GOUDA ACADEMY

# PARAGRAPH COMPLETION

## THE SAT SUPER GUIDE

READ. CONNECT. PREDICT. WIN.

NOVEMBER 2026




13 WORKED EXAMPLES + 8 PRACTICE QUESTIONS

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# One method. Lots of practice.

DIGITAL SAT READING & WRITING • NOVEMBER 2026 EDITION

A paragraph stops just before its final idea. Your mission: use the clues already there to choose the ending that fits. You do not need to become a scientist or memorize every difficult word.

**03** Start here: the four-step method

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### YOUR MAIN RULE

Read for the relationship. Predict a simple ending. Choose the answer the paragraph supports.

# The four-step Gouda method

## 1. CHUNK: turn long sentences into small ideas

Read from the beginning. After a useful chunk, ask: **“What did I just learn?”** Keep the answer short: “Old method hurts good plants.”

## 2. MAP: connect the ideas

Look for a problem and solution, a contrast, a comparison, a timeline, or a study flaw. A quick arrow or two columns often makes the answer easier to see.

## 3. PREDICT: finish it in your own words

Before reading A–D, say a short ending: **“Stop the bad plant without hurting good plants.”** You only need the idea, not fancy vocabulary.

## 4. ELIMINATE: check the choices

Cross out answers that change the topic, reverse the relationship, or add an unsupported claim. Check your final choice against the text.

### THE FAST VERSION

What happened? + What changed? = What follows?

*Your prediction is a guide, not a script. The correct choice usually says your idea in different words. Match the meaning.*

# Tiny notes. Big clarity.

## The three-note habit

**Note 1:** The setup.
**Note 2:** The change, result, or BUT.
**Note 3:** Your predicted ending.
Use short labels and arrows. On an easy question, you can do this mentally.

### EXAMPLE

Note 1: Weed damages farms.
Note 2: Old spray hurts good plants; new method targets weed.
Note 3: Fewer weeds, good plants safe.

## The jargon shield

An unfamiliar species name is usually just a label. Call it **Bird A**, **Plant X**, or **the new method**. Keep the useful meaning: what it does, what it affects, and what changes.

## Protect the small words

Keep **not, only, more, less, before, after, some, may**. These tiny words can change the whole answer. “No evidence of travel” stays “no evidence of travel.”

## Your translation box

**Inhibit** = slow or stop. **Confidential** = secret.
**Compensate** = pay. **Variation** = difference.
**Control a variable** = keep a factor equal so a comparison is fair.
**Inference** = a conclusion supported by the clues.

# Five patterns to spot fast

## 1. BARRIER REMOVED — likely improvement

Old method: costly or difficult. New method: removes that problem.
**Look for:** easier access, lower cost, or a faster process.

## 2. BIG BUT — follow the turn

A promising result + a warning usually leads to a limitation or concern.
**Look for:** the exact problem after BUT, not just a negative word.

## 3. TWO COLUMNS — compare the right thing

Interior: plants increase. Edge: plants decrease.
**Look for:** “The effect depends on location.” Keep the variable the same.

## 4. TIMELINE — connect the change

Earlier: trait absent. Later: trait appears with evidence of contact.
**Look for:** the route or change supported by the dates and clues.

## 5. UNFAIR TEST — possible false difference

One group gets an easy task; another gets a harder task.
**Look for:** the test may confuse task difficulty with ability.

### USE THE PATTERN TO PREDICT

These common patterns give you a fast starting point. The final sentence tells you exactly what the blank needs.

# Trigger words + trap filters

## BECAUSE / SINCE  give the reason

Ask: “Why is that final claim true?” Use the earlier facts to explain it.

## THEREFORE / SUGGESTING  give the result

Ask: “What follows from these clues together?” Connect the ideas.

## HOWEVER / BUT  track the contrast

Ask: “What changed?” Your ending should respect the new direction.

## THE FIVE-SECOND TRAP CHECK

**Wrong variable:** Text compares location; choice compares size.

**Reversed direction:** Text sends goods into Region A; choice sends them out.

**Extra story:** Choice invents a cost, motive, cause, or comparison.

**Wrong strength:** Choice claims more certainty or a bigger effect than the text supports.

**True detail, wrong job:** Choice repeats a fact but does not complete the final idea.

### HEDGE RADAR

Words like **may, might, could, likely** often fit inference answers. Strong words like **all, never, only** need strong evidence. First match the idea; then check its strength.

# See the answer before A–D

## WARM-UP 1: REMOVE THE BARRIER

A museum charges a high entry fee, which discourages some families from visiting. Next month, the museum will offer free entry on Saturdays. This suggests that _____.

### THREE TINY NOTES

1. High fee keeps some families away.
2. Saturday entry becomes free.
3. More families may visit on Saturdays.

**Why it works:** the new policy removes the stated cost barrier. “Every family will visit” goes further than the clues.

## WARM-UP 2: SPOT THE UNFAIR TEST

A class takes a memory test. One group studies in silence; the other studies next to loud construction. Both groups receive the same test. Lower scores in the second group may reflect _____.

### THREE TINY NOTES

1. Comparing memory scores.
2. BUT noise differs between groups.
3. Noise may affect performance.

*The shortcut: different test conditions can create a difference that looks like a difference in ability.*

# Save time. Keep your confidence.

## Bank the questions you solve efficiently

If a dense passage is slowing you down, choose your best current answer, flag it, and move on. Return within the same module after completing questions you solve more quickly.

