious. Do the constantly changing fashions of women's clothes, one wonders, reflect basic qualities of fickleness and instability?Men are too sensible to let themselves be bullied by fashion designers. Do their unchanging styles of dress reflect basic qualities of stability and reliability?That is for you to decide. 1. The main idea of this passage is [A]. New fashions in clothes reflect the qualities of women.[B]. New fashions in clothing are created solely for commercial exploitation of women.[C]. The top designers seem to have the right

to creating new fashion. [D]. Men have the basic quality of reliability. 2. Why do the general appearance of actresses look ludicrous? [A]. Because they want their appearance in the fashion. [B]. Because the top designers want them to follow the fashion. [C]. Because the top designers want them to make fashion. [D]. Because the top designers want them to lead the fashion. 3. Why are women mercilessly exploited by the fashion designers? [A]. They love new fashion. [B]. They love new clothes. [C]. They want to look beautiful. [D]. They are too vain. 4. What are fashion designers interested in? [A]. Outward appearance. [B]. Comfort. [C]. Beauty. [D]. Durability. 100Test

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