Gouda Academy

DIGITAL SAT SUPER FINAL REVISION

READING & WRITING

November 2026 Edition



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01 Subject and verb

Marine ecologist Tomás Herrera, whose fieldwork centers on the kelp forests off the coast of Baja California, _____ that rising ocean temperatures have allowed sea urchin populations in the region to grow largely unchecked.

Which choice completes the text so that it conforms to the conventions of Standard English?

A) argues
B) argue
C) are arguing
D) have argued

02 Modifier placement

Stretching more than 1,400 miles along Australia's northeastern coast, _____

Which choice completes the text so that it conforms to the conventions of Standard English?

A) scientists have identified more than 400 species of hard coral in the Great Barrier Reef.
B) the Great Barrier Reef is the world's largest coral reef system and is home to more than 400 species of hard coral.
C) more than 400 species of hard coral make their home in the Great Barrier Reef, the world's largest coral reef system.
D) the Great Barrier Reef's more than 400 species of hard coral have made it the world's largest coral reef system.

03 Sentence boundaries and interruptions

During the investigation of a laboratory fire, officials reconstructed the accident almost entirely from one technician's _____ the witness was mistaken, officials initially accepted her account.

Which choice completes the text so that it conforms to the conventions of Standard English?

A) testimony, though as later records revealed,
B) testimony. Though, as later records revealed
C) testimony. Though, as later records revealed,
D) testimony, though, as later records revealed,

04 Punctuation with however

Santiago Ramón y Cajal was a Spanish neuroscientist best known for proposing the "neuron theory," which states that the brain consists of individual nerve cells which are separate and distinct. Cajal did not make this discovery _____ he worked closely with his student Rafael Lorente de Nó to perform crucial investigations on the nervous system.

Which choice completes the text so that it conforms to the conventions of Standard English?

A) alone, however;
B) alone; however,
C) alone, however
D) alone, however,

05 Sentence boundaries

In 1854, a clipper ship called the Flying Cloud entered San Francisco _____ left New York Harbor under the guidance of Captain Josiah Perkins Creesy and his wife, navigator Eleanor Creesy, a mere 89 days and 8 hours earlier, the celebrated ship set a record that would stand for 135 years.

Which choice completes the text so that it conforms to the conventions of Standard English?

A) Bay and having
B) Bay. Having
C) Bay, having
D) Bay having

06 Verb tense

Nanoengineers have synthesized gadolinium nanoparticles that are used to enhance the visibility of specific cells in MRI scans. As nanotechnology evolves, medical technology _____ to evolve as well.

Which choice completes the text so that it conforms to the conventions of Standard English?

A) would likely have continued
B) had probably continued
C) will likely continue
D) had likely been continuing

07 Colon before a list

The human body has three types of muscle _____ cardiac, and skeletal. The sartorius is a skeletal muscle - of which the body contains more than five hundred - and it helps with flexing the leg.

Which choice completes the text so that it conforms to the conventions of Standard English?

A) tissue smooth,
B) tissue; smooth,
C) tissue: smooth,
D) tissue, and smooth,

08 Names and titles

Although sound cannot travel through the vacuum of space, measurements collected near planets can be converted into audible tones. Intrigued by the resulting cacophony, experimental _____ wove signals from Mars and Neptune into an orchestral composition, giving disparate planetary datasets a shared musical identity.

Which choice completes the text so that it conforms to the conventions of Standard English?

A) musicians Lena Ortiz and Felix Chen
B) musicians Lena Ortiz and Felix Chen,
C) musicians; Lena Ortiz and Felix Chen
D) musicians, Lena Ortiz and Felix Chen

09 Words in context

To estimate historical wildfire frequency, ecologists sometimes examine tree rings for scars left by past fires. But because a scar forms only when a tree survives a fire and is wounded in a particular way, the absence of scars in a given decade cannot _____ the possibility that a fire occurred then.

Which choice completes the text with the most logical and precise word or phrase?

A) preclude
B) illuminate
C) approximate
D) magnify

10 Meaning in context

The following text is adapted from J.M. Barrie's novel Peter Pan. Peter, a young boy who can fly, is captaining a ship.

Captain Pan calculated, after consulting the ship's chart, that if this weather lasted they should reach the Azores about the 18th of June, after which it would save time to fly.

As used in the text, what does the word "consulting" most nearly mean?

A) Advising
B) Convincing
C) Considering
D) Obstructing

11 Words in context

In response to John Burroughs blasting fellow nature writers for sacrificing scientific objectivity to sentimentality, the celebrated ornithological field guide author Mabel Osgood Wright _____, conceding that some of her peers had strayed too far from demonstrable fact but maintaining that empiricism and imaginative expression weren't mutually exclusive in the genre of nature writing.