## Use the question type, not a fixed number

Find grammar, transitions, or notes questions by their content. Build your order during timed practice so you know what works for you.

## Give hard questions a second pass

When you return, take a fresh look at the relationship. A short T-chart can save more time than rereading every answer repeatedly. Leave an answer for every question.

### HOW TO USE THE WORKED EXAMPLES

Each example has two pages. First, solve the question and write a prediction. Then turn the page for the clues, answer, and elimination reasons. Keep the explanation covered until you try.

## How to use the independent quiz

Complete Questions 1–8 before opening the key. First aim for clear reasoning. On a later attempt, time yourself and track whether your accuracy stays strong.

## After a mistake, fix one habit

Label it: **missed clue / wrong variable / reversal / extra story / strength / timing**. Write one action to use next time. That is how a shortcut becomes a skill.

# Human-Robot Handshake Trust

Read the passage. Predict the ending. Then compare A–D.

In many cultures, a handshake can create trust between people. Engineer João Avelino and his team are designing a robot to shake hands with a human in order to improve human-robot interactions. The robot hand adjusts its movements and pressure to better imitate the feel of a human hand. The researchers want the robot's handshake to feel realistic because _____

Which choice most logically completes the text?

**A)** people are less likely to interact with robots that don't look like humans.

**B)** it's easier to program a robot to perform handshakes than it is to program a robot to perform some other types of greetings.

**C)** the robot in the researchers' study may have uses other than interacting with humans.

**D)** lifelike handshakes may make people more comfortable interacting with robots.

## My prediction:

My answer: _____ My strongest clue: _____

# Answer D: connect the clues

### THE THREE-NOTE SCRATCHPAD

**1. Setup:** Handshakes can create trust.
**2. Development:** The robot copies the movement and pressure of a human hand.
**3. Prediction:** A realistic handshake may help people feel comfortable with the robot.

## Why the answer works

The goal is better human-robot interaction. A lifelike handshake connects the familiar action to trust and comfort.

## CHECK ALL FOUR CHOICES

A changes touch into appearance. The passage does not compare human-looking and nonhuman-looking robots.

B adds a programming-difficulty comparison. It does not explain the need for realism.

C suggests another possible use. That does not explain the stated goal of improving interaction.

D connects realistic touch with greater comfort.

### GOUDA SHORTCUT

BECAUSE asks for the reason behind the final goal.

# Detective Stories & Copyright Barriers

Read the passage. Predict the ending. Then compare A–D.

A collection of detective stories has inspired many successful adaptations, including comics, films, and television programs. For many years, anyone who wanted to adapt the collection had to pay a copyright fee and obtain approval from the copyright holders. The collection has now entered the public domain in the country being discussed. Some journalists predict that the number of adaptations is likely to increase since the end of copyright means that _____

Which choice most logically completes the text?

**A)** The original detective stories will become hard to find.

**B)** People will become more interested in detective stories than they were when the collection was first published.

**C)** producing adaptations will become easier and less expensive.

**D)** The former copyright holders will return fees they collected.

## My prediction:

My answer: _____ My strongest clue: _____

# Answer C: connect the clues

### THE THREE-NOTE SCRATCHPAD

1. **Setup:** Copyright required a fee and approval.
2. **Development:** The copyright barrier ends in the situation described.
3. **Prediction:** Making adaptations becomes easier and cheaper.

## Why the answer works

No fee removes a cost. No required permission removes an approval step. Together, those changes explain the predicted increase.

## CHECK ALL FOUR CHOICES

A predicts a shortage of the books, which is not supported.

B invents a comparison of audience interests across centuries.

C removes both barriers: cost and permission.

D adds refunds. The passage gives no reason to expect them.

### GOUDA SHORTCUT

When a barrier disappears, look for the improvement it allows.

# Mountain Elevation & Metabolic Costs

Read the passage. Predict the ending. Then compare A–D.

Adaptations to cold temperatures have high metabolic costs. It is expensive, in terms of energy use, for land plants and animals to withstand very cold temperatures, and it gets more expensive the colder it gets, which means that the lower the air temperature, the fewer species have evolved to survive it. This factor, in conjunction with the decline in air temperature with increasing elevation, explains the distribution of species diversity in mountain ecosystems: you find fewer species high up a mountain than at the mountain's base because _____

Which choice most logically completes the text?

**A)** there are relatively few environments hospitable to species that are adapted to live in low air temperatures.

**B)** there are relatively few species with the adaptations necessary to tolerate the temperatures at high elevations.

**C)** adaptations that allow plants and animals to survive in rocky environments are metabolically costly.

**D)** some mountain environments are at elevations so high that no plants or animals can survive them.

## My prediction:

My answer: _____ My strongest clue: _____

# Answer B: connect the clues

### THE THREE-NOTE SCRATCHPAD

**1. Setup:** Colder temperatures require costly adaptations; fewer species have them.
**2. Development:** Higher elevations have lower air temperatures.
**3. Prediction:** Fewer species can tolerate the cold at high elevations.

## Why the answer works

Join the two facts: higher mountain → colder air → fewer species adapted to survive there.

## CHECK ALL FOUR CHOICES

A changes “few suitable species” into “few suitable environments.”

B correctly connects cold tolerance with high elevation.

C swaps cold for rocky terrain.

D makes a stronger claim about no life and misses the stated explanation.

