



“The Watchmaker’s Room”

The following passage is taken from “The Watchmaker’s Room”.

When Elias returned to the watchmaker’s shop, the bell above the door did not ring. It hung motionless, as though time itself had forgotten to pass through that threshold. The windows were clouded with years of dust, and the faint outlines of clocks stood behind the glass like faces turned away mid-conversation. Even the street outside seemed quieter here, as though the world had learned to move around the place without disturbing it.

Inside, the air carried the dry scent of oil and metal, thickened by disuse. Every surface was crowded with timepieces—grand clocks with solemn pendulums, delicate pocket watches resting in velvet trays, and half-dismantled mechanisms frozen in mid-repair. Some leaned slightly, their balance lost over years of neglect, while others remained upright, stubborn in their stillness. His grandfather had worked here alone for decades, tending to each ticking device as if it possessed a quiet will of its own.

Elias remembered the way his grandfather used to listen—not just to the sound of the clocks, but to the spaces between them. He would close his eyes, head tilted slightly, as though the silence itself carried a rhythm only he could hear. “That,” he would say, tapping the workbench lightly, “is where the truth of time lives.” As a child, Elias had laughed at the idea. Time, he believed, was something you could measure, divide, and record—not something that existed in absence.

In the years since, the world had grown faster. Digital screens replaced ticking hands; precision replaced patience. Time was no longer kept—it was displayed, exact and unquestioned. The shop had closed soon after his grandfather’s passing, its purpose quietly dissolved in a world that no longer needed to listen. Even memory, Elias thought, had become something to store rather than to feel.

Drawn by something he could not name, Elias stepped further inside. The floor creaked beneath him, the sound sharp against the stillness, as though the room resisted interruption. He ran his fingers along the workbench, tracing the shallow grooves left by years of careful repair. Each mark seemed deliberate, as though time itself had pressed into the wood and stayed there.

He reached for a small brass watch resting near the edge. It resisted at first, its casing stiff, as though reluctant to be disturbed. When he wound it gently, the mechanism answered with a faint ticking—uneven, hesitant, but unmistakably alive. The sound did not fill the room; instead, it settled into it, as though it belonged to a larger pattern waiting to be remembered.

Slowly, the ticking seemed to travel. Not as sound alone, but as something felt—a quiet stirring that passed through the rows of silent clocks. They did not begin to move, yet the room no longer felt empty. Elias became aware of the layered stillness around him, no longer absence, but presence held in suspension.

He stood very still, listening—not to the ticking, but to what followed it. For the first time, he noticed how each sound gave way to silence, and how that silence seemed to hold more than the sound itself. It was not emptiness, but a kind of fullness he had never learned to recognize.

In that moment, the shop was no longer abandoned. It existed not in motion, but in continuity—held together by something that neither stopped nor started. Elias closed his eyes briefly, not to remember, but simply to remain.

For the first time, he did not try to measure it.

Q1. What is the central theme of the passage?

- A. The inevitability of technological progress
- B. The rediscovery of meaning beyond measurement
- C. The decline of traditional craftsmanship
- D. The importance of preserving family heritage

Q2. The line “that is where the truth of time lives” most likely conveys—

- A. time exists only in measurable units
- B. silence and absence carry deeper meaning than sound
- C. clocks are incapable of measuring time
- D. time depends on mechanical accuracy

“Stages of River Channel Evolution and Adjustment”

Refer to Figure 1 and Figure 2 showing “Stages of River Channel Evolution and Adjustment”.

