A unique religious group on Tanna Island in the country of Vanuatu has been waiting for a mysterious figure named John Frum to come to the island and bring with him riches and goods. The John Frum cult is the most famous example of what anthropologists call a ‘cargo cult’, a religious movement that believes that practicing certain rituals will bring material rewards. The origin of the John Frum cult is not clear but there are two major theories.

Tanna Island is volcanic in origin and islanders have long believed that the god of the volcano created the island, and the whole world. Around 1930, about the time that Christian missionaries began preaching in Vanuatu, stories began of a figure named John Frum who lived in the volcano and who preached against Christianity, encouraging a return to traditional beliefs and ways of life. He apparently promised great rewards and claimed that an army lived in the volcano, waiting to clear the land of foreign influence. His symbol was ironically, a red cross similar to the cross that symbolizes Christianity.

Some anthropologists argue that John Frum was a man who wanted to gain followers. This man cleverly mixed traditional beliefs and promises of material rewards to fool people into believing he was a god. Others believe that he was a conservative figure who believed strongly in traditional ways. Perhaps a chief or someone with great power in the traditional system who was afraid of losing his status.

In the 1940s, Vanuatu was an important U.S. military base in World War II because it was close to Japan. The American soldiers brought with them radios and jeeps and other modern technology. It was the first time many people on Tanna had seen such things. Many of the soldiers were also friendly with the natives and gave them gifts such as food, toys, and tools. The army hospitals often treated natives who were ill. Some anthropologists point out that U.S. army hospital tents were painted with a red cross. This would explain why the cargo cult associated the red cross with generosity. Furthermore, John was such a common American name that many natives called all Americans John. Finally, the boxes in which supplies came from America were stamped “From America.” So the meaning of the name might be “John From America”, likely a common way to refer to generous soldiers from America who shared their supplies or gave gifts to the island people.

If all of this is true, there is still the question of how a historical event, the coming of Americans to Vanuatu, became a religious movement. To answer this question, anthropologists point to the gap in wealth and technology than existed at that time between Vanuatu and the rest of the world. Before World War II, most people in Vanuatu had had little contact with the outside world except for missionaries and the occasional adventurer. Seeing that the nation of America had such wealth and power that it could travel a long way with airplanes and jeeps made a deep impression on the Vanuatu people, argue anthropologists. Some experienced this idea as shame and some saw this as an opportunity to gain a better life. These people associated the great wealth with symbols and behavior of American soldiers. They began to develop rituals to imitate Americans and invented a god-like figure to explain their beliefs. In this way they began to believe that if the acted in a certain way, John Frum would come back and bring them wealth, much like the time when the American soldiers lived there.

In this way the cargo cult, which seems very strange, is actually connected to common forms of human behavior. Many people imitate the powerful believing that it will give them power. It is common now for businessmen to wear suits
because the suit has been adopted as a symbol of success, though no one really knows why. Likewise some people change their way of speaking, adopting the accent and slang of the rich or powerful in their country.

1) In the passage the word **practicing** is closest in meaning to:
   A. perfecting
   B. performing
   C. praying
   D. purchasing

2) In the passage the word **ironically** is closest in meaning to:
   A. foolishly
   B. humorously
   C. paradoxically
   D. obviously

3) In paragraph 2, why does the author mention volcanoes?
   A. to give a reason why Vanuatu didn’t have much contact with outsiders
   B. to show that the geography of Tanna island is different from other islands
   C. to give an example of a traditional belief that exists in the John Frum cult
   D. to give a reason why the cross of John Frum might be red

Paragraph 2 is marked by an arrow (→)

4) Paragraph 2 gives all of the following examples of individuals who might have started the cargo cult EXCEPT:
   A. a traditional healer
   B. a chief
   C. a conservative figure
   D. someone who wanted followers

Paragraph 2 is marked by an arrow (→)

5) In the passage the word **treated** is closest in meaning to:
   A. acted
   B. healed
   C. ignored
   D. preached to

6) In paragraph 4, the phrase **such things** refers to:
   A. cargo cults
   B. modern technology
   C. boxes stamped with “From America”
   D. medical supplies

7) According to paragraph 4 why might the red cross be used as a symbol of the John Frum cult?
   A. It was the symbol of the U.S. Army, which won World War II.
   B. The red cross was believed to be more powerful than the Christian cross
   C. Soldiers gave red cross as gifts to people on Tanna island
   D. It was the symbol painted on U.S. Army hospitals, which received native patients.

Paragraph 4 is marked by an arrow (→)

8) In paragraph 5 why does the author write that many people in Vanuatu had had little contact with the outside world?
   A. To show that Tanna island was unusual in its knowledge of American customs
   B. To explain why the appearance of new technology made such an impression on the people of Vanuatu
   C. To explain why people in Vanuatu did not wear suits
   D. To emphasize how hard it was for America to establish soldiers there

9) What can be inferred from paragraph 6 the custom of wearing a suit?
   A. It is internationally adopted
   B. It helps people become successful businessmen
   C. It was common among soldiers in World War II
   D. To some people it may seem strange

Paragraph 6 is marked by an arrow (→)

10) What was the main reason why American soldiers came to Vanuatu in the 1940s?
    A. To spread a new religion
    B. To fight against the Japanese in World War II
    C. To bring gifts that they had promised to the native people
    D. To help Vanuatu achieve a more modern way of life

Paragraph 6 is marked by an arrow (→)
11) Look at the four squares that indicate where the following sentence could be added to the passage.

**Still others believe that the name John Frum and the symbol of the red cross indicate that the cult originated during World War II.**

Where would the sentence best fit?
Click on a square to add the sentence to the passage.

12) **Directions:** An introductory sentence for a brief summary of the passage is provided below. Complete the summary by selecting the THREE answer choices that express the most important ideas in the passage. Some sentences do not belong in the summary because they express ideas that are not presented in the passage or are minor ideas in the passage. *This question is worth 2 points.*

**Write the appropriate letters of the phrases in the space below, in order.**

The John Frum cargo cult is a famous and interesting example of a cargo cult, whose origins are not fully understood.

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**Answer Choices**

A. The John Frum cult may have originated with a figure who preached against Christian teachings and modern ways of life.
B. The symbol of the John Frum movement a red cross may have been an imitation of the Christian cross
C. Modern medical technology deeply impressed the Vanuatu people and led them to believe American soldiers were gods
D. To believers in John Frum, wearing a suit or adopting a different accent will prevent a person from becoming rich and powerful
E. Evidence such as the name John Frum and the symbol of the red cross point to the cult originating with the arrival of American soldiers.
F. The cargo cult may seem strange but in fact it may be simply another example of human beings adopting the signs of wealth and power in order to gain wealth and power.