### GOUDA SHORTCUT

Link the chain in order. Do not swap the cause and the result.



# Invasive Leafy Spurge & Engineered DNA

Read the passage. Predict the ending. Then compare A–D.

Euphorbia esula (leafy spurge) is a Eurasian plant that has become invasive in North America, where it displaces native vegetation and sickens cattle. E. esula can be controlled with chemical herbicides, but that approach can also kill harmless plants nearby. Recent research on introducing engineered DNA into plant species to inhibit their reproduction may offer a path toward exclusively targeting E. esula, consequently _____

Which choice most logically completes the text?

**A)** making individual E. esula plants more susceptible to existing chemical herbicides.

**B)** enhancing the ecological benefits of E. esula in North America.

**C)** enabling cattle to consume E. esula without becoming sick.

**D)** reducing invasive E. esula numbers without harming other organisms.

## My prediction:

My answer: _____ My strongest clue: _____

# Answer D: connect the clues

### THE THREE-NOTE SCRATCHPAD

**1. Setup:** Leafy spurge damages vegetation and sickens cattle.
**2. Development:** Herbicides harm other plants; the proposed DNA method targets leafy spurge.
**3. Prediction:** Reduce the invasive plant while avoiding harm to other organisms.

## Why the answer works

The new approach inhibits reproduction and targets E. esula specifically. D captures the intended benefit of that targeted approach.

## CHECK ALL FOUR CHOICES

A changes the new mechanism into improving old herbicides.

B adds ecological benefits that the passage does not establish.

C changes population control into making the plant safe to eat.

D connects reduced reproduction with targeted control.

### GOUDA SHORTCUT

New solution + old side effect usually means solve the problem without the side effect.

# Pied Flycatcher Song Dialects

Read the passage. Predict the ending. Then compare A–D.

Songbirds learn to respond to and imitate their species' songs from an early age. With each generation, small differences are introduced that result in distinct variations—called dialects—among geographically isolated populations of the same species. A research study examined whether twelve-day-old Ficedula hypoleuca (pied flycatcher) nestlings prefer local dialects over the unfamiliar dialects of nonlocal F. hypoleuca populations: the more begging calls the nestlings made in response to a song, the stronger their preference. The researchers found that nestlings produced more begging calls in response to their own dialect than to nonlocal dialects. Since song preference plays a role in songbird mate selection, the finding suggests that _____

Which choice most logically completes the text?

**A)** F. hypoleuca nestlings' preference for their own dialect likely disappears as they mature to promote socialization between different F. hypoleuca populations.

**B)** F. hypoleuca nestlings who show an early preference for their own dialect are likely to receive more food from their caretakers than nestlings who show no preferences among any F. hypoleuca dialects.

**C)** F. hypoleuca nestlings' preference for their own dialect likely drives them when they mature to reproduce with other F. hypoleuca from local rather than nonlocal populations.

**D)** F. hypoleuca nestlings show a preference for both local F. hypoleuca dialects and the songs of other local songbirds over the songs of nonlocal birds of any species.

## My prediction:

My answer: _____ My strongest clue: _____

# Answer C: connect the clues

### THE THREE-NOTE SCRATCHPAD

1. **Setup:** Young birds prefer their own local dialect.
2. **Development:** Song preference helps guide mate selection.
3. **Prediction:** They will likely choose local mates when they mature.

## Why the answer works

The last sentence supplies the bridge: song preference matters for choosing a mate. Connect that bridge to the local-dialect preference.

## CHECK ALL FOUR CHOICES

A invents the disappearance of the preference.

B uses begging calls to tell a new story about food.

C links local preference with later mate choice.

D introduces other species and misses mate selection.

### GOUDA SHORTCUT

Use the final sentence as a bridge between the result and the conclusion.

# Salt Marsh Crabs

Read the passage. Predict the ending. Then compare A–D.

Tides can deposit large quantities of dead vegetation within a salt marsh, smothering healthy plants and leaving a salt panne—a depression devoid of plants that tends to trap standing water—in the marsh's interior. Ecologist Kathryn Beheshti and colleagues found that burrowing crabs living within these pannes improve drainage by loosening the soil, leading the pannes to shrink as marsh plants move back in. At salt marsh edges, however, crab-induced soil loosening can promote marsh loss by accelerating erosion, suggesting that the burrowing action of crabs _____

Which choice most logically completes the text?

**A)** can be beneficial to marshes with small pannes but can be harmful to marshes with large pannes.

**B)** may promote increases in marsh plants or decreases in marsh plants, depending on the crabs' location.

**C)** tends to be more heavily concentrated in areas of marsh interiors with standing water than at marsh edges.

**D)** varies in intensity depending on the size of the panne relative to the size of the surrounding marsh.

## My prediction:

My answer: _____ My strongest clue: _____

# Answer B: connect the clues

### THE THREE-NOTE SCRATCHPAD

**1. Setup:** Inside pannes, crab burrowing improves drainage and helps plants return.
**2. Development:** At marsh edges, it increases erosion and marsh loss.
**3. Prediction:** Burrowing can help or hurt marsh plants depending on location.

## Why the answer works

The same action has different effects in two places. The deciding variable is location, not size or intensity.

## CHECK ALL FOUR CHOICES

A swaps location for panne size.

B captures both effects and the correct variable.

C compares how concentrated burrowing is, not its effect.

D invents a link between intensity and relative size.