The diagram shows four stages of river channel development:

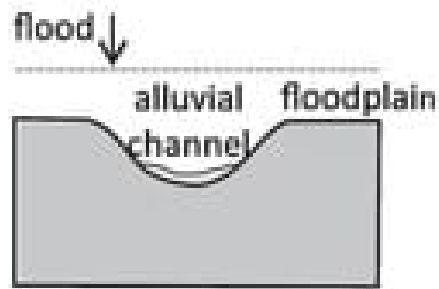
I. Natural, stable (“equilibrium”)

II. Channel deepening (with knickpoint)

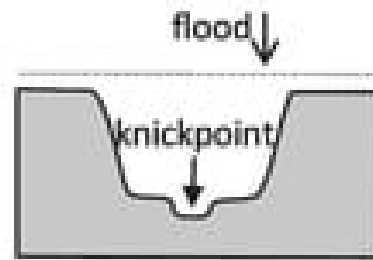
III. Widening (bank slumping, terrace formation)

IV. Anthropogenic, stable (modified channel and inset floodplain)

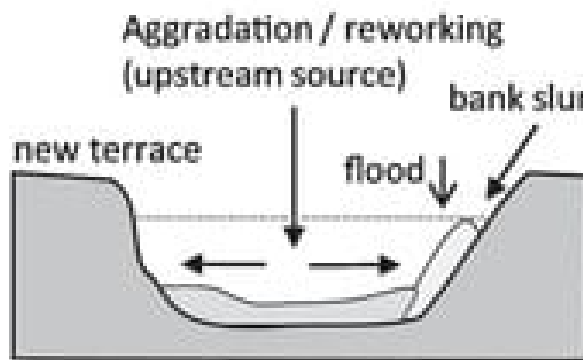
(A)



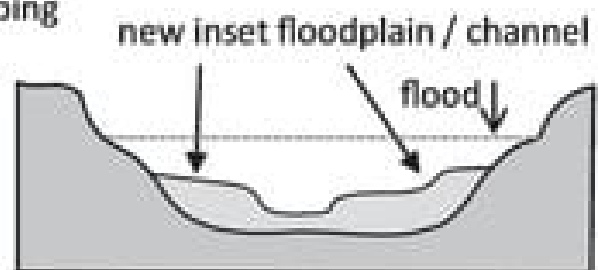
I. Natural, stable (~equilibrium)



II. Channel deepening



III. Widening



IV. Anthropogenic, stable (~new equilibrium)

Q3. Which feature is clearly introduced in Stage II but not present in Stage I?

- A. Floodplain
- B. Alluvial channel
- C. Knickpoint
- D. Bank slumping

Q4. The transition from Stage III to Stage IV primarily suggests

- A. natural recovery of the river to its original equilibrium
- B. increased erosion due to climatic changes

C. human modification leading to a new stable condition

D. complete loss of floodplain features

Ancient Indian Ocean Trade Route Between East Africa and Northern Australia

The following map shows Ancient Indian Ocean Trade Route Between East Africa and Northern Australia



The map shows an ancient maritime trade route (~10,000 km) connecting the Kilwa coast of Tanzania to Elcho Island (northern Australia). The route crosses the Indian Ocean, suggesting long-distance cultural and trade interactions.

Q5. Based on the map, which of the following best explains the significance of the route shown?

A. It represents a modern shipping lane used for global trade

B. It suggests historical long-distance maritime connections between Africa and Australia

C. It indicates migration patterns from Europe to Asia

D. It shows a route primarily used for inland transportation

Q6. If artifacts such as coins are found at both ends of the route, the most reasonable conclusion is that—

A. the regions were geographically connected by land

B. trade or cultural exchange occurred across the Indian Ocean

C. the coin originated independently in both regions

D. the route was used only for exploration, not trade

Quotation: “Beyond Measurement”

Consider the following Quotation.

“We measure the world to understand it, but we understand it best when we stop measuring.”

Q7. The quotation most nearly suggests that—

A. measurement is unnecessary for all forms of understanding

B. true understanding goes beyond quantification and analysis

C. the world cannot be explained through scientific methods

D. understanding depends entirely on imagination

“The Window at Dusk”

Several words in the poem have been defined for you.

“The Window at Dusk”



(Several words in the poem have been defined for you.)