Which choice completes the text with the most logical and precise word or phrase?

A) staked out a middle ground
B) proposed a reluctant compromise
C) cultivated deliberate ambiguity
D) pretended to stay undecided for tactical reasons

12 Sentence function

Astronomers are confident that the star Betelgeuse will eventually consume all the helium in its core and explode in a supernova. They are much less confident, however, about when this will happen, since that depends on internal characteristics of Betelgeuse that are largely unknown. Astrophysicist Sarafina El-Badry Nance and colleagues recently investigated whether acoustic waves in the star could be used to determine internal stellar states but concluded that this method could not sufficiently reveal Betelgeuse's internal characteristics to allow its evolutionary state to be firmly fixed.

Which choice best describes the function of the second sentence in the overall structure of the text?

A) It describes a serious limitation of the method used by Nance and colleagues.

B) It presents the central finding reported by Nance and colleagues.

C) It identifies the problem that Nance and colleagues attempted to solve but did not.

D) It explains how the work of Nance and colleagues was received by others in the field.

13 Overall structure

President Richard Nixon is most famous for his participation in the 1970s Watergate political scandal, a convoluted tale of criminality and eroded ethics involving a constellation of associates such as Chief of Staff H.R. "Bob" Haldeman and former CIA officer James W. McCord. But Nixon's legacy is complex: he has been praised for his role in affirming the sovereignty of tribal nations, and he once made an attempt at reforming United States health care policy that is arguably a precursor to the Affordable Care Act, which became law during the Barack Obama administration.

Which choice best describes the overall structure of the text?

A) An assertion about a historical figure is made, and then evidence both for and against that assertion is presented.

B) A set of historical figures is introduced, followed by arguments for why one deserves greater significance than the rest.

C) An achievement of a historical figure is described, and then reasons why that achievement is often disregarded by historians are suggested.

D) Information supporting a particular perception of a historical figure is provided, and then additional facts are offered suggesting that this perception is an oversimplification.

14 Main idea

From zebras to earwigs, many animals practice some form of brood care (caring for offspring). Chenyang Cai and team claim to have found the earliest evidence of this behavior in insects in 151.2-million-year-old remains from the Haifanggou Formation in China, a location that has yielded many fossils, including those of carrion beetles. Cai and team examined 143 specimens of the extinct water boatman species Karataviella popovi and noted twenty-six individuals that appear to carry eggs on one of their legs. This finding establishes brood care in insects approximately 45 million years earlier than previously known.

Which choice best states the main idea of the text?

A) Cai and team's study of K. popovi fossils suggests that brood care in insects began earlier than formerly established.

B) The Haifanggou Formation contains more insect fossils than any other site in China.

C) Studies indicate that carrion beetles lived where the Haifanggou Formation now lies well before K. popovi did.

D) Cai and team concluded that K. popovi likely carried their offspring on one of their legs.

15 Main idea

A coherent account of a disputed event may influence jurors differently depending on the strength of the evidence. Yet an experiment that varies narrative coherence while testing only one level of evidence strength cannot establish whether the effect of coherence differs between weak and strong evidence. To address this limitation, a research team designed a mock-jury experiment in which both the strength of the evidence and the coherence of the accompanying narrative varied independently. The researchers' central question was whether narrative coherence had a greater effect when the evidence was equivocal than when it was compelling.

Which choice best states the main idea of the text?

A) A research team developed an experiment to determine whether narrative coherence influences jurors' decisions more strongly than the strength of the evidence does.

B) A research team designed an experiment to explain why narrative coherence has a greater influence on jurors when evidence is equivocal than when it is compelling.

C) A research team refined earlier investigations by examining whether narrative coherence retains its persuasive effect when the strength of the evidence is held constant.

D) A research team sought to clarify the influence of narrative coherence on jurors' decisions by examining how that influence might vary with the strength of the evidence.

16 Main purpose

A colonial viceroy might construe a drop in grain-tax riots as proof that harsher garrison policing has won a prefecture's loyalty. Yet surface quiescence is ambiguous: it may signify endorsement of viceregal authority, dread of reprisals, or a tactical regrouping by insurgent cells. Even proof that dread accounts for the drop would leave a further issue unsettled. If villagers in Valencia view insurrection as hopeless, dread may deter unrest; if underground guild networks in Aragon provide reliable safe houses, it may prompt villagers there to aid insurgents in more covert ways. A decree praised for pacifying one prefecture could thus generate repercussions elsewhere that its most immediate metrics fail to capture.

Which choice best states the main purpose of the text?