### GOUDA SHORTCUT

Two locations + opposite effects → the effect depends on location.

| INSIDE PANNES | MARSH EDGES |
| --- | --- |
| Better drainage | More erosion |
| Plants return | Plants lost |

# White-Faced Capuchin Monkeys

Read the passage. Predict the ending. Then compare A–D.

In a study of the cognitive abilities of white-faced capuchin monkeys (Cebus imitator), researchers neglected to control for the physical difficulty of the tasks they used to evaluate the monkeys. The cognitive abilities of monkeys given problems requiring little dexterity, such as sliding a panel to retrieve food, were judged by the same criteria as were those of monkeys given physically demanding problems, such as unscrewing a bottle and inserting a straw. The results of the study, therefore, _____

Which choice most logically completes the text?

**A)** could suggest that there are differences in cognitive ability among the monkeys even though such differences may not actually exist.

**B)** are useful for identifying tasks that the monkeys lack the cognitive capacity to perform but not for identifying tasks that the monkeys can perform.

**C)** should not be taken as indicative of the cognitive abilities of any monkey species other than C. imitator.

**D)** reveal more about the monkeys' cognitive abilities when solving artificial problems than when solving problems encountered in the wild.

## My prediction:

My answer: _____ My strongest clue: _____

# Answer A: connect the clues

### THE THREE-NOTE SCRATCHPAD

**1. Setup:** Researchers want to measure cognitive ability.
**2. Development:** They compare tasks with different physical demands using the same criteria.
**3. Prediction:** Results may make physical differences look like differences in intelligence.

## Why the answer works

A monkey can struggle because a task requires more dexterity. Its score could then look like evidence of lower cognitive ability.

## CHECK ALL FOUR CHOICES

A identifies the false difference the test could create.

B treats failure as evidence of low cognitive capacity, ignoring physical difficulty.

C shifts to other species instead of addressing the flawed comparison.

D adds an artificial-versus-wild comparison.

### GOUDA SHORTCUT

Uncontrolled factor → results may confuse that factor with the ability being measured.

# The Nagoya Protocol

Read the passage. Predict the ending. Then compare A–D.

Ratified by more than 90 countries, the Nagoya Protocol is an international agreement ensuring that Indigenous communities are compensated when their agricultural resources and knowledge of wild plants and animals are utilized by agricultural corporations. However, the protocol has shortcomings. For example, it allows corporations to insist that their agreements with communities to conduct research on the commercial uses of the communities' resources and knowledge remain confidential. Therefore, some Indigenous advocates express concern that the protocol may have the unintended effect of _____

Which choice most logically completes the text?

**A)** diminishing the monetary reward that corporations might derive from their agreements with Indigenous communities.

**B)** limiting the research that corporations conduct on the resources of the Indigenous communities with which they have signed agreements.

**C)** preventing independent observers from determining whether the agreements guarantee equitable compensation for Indigenous communities.

**D)** discouraging Indigenous communities from learning new methods for harvesting plants and animals from their corporate partners.

## My prediction:

My answer: _____ My strongest clue: _____

# Answer C: connect the clues

### THE THREE-NOTE SCRATCHPAD

**1. Setup:** The agreement is meant to ensure fair compensation.
**2. Development:** Corporations can keep their agreements with communities confidential.
**3. Prediction:** Outside observers may be unable to check whether payment is fair.

## Why the answer works

If the terms are secret, independent observers cannot inspect whether those terms guarantee equitable compensation.

## CHECK ALL FOUR CHOICES

A focuses on corporate profit rather than checking community compensation.

B adds a claim about the amount of research.

C explains the direct consequence of secrecy.

D invents an effect on learning harvesting methods.

### GOUDA SHORTCUT

A policy loophole usually points to the specific job the policy can no longer guarantee.

# Haudenosaunee Farming Techniques

Read the passage. Predict the ending. Then compare A–D.

In the early nineteenth century, some Euro-American farmers in the northeastern United States used agricultural techniques developed by the Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) people centuries earlier, but it seems that few of those farmers had actually seen Haudenosaunee farms firsthand. Barring the possibility of several farmers of the same era independently developing techniques that the Haudenosaunee people had already invented, these facts most strongly suggest that _____

Which choice most logically completes the text?

**A)** those farmers learned the techniques from other people who were more directly influenced by Haudenosaunee practices.

**B)** the crops typically cultivated by Euro-American farmers in the northeastern United States were not well suited to Haudenosaunee farming techniques.

**C)** Haudenosaunee farming techniques were widely used in regions outside the northeastern United States.

**D)** Euro-American farmers only began to recognize the benefits of Haudenosaunee farming techniques late in the nineteenth century.

## My prediction:

My answer: _____ My strongest clue: _____

# Answer A: connect the clues

### THE THREE-NOTE SCRATCHPAD

**1. Setup:** Farmers used Haudenosaunee methods but rarely observed the farms firsthand.
**2. Development:** The text rules out inventing the techniques independently.
**3. Prediction:** They likely learned through people familiar with those methods.

## Why the answer works

Secondhand learning explains how techniques spread without direct observation or independent invention.

## CHECK ALL FOUR CHOICES

A supplies the missing route: other people passed on the knowledge.

B claims the methods were poorly suited, which the text does not establish.

C adds an unsupported geographical conclusion.

D adds a claim about late recognition of benefits; the passage describes early use, not when farmers recognized the benefits.

### GOUDA SHORTCUT

No direct contact + no independent invention → look for an intermediary.

