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Comprehension (35 minutes) Passage One Questions 21 to 24 are based on the following passage: Automation refers to the introduction of electronic control and automatic operation of productive machinery. It reduces the human factors, mental and physical, in production, and is designed to make possible the manufacture of more goods with fewer workers. The development of automation in American industry has been called the "Second Industrial Revolution". Labour's concern over automation arises from uncertainty about the effects on employment, and fears of major changes in jobs. In the main, labour has taken the view that resistance to technical change is unfruitful. Eventually, the result of automation may well be an increase in employment, since it is expected that vast industries will grow up around manufacturing, maintaining, and repairing automation equipment. The interest of labour lies in bringing about the transition with a minimum of inconvenience and distress to the workers involved. Also, union spokesmen emphasize that the benefit of the increased production and lower costs made possible by automation should be shared by workers in the form of higher wages, more leisure, and improved living standards. To protect the interests of their members in the era of automation, unions have adopted a number of new policies. One of these is the promotion of supplementary unemployment benefit

plans. It is emphasized that since the employer involved in such a plan has a direct financial interest in preventing unemployment, he will have a strong drive for planning new installations so as to cause the least possible problems in jobs and job assignments. Some unions are working for dismissal pay agreements, requiring that permanently dismissed workers be paid a sum of money based on length of service. Another approach is the idea of the "improvement factor", which calls for wage increases based on increases in productivity. It is possible, however, that labour will rely mainly on reduction in working hours in order to gain a full share in the fruits of automation.

21. Though labour worries about the effects of automation, it does not doubt that

- A) automation will eventually prevent unemployment
- B) automation will help workers acquire new skills
- C) automation will eventually benefit the workers no less than the employers
- D) automation is a trend which cannot be stopped

22. The idea of the "improvement factor" ( Line 7, Para. 3) probably implies that

- A) wages should be paid on the basis of length of service
- B) the benefit of increased production and lower costs should be shared by workers
- C) supplementary unemployment benefit plans should be promoted
- D) the transition to automation should be brought about with the minimum of inconvenience and distress to workers

23. In order to get the full benefits of automation, labour will depend mostly on

- A) additional payment to the permanently dismissed workers
- B) the increase of wages in proportion to the increase in productivity
- C) shorter working hours and more leisure time
- D) a strong drive for planning new installations

24. Which of

the following can best sum up the passage? A) Advantages and disadvantages of automation. B) Labour and the effects of automation.来源：考试大 C) Unemployment benefit plans and automation. D) Social benefits of automation. 100Test 下载频道开通，各类考试题目直接下载。详细请访问 [www.100test.com](http://www.100test.com)