When daylight **loosens**₁ from the glass, **Release**₁ 1

And shadows gather, thin and fast,

The window holds the fading light,

A **fragile**₂ frame for passing sight. **Breakable**₂ 4

Its surface hums with what has been, 5

With distant hours it once had seen;

Each flicker **traced**₃ in quiet streams, **Unsteady**₃

Like echoes drifting out of dreams. 8

Beyond, the world dissolves in grey, 9
Where edges blur and slip away;
Yet in that loss, a stillness grows, 11
A space no measured moment knows. 12

So stands the glass—both clear and dim, 13
A boundary neither full nor thin;
It shows, conceals, reflects, **refracts**₄, **Turn**₄
And holds the truth no lens extracts. 16

Q8. The phrase “daylight loosens from the glass” (line 1) primarily conveys—

- A. the physical breaking of the window
- B. the gradual fading of light at sunset
- C. the reflection of light from the surface
- D. the sudden disappearance of daylight

Q9. Which of the following best expresses the poem’s central contrast?

- A. Light versus darkness
- B. Reality versus illusion
- C. Presence versus absence of meaning
- D. Clarity versus ambiguity

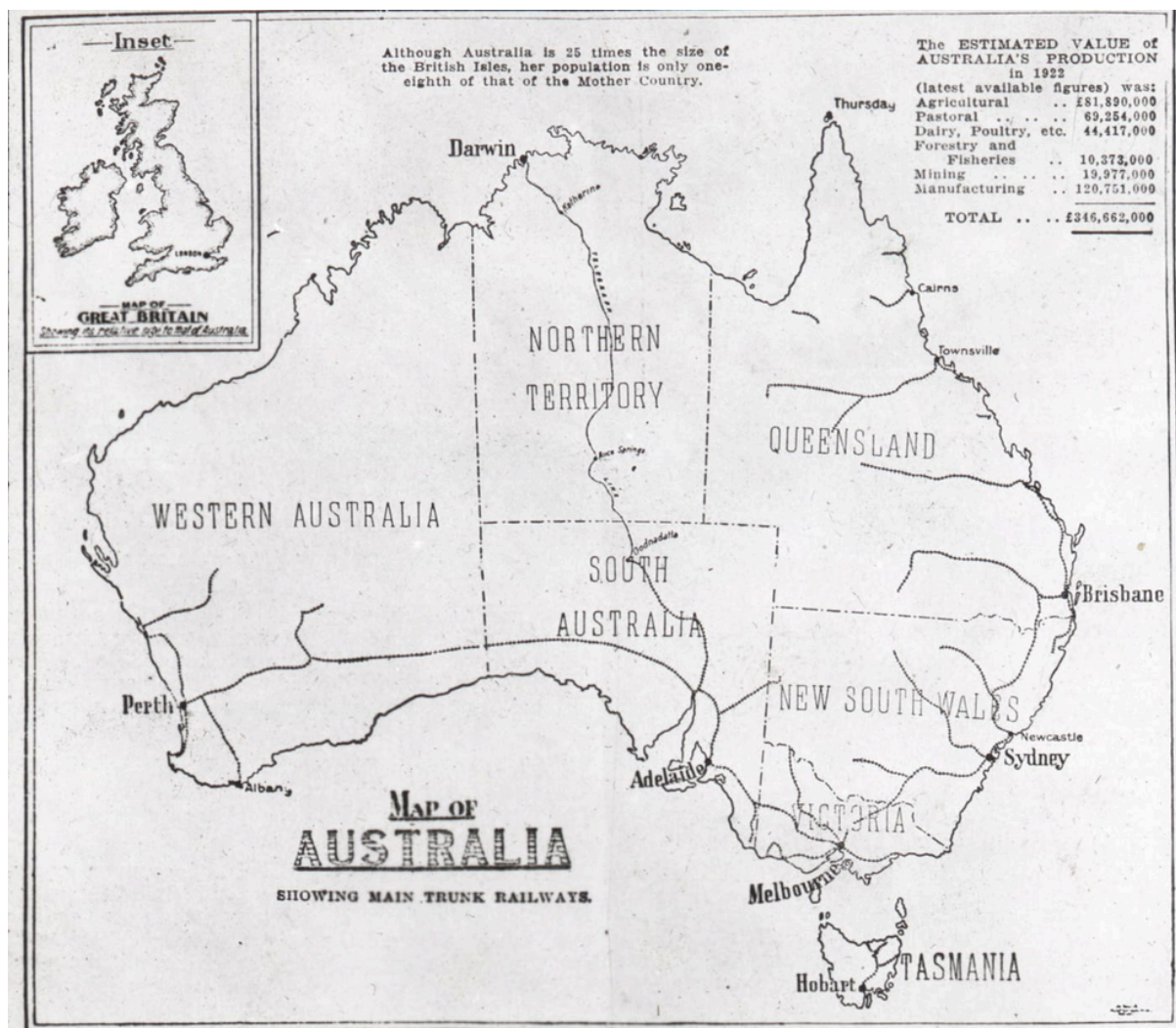
DEBATE

Theme: Technology and Human Experience

Six individuals were asked to respond to the statement:

“Technology brings people closer together.”

Below are their responses.



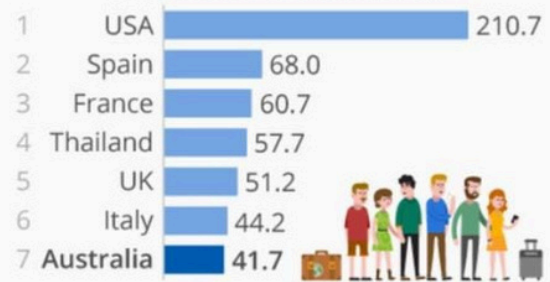
1. Arjun

Australia's tourism earnings on the rise

Total spent by international tourists in Australia per year (in billion U.S. dollars)



Biggest earners through international tourism (2017)



Top spenders by country per year in Australia (2018)



© StatistaCharts

* provisional figure

Sources: United Nations World Tourism Organization, Tourism Australia

statista

2. Lena
3. Marcus
4. Sofia
5. Noel
6. Ravi

Q10. Which respondent most directly challenges the idea that increased communication equals deeper connection?

- A. Arjun
- B. Marcus
- C. Noel
- D. Lena

Q11. Ravi's comment suggests that he believes the key issue is—

- A. lack of access to technology