# Siberian Domestic Dogs

Read the passage. Predict the ending. Then compare A–D.

Tatiana R. Feuerborn and colleagues analyzed the genomes of more than a hundred domestic dogs from sites in Siberia dating from 11,000 years ago to the present. They found that the dogs constituted a genetically isolated population of Arctic breeds until approximately 2,000 years ago, at which point there was substantial interbreeding with Near Eastern dog breeds. Furthermore, beginning around 2,000 years ago, some sites contain artifacts consistent with a Near East origin, like glass beads, but the people show no evidence of having traveled extensively outside Siberia. From this, Feuerborn and colleagues concluded that around 2,000 years ago _____

Which choice most logically completes the text?

**A)** dogs and artifacts like glass beads began to be transported from the Near East to Siberia.

**B)** people from Siberia began to reach the Near East, where they acquired dogs and artifacts such as glass beads.

**C)** glass beads and other artifacts from the Near East began to be exchanged for dogs from Siberia.

**D)** dogs from the Near East began to be exchanged for glass beads and other artifacts from Siberia.

## My prediction:

My answer: _____ My strongest clue: _____

# Answer A: connect the clues

### THE THREE-NOTE SCRATCHPAD

**1. Setup:** Siberian dogs were genetically isolated until about 2,000 years ago.
**2. Development:** Near Eastern dog ancestry and artifacts then appear; extensive outward travel is not evidenced.
**3. Prediction:** Near Eastern dogs and objects were transported into Siberia.

## Why the answer works

The incoming items explain both the new dog ancestry and the artifacts. The passage does not establish that Siberian residents made the journey themselves.

## CHECK ALL FOUR CHOICES

A explains both types of incoming evidence.

B assigns the travel to Siberians without supporting evidence.

C sends Siberian dogs away, leaving the incoming Near Eastern ancestry unexplained.

D reverses the origin of the artifacts.

### GOUDA SHORTCUT

Track what arrived, where it came from, and the direction of movement.



# Ancestral Puebloan Turkeys

Read the passage. Predict the ending. Then compare A–D.

Ancestral Puebloans, the civilization from which present-day Pueblo tribes descended, emerged as early as 1500 B.C.E. in an area of what is now the southwestern United States and dispersed suddenly in the late 1200s C.E., abandoning established villages with systems for farming crops and turkeys. Recent analysis comparing turkey remains at Mesa Verde, one such village in southern Colorado, to samples from modern turkey populations in the Rio Grande Valley of north central New Mexico determined that the latter birds descended in part from turkeys cultivated at Mesa Verde, with shared genetic markers appearing only after 1280. Thus, researchers concluded that _____

Which choice most logically completes the text?

**A)** conditions of the terrains in the Rio Grande Valley and Mesa Verde had greater similarities in the past than they do today.

**B)** some Ancestral Puebloans migrated to the Rio Grande Valley in the late 1200s and carried farming practices with them.

**C)** Indigenous peoples living in the Rio Grande Valley primarily planted crops and did not cultivate turkeys before 1280.

**D)** the Ancestral Puebloans of Mesa Verde likely adopted the farming practices of Indigenous peoples living in other regions.

## My prediction:

My answer: _____ My strongest clue: _____

# Answer B: connect the clues

### THE THREE-NOTE SCRATCHPAD

**1. Setup:** Ancestral Puebloans left established villages in the late 1200s.
**2. Development:** Mesa Verde turkey ancestry appears in the Rio Grande Valley after 1280.
**3. Prediction:** Some people moved to the valley and carried farming practices with them.

## Why the answer works

The dates align with the movement of a domesticated animal lineage. B links the population movement with the farming evidence.

## CHECK ALL FOUR CHOICES

A introduces terrain similarity, which the text never evaluates.

B connects the departure, destination, dates, and farming evidence.

C makes an unsupported claim about what people farmed before 1280.

D reverses the proposed direction of influence.

### GOUDA SHORTCUT

Matching dates + a shared trait can point to movement between places.



# Mediterranean Biodiversity Censuses

Read the passage. Predict the ending. Then compare A–D.

Marta Coll and colleagues' 2010 Mediterranean Sea biodiversity census reported approximately 17,000 species, nearly double the number reported in Carlo Bianchi and Carla Morri's 2000 census—a difference only partly attributable to the description of new invertebrate species in the interim. Another factor is that the morphological variability of microorganisms is poorly understood compared to that of vertebrates, invertebrates, plants, and algae, creating uncertainty about how to evaluate microorganisms as species. Researchers' decisions on such matters therefore can be highly consequential. Indeed, the two censuses reported similar counts of vertebrate, plant, and algal species, suggesting that _____

Which choice most logically completes the text?

**A)** Coll and colleagues reported a much higher number of species than Bianchi and Morri did largely due to the inclusion of invertebrate species that had not been described at the time of Bianchi and Morri's census.

**B)** some differences observed in microorganisms may have been treated as variations within species by Bianchi and Morri but treated as indicative of distinct species by Coll and colleagues.

**C)** Bianchi and Morri may have been less sensitive to the degree of morphological variation displayed within a typical species of microorganism than Coll and colleagues were.

**D)** the absence of clarity regarding how to differentiate among species of microorganisms may have resulted in Coll and colleagues underestimating the number of microorganism species.