A) To question whether an ostensible triumph furnishes a sufficient warrant for expanding a strategy of administrative coercion

B) To explain why coercion tends to modify the outward form of popular dissent rather than its latent potency

C) To contend that the efficacy of administrative coercion should be gauged through private sentiment rather than public compliance

D) To specify the circumstances under which an apparent drop in popular dissent signals a durable decline in insurgency

17 Supporting evidence

Biologist Rosanna Alegado believes that we might learn how multicellular organisms developed from single-celled ones if we understand why the single-celled organism Salpingoeca rosetta, one of the closest living unicellular relatives of animals, sometimes forms colonies of cells. Alegado and colleagues reviewed data from many studies about how S. rosetta responds when exposed to another type of single-celled organism, bacteria, including William C. Nierman's work with Caulobacter crescentus bacteria and Josefa Antón's work with Salinibacter ruber bacteria. Alegado and colleagues concluded that neither C. crescentus nor S. ruber are likely to have played a significant role in the development of multicellular organisms.

Which finding, if true, would most directly support Alegado and colleagues' conclusion?

A) S. rosetta did not tend to form colonies when exposed to either C. crescentus or S. ruber.

B) S. rosetta tended to form colonies when exposed to C. crescentus and when exposed to S. ruber.

C) S. rosetta tended to form colonies when exposed to S. ruber, but did not when exposed to C. crescentus.

D) S. rosetta tended to form colonies when exposed to C. crescentus, but not when exposed to S. ruber.

18 Supporting evidence

After the 2010 Deepwater Horizon disaster, BP chief executive Tony Hayward publicly apologized for the resulting harm. Corporate apologies often address injured parties explicitly, but this does not necessarily identify their principal audience. In a study modeled on such responses, researchers Elena Varela and Marcus Renwick asked communications professionals to select between drafts of an apology for a fictional industrial accident. Each draft acknowledged identical harms and promised identical compensation, but the drafts differed in their expressions of contrition. The researchers proposed that, when selecting language, the professionals would prioritize preserving the company's legitimacy among uninvolved observers over achieving reconciliation with those directly affected.

Which result would most strongly support Varela and Renwick's proposed explanation?

A) Uninvolved observers judged the company more favorably after reading the selected apologies, particularly when told that affected residents had accepted those apologies and considered the promised compensation adequate.

B) When told that a revision increased affected residents' willingness to forgive but reduced uninvolved observers' trust in the company, professionals tended to reject it; when those effects were reversed, they tended to accept it.

C) Professionals favored drafts that affected residents rated as more sincere, and uninvolved observers generally regarded those same drafts as stronger evidence that the company deserved continued public trust.

D) Professionals preferred drafts addressed explicitly to affected residents over drafts addressed to the general public, even when informed that both versions would receive equivalent national media coverage.

19 Weakening evidence

Computational linguists evaluated two automated translation engines, Kestrel and Albatross, using archival diplomatic transcripts omitted from the training sets of both engines. Each engine generated a candidate translation for every idiomatic clause. Evaluators assigned higher conciseness ratings to more compact phrasing and higher fidelity ratings when a larger share of source nuances was preserved in the output. A composite index averaged these two ratings, giving equal weight to each. Kestrel's composite index exceeded Albatross's. Pointing to this outcome, a commentator asserted that Kestrel's superiority was not simply greater brevity: its translations were also more accurate.

Which finding, if true, would most directly undermine the commentator's assertion?

A) Both engines earned higher fidelity ratings than conciseness ratings, although Kestrel's composite index was higher.

B) Kestrel's lead in conciseness was larger than its lead in fidelity.

C) Assigning fidelity greater weight narrowed Kestrel's composite lead but did not erase it.

D) The share of source nuances omitted from the candidate translations was larger for Kestrel than for Albatross.

20 Inference

European green crabs have invaded coastal waters in Japan, the US Pacific Northwest, and other parts of the world. These crabs have hardy offspring. This makes it easier for the crabs to invade new areas. The crabs eat a lot of young lobsters and other native organisms in the areas they invade. This takes food away from the other species and makes it harder for them to survive. But the crabs are having relatively little effect in one California location. Why? A healthy population of sea otters in this area preys on the crabs. This suggests that areas struggling with European green crab invasions might want to consider _____

Which choice most logically completes the text?

A) using predators to help limit the European green crab population.

B) relocating native lobster populations to areas where the crabs are less common.

C) introducing other crab species to compete with the European green crabs.

D) moving the European green crabs to their native habitats.

