

Questions 10-19

The piano has always had a special place in music in the United States.

Because one can play on it several notes at once, it can be used in substitution for a band. This quality has attracted composers; there has been far more music written for piano, or the keyboards in general, than for any other instrument. And because a piano can, in effect, accompany itself, for a century it has been the basic instrument for the playing of popular music.

This was especially so during the decades around the turn of the century. In the years before the First World War (1914-1918), most families in the United States felt it important to own a piano, no matter how poor they were. People who could play the piano were welcome visitors and were generally cajoled into playing the latest popular tunes.

But it was not just in the home that the piano flourished. It was the basic entertainment tool in cabarets, clubs, and restaurants, just as it is today. The piano, thus, was central to the social lives of people in the United States, and in the period between the Civil War (1861-1865) and the First World War, there grew up a considerable industry devoted to it: the popular music business, a huge trade in instructional schools and mail order lessons, and, of course, the selling of pianos themselves.

Inevitably a large corps of virtuoso professional piano players developed. These "professors" or "ivory ticklers" were not necessarily trained in the classical European tradition. Most, although not all, either were self-taught or studied with older ticklers who themselves had little experience with the classical tradition. Despite the lack of European-style training, many of these players possessed astonishing techniques that, if not well-suited to classical piano compositions, were exactly right for producing the showy effects with which these professors impressed audiences and competing pianists. Fast arpeggios, octave runs, and other great splashes up and down the keyboard were practiced endlessly.

These ticklers were the people who developed and popularized ragtime; it is no accident that the most popular music of the period was a piano form. And of course, when jazz came into fashion, they were caught up in this new music.

10. What does the passage mainly discuss?

- (A) The parts of a piano
- (B) Kinds of pianos
- (C) Composers of piano music
- (D) The popularity of the piano

11. The word "place" in line 1 is

- closest in meaning to
- (A) performance
- (B) region
- (C) position
- (D) arrangement

12. The word "it" in line 2 refers to

- (A) piano
- (B) place
- (C) music
- (D) band

13. The word "central" in line 14 is closest in meaning to

- (A) accessible
- (B) important
- (C) convenient
- (D) related

14. Which of the following can be inferred from the passage about the piano industry between 1861 and 1914?

- (A) Fewer pianos were built.
- (B) Many people wanted to learn how to play the piano.
- (C) Other forms of keyboard instruments were invented.
- (D) Large bands began to replace pianos in clubs and restaurants.

15. The word "virtuoso" in line 19 is closest in meaning to

- (A) youthful
- (B) dedicated
- (C) skilled
- (D) noble

16. The word "themselves" in line 22 refers to

- (A) pianos
- (B) compositions
- (C) older ticklers
- (D) techniques