## My prediction:

My answer: _____ My strongest clue: _____

# Answer B: connect the clues

### THE THREE-NOTE SCRATCHPAD

**1. Setup:** The later census reports nearly twice as many species.
**2. Development:** New invertebrates explain only part; microorganism boundaries are uncertain, while several other groups have similar counts.
**3. Prediction:** The studies may have grouped microorganism differences differently.

## Why the answer works

If one team groups different forms within one species and the other separates them, their totals can differ. B explains the discrepancy using the classification issue in the text.

## CHECK ALL FOUR CHOICES

A attributes the increase largely to new invertebrates without support for that size of contribution; it misses the classification evidence.

B offers the supported difference in how the teams counted species.

C points in the wrong direction: less allowance for variation within a species would tend to split groups, not explain the lower count.

D claims an undercount relative to the true number. The passage gives no true total to establish that.

### GOUDA SHORTCUT

Different totals + unclear category boundaries → check how each team grouped the categories.

| EARLIER CENSUS | LATER CENSUS |
| --- | --- |
| Groups forms together | May split forms apart |
| Lower count | Higher count |

# The Blurbogs Limit: A Fictional Logic Lab

Read the passage. Predict the ending. Then compare A–D.

Fictional demonstration: unfamiliar names are labels. Follow the logic.

Lorem Ipsum and her colleagues discovered a breakthrough enzyme recombinant that produces cytosomes at a rate that biochemists had previously thought impossible. Experts had long believed that enzyme matriculation rates had an upper limit, known as the Blurbogs line after Cassandra Blurbogs, who first calculated the limit in 1954. Several experiments had corroborated the Blurbogs line prior to Ipsum’s findings, so many biochemists—including Ipsum herself—have cautioned against discarding the old theory too quickly. This suggests that _____

Which choice most logically completes the text?

**A)** Blurbogs prematurely claimed to have found the enzyme matriculation limit.

**B)** additional research may show Ipsum’s findings to be based on faulty data.

**C)** Ipsum’s methods are more reliable than those in previous experiments.

**D)** the cytosomes produced by Ipsum’s recombinant are likely to decay.

## My prediction:

My answer: _____ My strongest clue: _____

# Answer B: connect the clues

### THE THREE-NOTE SCRATCHPAD

**1. Setup:** A new result appears to exceed a previously accepted limit.
**2. Development:** Earlier experiments supported the old limit; even the new researcher urges caution.
**3. Prediction:** More research may reveal a problem with the new result.

## Why the answer works

B fits the caution: the surprising result may rest on faulty data, so the old theory should not be discarded too quickly.

## CHECK ALL FOUR CHOICES

A blames the older researcher without support.

B explains why researchers remain cautious about the new result.

C asserts superior methods that the passage does not establish.

D invents a claim about decay.

### GOUDA SHORTCUT

Breakthrough + caution usually leads to a possible weakness in the new finding.

# Your turn: Question 1

Original practice scenario • Solve all eight before checking pages 43–46.

In urban architecture, reflective glass facades are popular because they maximize natural indoor lighting. However, ornithologists have documented that songbirds frequently collide with these windows because the glass mirrors surrounding trees and sky, creating the illusion of open flight paths. Architect Elena Rostova and her team are testing a new window coating embedded with microscopic ultraviolet (UV) grid patterns that are invisible to the human eye but brightly visible to songbirds. Rostova's team expects the coating to be widely adopted by commercial building developers because _____

Which choice most logically completes the text?

**A)** the coating is likely to make nearby trees less attractive as nesting sites for songbirds.

**B)** it is less expensive to manufacture glass with ultraviolet coatings than to manufacture traditional reflective glass.

**C)** the coating may reduce bird collisions without compromising the clear views and natural light that human occupants value.

**D)** commercial building developers are legally required in all cities to replace reflective glass facades with nonreflective materials.

## My three notes:

My answer: _____ Confidence: high / medium / low

# Your turn: Question 2

Original practice scenario • Solve all eight before checking pages 43–46.

During the nineteenth century, deep-sea cartography relied on weighted hemp ropes lowered from stationary ships to measure ocean floor depth at single points—a process so slow that mapping a single submarine canyon could take months and required calm weather. In the 1920s, naval engineers introduced acoustic echo sounders, which transmitted continuous sound pulses from moving vessels and calculated depth automatically from the returning echoes in a wider range of surface conditions. Historians of oceanography note that the number of charted deep-sea trenches expanded dramatically in the 1930s, since the adoption of acoustic echo sounders meant that _____

Which choice most logically completes the text?

**A)** earlier rope-based maps could be corrected without collecting any additional depth measurements.

**B)** ocean-floor mapping could be conducted much more rapidly and under a wider range of weather conditions than was previously possible.

**C)** the depth of a trench could now be inferred from its surface appearance without measuring it.

**D)** sound pulses traveled faster through cold trench water than through warm surface water.

## My three notes:

My answer: _____ Confidence: high / medium / low

# Your turn: Question 3

Original practice scenario • Solve all eight before checking pages 43–46.

Agrilus planipennis (the emerald ash borer) is an invasive beetle whose larvae tunnel beneath the bark of North American ash trees, cutting off water transport and killing the trees within a few years. Broad-spectrum systemic insecticides applied to soil around ash trees effectively kill A. planipennis larvae, but those chemicals are also absorbed by nearby flowering plants, poisoning native bumblebee populations. Recently, entomologists identified a species- specific RNA molecule that silences a gene essential for molting only in A. planipennis, consequently offering a way to _____

Which choice most logically completes the text?