- B. the redefinition of what “connection” means
- C. excessive dependence on physical interaction
- D. the inability of people to adapt to change

Main Trunk Railway Network

Main Trunk Railway Network of Australia (Early 20th Century)

The map shows major railway lines connecting key cities such as Perth, Adelaide, Melbourne, Sydney, and Brisbane. The network is concentrated along the southern and eastern regions, with limited inland penetration.

Q12. Why is there comparatively limited railway development in the central interior of Australia?

- A. The region has excessive rainfall and flooding
- B. The terrain is heavily forested and difficult to clear
- C. The area has low population density and harsh environmental conditions
- D. Coastal trade routes replaced the need for inland transport

Q13. What is the most likely strategic purpose of connecting cities such as Adelaide, Melbourne, and Sydney by rail?

- A. To support isolated agricultural communities only
- B. To enable efficient transport of goods and people between major economic centres
- C. To reduce dependence on maritime trade completely
- D. To promote tourism in inland regions

For questions 27-30, use the information in the diagram below.

Australia's Tourism

Q14. The difference between Australia's tourism earnings in 2016 and 2018 is—

- A. 2.5 billion USD
- B. 3.5 billion USD
- C. 4.5 billion USD
- D. 5.5 billion USD

Quotation: Perception and Reality

Below are six quotations (I-VI) on the theme of Perception and Reality.

(I) "The mirror reflects faithfully, yet never reveals what stands behind the eyes."

(II) "We see the world not as it is, but as we are prepared to understand it."

(III) "Clarity often begins where certainty ends."

(IV) “The sharpest vision can still be blind to what it refuses to see.”

(V) “Reality does not change when ignored—but our understanding of it does.”

(VI) “What we call truth is sometimes only the most convincing perspective.”

Q15. Which quotation most directly suggests that perception is influenced by the observer?

A. I

B. II

C. IV

D. VI