**A)** accelerate the growth of native flowering plants that grow near infected ash trees.

**B)** make A. planipennis larvae more vulnerable to broad-spectrum soil insecticides.

**C)** allow ash trees to transport water even after their bark has been tunneled by beetle larvae.

**D)** suppress invasive A. planipennis populations without harming native pollinators such as bumblebees.

## My three notes:

My answer: _____ Confidence: high / medium / low

# Your turn: Question 4

Original practice scenario • Solve all eight before checking pages 43–46.

Coral larvae (planulae) swim freely in the ocean before settling permanently onto a reef surface, guided by acoustic and chemical cues emitted by healthy reefs. Marine biologist Dr. Tariq Al-Mansoor and colleagues tested whether twelve-hour-old Acropora millepora larvae distinguish between water collected from reefs dominated by crustose coralline algae (CCA) and water from reefs overgrown by fleshy macroalgae: the more frequently larvae attached to a test slide, the stronger their settlement preference. The team observed significantly higher attachment rates in water from CCA-dominated reefs than in water from macroalgae-dominated reefs. Because successful larval settlement is essential for reef recovery after bleaching events, this finding implies that _____

Which choice most logically completes the text?

**A)** A. millepora larvae lose their sensitivity to chemical cues once they attach permanently to a reef surface.

**B)** bleached reefs that become overgrown by fleshy macroalgae may recover more slowly than bleached reefs where crustose coralline algae remain abundant.

**C)** fleshy macroalgae emit acoustic cues that are louder than the acoustic cues emitted by crustose coralline algae.

**D)** A. millepora larvae prefer water from CCA-dominated reefs only when the water temperature is below the threshold that causes coral bleaching.

## My three notes:

My answer: _____ Confidence: high / medium / low

# Your turn: Question 5

Original practice scenario • Solve all eight before checking pages 43–46.

Beavers (Castor canadensis) construct wooden dams across streams, slowing water flow and creating deep ponds upstream. Hydrologist Dr. Maya Lin and her colleagues found that in high-altitude mountain headwaters, beaver ponds trap nutrient-rich sediment and raise the surrounding water table, allowing drought-sensitive willow shrubs to flourish along the banks. In flat lowland floodplains, however, beaver dams can submerge expansive meadows for years, suffocating the root systems of native riparian trees and causing widespread die-offs, indicating that dam construction by beavers _____

Which choice most logically completes the text?

**A)** tends to occur more frequently in high-altitude mountain headwaters than in flat lowland floodplains.

**B)** is beneficial to streams with small beaver populations but harmful to streams with large beaver populations.

**C)** can either enhance or diminish riverside woody vegetation, depending on the topography of the area where the dam is built.

**D)** varies in structural durability depending on whether the dam is constructed from willow shrubs or lowland riparian trees.

## My three notes:

My answer: _____ Confidence: high / medium / low

# Your turn: Question 6

Original practice scenario • Solve all eight before checking pages 43–46.

In an evaluation of the foraging memory of Eurasian jays (Garrulus glandarius), researchers failed to standardize the olfactory visibility of the food caches the birds were asked to relocate. Jays tested in trials using strongly scented roasted peanuts buried in dry sand were scored using the same memory-accuracy rubric as jays tested in trials using odorless wax-coated seeds buried in damp peat moss. The conclusions of the evaluation, therefore, _____

Which choice most logically completes the text?

**A)** might attribute differences in cache-recovery rates to variations in spatial memory among the jays when those differences actually reflect variations in scent cues.

**B)** demonstrate that Eurasian jays rely exclusively on smell rather than spatial memory when foraging for food in the wild.

**C)** are valid for comparing memory accuracy within G. glandarius populations but cannot be generalized to other corvid species.

**D)** prove that damp peat moss degrades the cognitive abilities of foraging birds more rapidly than dry sand does.

## My three notes:

My answer: _____ Confidence: high / medium / low

# Your turn: Question 7

Original practice scenario • Solve all eight before checking pages 43–46.

Archaeologist Dr. Kwame Mensah and colleagues examined copper metallurgical tools from settlements in the Kalahari Basin dating from 500 C.E. to 1700 C.E. They determined that tools forged at these sites relied exclusively on local surface malachite ores until approximately 1350 C.E., after which copper tools in the basin began exhibiting distinctive trace-lead isotope signatures matching deep-shaft mines in the Copperbelt region 900 kilometers to the north. Moreover, post-1350 C.E. Kalahari sites contain carved ivory pendants characteristic of Copperbelt artisans, yet skeletal isotope analyses of Kalahari residents show they spent their entire lives within the local basin. From these findings, Mensah and colleagues concluded that around 1350 C.E. _____

Which choice most logically completes the text?

**A)** residents of the Kalahari Basin began traveling to the Copperbelt region to mine deep-shaft copper ores and carve ivory pendants.

**B)** Kalahari artisans began producing Copperbelt-style ivory objects using only locally obtained materials.

**C)** trade networks or travelers began bringing Copperbelt copper and ivory artifacts into the Kalahari Basin.

**D)** Kalahari metallurgists began exporting their local malachite tools to the Copperbelt in exchange for ivory pendants.

## My three notes:

My answer: _____ Confidence: high / medium / low

# Your turn: Question 8

Original practice scenario • Solve all eight before checking pages 43–46.

Dr. Henrik Lindqvist and colleagues' 2018 linguistic survey of the Caucasus mountain region cataloged 64 distinct indigenous languages, nearly 40 percent more than the 46 languages recorded in Dr. Sofia Orlova's 1995 survey—a discrepancy only partly explained by the inclusion of three remote village communities that Orlova's team had been unable to visit. A broader challenge in linguistics is that the boundary between a regional dialect and a separate language is poorly standardized for unwritten speech varieties, making linguists' classification thresholds highly influential. Indeed, the two surveys recorded identical inventories of languages with established written scripts, suggesting that _____

Which choice most logically completes the text?

**A)** Lindqvist and colleagues reported a higher language total because their survey counted more languages with established written scripts.

**B)** some unwritten speech varieties that Orlova classified as dialects of a single language may have been classified as separate languages by Lindqvist and colleagues.

**C)** Orlova may have been less willing to group mutually intelligible regional speech varieties under a single language label than Lindqvist and colleagues were.

**D)** the lack of standardized criteria for unwritten speech varieties likely caused Lindqvist and colleagues to undercount the true number of languages in the Caucasus.

## My three notes:

My answer: _____ Confidence: high / medium / low

# Questions 1 & 2: explained

## QUESTION 1 — C

**Why it works:** Human occupants value natural light. Birds mistake reflections for open paths. The coating is visible to birds but not humans, so it may help birds avoid the windows while preserving the benefit for people.

**Why the others fail:** A invents a nesting effect. B invents lower manufacturing cost. D invents a legal requirement in every city.

### SHORTCUT TO REUSE

Solve the new problem while keeping the old benefit.

## QUESTION 2 — B

**Why it works:** Ropes were slow, required stationary ships, and depended on calm weather. Echo sounders work from moving vessels and in a wider range of conditions. B combines both improvements.

**Why the others fail:** A claims maps can be corrected without new measurements. C removes measurement altogether. D adds an unsupported claim about sound speed.

### SHORTCUT TO REUSE

Remove two barriers → look for an answer covering both.

# Questions 3 & 4: explained

## QUESTION 3 D

**Why it works:** The old insecticide kills the pest but harms pollinators. The new RNA targets a gene essential for molting only in the pest, offering targeted population control.

**Why the others fail:** A invents faster plant growth. B changes the mechanism into improving insecticide sensitivity. C claims damaged tree transport is repaired.

### SHORTCUT TO REUSE

Target the pest without the old collateral damage.

## QUESTION 4 B

**Why it works:** The larvae settle more readily in CCA water. Settlement is essential for reef recovery. Reefs overgrown by macroalgae may therefore recover more slowly.

**Why the others fail:** A invents loss of sensitivity after attachment. C adds an acoustic-volume claim. D adds a temperature condition the study did not test.

### SHORTCUT TO REUSE

Study result + final bridge → likely consequence.

# Questions 5 & 6: explained

## QUESTION 5 — C

**Why it works:** Mountain ponds help willow shrubs flourish. Lowland dams can kill riverside trees. C captures both outcomes and links them to topography.

**Why the others fail:** A compares frequency. B swaps topography for beaver population size. D changes the focus to dam durability.

### SHORTCUT TO REUSE

Two environments, different effects: keep the same deciding variable.

## QUESTION 6 — A

**Why it works:** The test aims to measure memory, but scent cues differ. The jays might recover food using smell, making scent differences look like memory differences.

**Why the others fail:** B claims exclusive reliance on smell in the wild. C declares the comparison valid despite the flaw. D invents damage to cognition.

### SHORTCUT TO REUSE

An uncontrolled factor can imitate a difference in ability.

# Questions 7 & 8: explained

## QUESTION 7 C

**Why it works:** Northern copper signatures and northern-style ivory appear around the same time. Residents stayed local in the scenario. Incoming trade or travelers explain both findings.

**Why the others fail:** A conflicts with the stated lifetime-location evidence. B explains style using local materials but not the northern copper signature. D sends local copper out and fails to explain the northern copper arriving.

### SHORTCUT TO REUSE

Follow the origin and direction of the incoming evidence.

## QUESTION 8 B

**Why it works:** The surveys agree on written languages. The difference is partly linked to coverage and may also reflect how unwritten speech varieties were classified. Splitting dialects into languages can increase the total.

**Why the others fail:** A contradicts the identical written-language inventories. C reverses the grouping logic: less willingness to group would tend to raise the earlier count. D asserts an undercount without a known true total.

### SHORTCUT TO REUSE

When category boundaries are unclear, compare grouping decisions.

# Your paragraph-completion checklist

## 1. READ THE WHOLE IDEA

Read from the start. Turn dense wording into simple meaning.

## 2. SAVE THE RELATIONSHIP

Problem → solution. BUT → turn. Two groups → compare. Dates → change. Unfair test → possible false difference.

## 3. READ THE TRIGGER

BECAUSE asks why. THEREFORE asks what follows. HOWEVER signals a change.

## 4. PREDICT A SMALL ENDING

Combine the important clues in one short sentence.

## 5. ELIMINATE THE TRAPS

Wrong variable? Reversed direction? Extra story? Wrong strength? True detail that misses the final job?

## 6. MATCH THE MEANING

The right answer often uses new words for your predicted idea. Cautious wording is a useful clue when the evidence is cautious.

## 7. CHECK, CHOOSE, MOVE

Confirm the answer against the text. If stuck, flag it and return within the module.

### THE GOUDA FINISH

Do not invent a new story. Complete the story the evidence already tells.