21 Quantitative evidence

Minimum woven-fabric layers needed for winter insulation

Site	Latitude	Layers
Strashnaya Cave	51°N	6
Aitzbitarte III	43°N	4
Shizitan	36°N	2

Researchers have classified sites occupied by Pleistocene humans according to the estimated minimum number of layers of clothing required to achieve adequate winter insulation at each site's latitude. According to the classifications shown in the table, at least four layers are needed during winters at Aitzbitarte III (43°N). However, the layering thresholds are modern standards based on the insulative properties of woven fabrics, and Pleistocene humans wore clothing of hide and fur, materials which Ian Gilligan et al. claim provide twice the thermal protection of woven fabrics per layer worn. If true, this suggests that _____

Which choice most effectively uses data from the table to complete the sentence?

A) fewer than two layers of clothing may have been needed for winters at sites north of 42°N, including both Aitzbitarte III and Strashnaya Cave.

B) the same number of layers may have been necessary for winters at Strashnaya Cave and Shizitan.

C) fewer than five layers of clothing may have been necessary for winters at Strashnaya Cave, while one layer may have been sufficient at Shizitan.

D) a maximum of two layers would have been necessary for winters at Shizitan (36°N) and other sites below 42°N.

22 Cross-text connections

Text 1

Of the twelfth-century monastic manuscripts cataloged in the Valserine Abbey archive, nearly five-sixths are bound in oak-tanned sheepskin; the remainder are bound in alum-tawed pigskin. Book historian Arthur Pendelton attributes this imbalance to scriptorium scribes' preference for inexpensive bindings. Although alum-tawed pigskin resisted dampness and bookworm damage, its costly preparation presumably rendered it an extravagant option for most codices produced in the valley. For Pendelton, the archive catalog demonstrates that budgetary constraints chiefly governed regional bookbinding customs.

Text 2

Conservator Elena Rostova identified a curatorial quirk in the Valserine catalog: catalogers during an earlier cataloging project typically selected volumes for the abbey's permanent registry only after ultraviolet lamps induced a characteristic golden fluorescence in the leather. Such fluorescence is triggered by oak-gall tannins concentrated in sheepskin; alum-tawed pigskin exhibits no comparable optical reaction. Conducting a shelf-by-shelf audit that did not rely on this screening method, Rostova's team uncovered dozens of uncataloged twelfth-century codices, most bound in alum-tawed pigskin.

Which criticism of Pendelton's interpretation in Text 1 is most directly supported by Rostova's findings in Text 2?

A) It overlooks evidence proving that alum-tawed pigskin was the predominant binding material across the valley's monastic scriptoria.

B) It attributes the relative prevalence of sheepskin bindings to their lower initial production cost rather than their superior durability in damp storage.

C) It assumes that the relative proportions recorded in the catalog reflect historical bookbinding customs despite a material-biased cataloging procedure.

D) It fails to recognize the wider variety of binding techniques revealed by the uncataloged codices, although its account of their relative prevalence remains valid.

23 Transitions

Ceramic artist Naomi Aldana insisted that every glaze used in her studio be mixed by hand from raw materials. _____ she once returned an entire shipment of commercially prepared glazes to her supplier, explaining in a note that "color has to be earned."

Which choice completes the text with the most logical transition?

A) Nevertheless,

B) In contrast,

C) Similarly,

D) Indeed,

24 Transitions

In an ekphrastic poem, a poet explores a work of visual art, such as a drawing, sculpture, or painting. Robert Hayden's 1978 poem "Monet's 'Waterlilies,'" for example, meditates on Claude Monet's 1906 painting Water Lilies. John Yau's 2016 poem "Further Adventures in Monochrome," _____ takes a painting as its subject: Yves Klein's 1961 work Silence is Golden.

Which choice completes the text with the most logical transition?

A) therefore,

B) likewise,

C) nevertheless,

D) conversely,

25 Transitions

An early prototype of the battery stored substantially more energy than conventional cells. It also lost nearly 35% of its capacity after only sixty charge cycles. _____ the research team shifted its attention from increasing energy density to stabilizing the electrode material.

Which choice completes the text with the most logical transition?

A) Specifically,

B) Accordingly,

C) Meanwhile,

D) Even so,

26 Rhetorical synthesis

While researching a topic, a student has taken the following notes:

• British scholar Robert Plot described fossilized dinosaur bones in his 1676 book The Natural History of Oxfordshire.
• Plot earned a reputation for being the first person to have discovered dinosaur remains.
• In 1990, archaeologists in Lesotho, in southern Africa, discovered a fossilized phalanx of a Massospondylus carinatus dinosaur in a cave once inhabited by humans.
• Indigenous Khoesan and Basotho peoples had inhabited the cave beginning around 1100 CE.
• According to paleontologist Julien Benoit, these peoples may have found the phalanx and brought it to the cave centuries before Plot's descriptions.

The student wants to emphasize the significance of the 1990 discovery to Plot's reputation. Which choice most effectively uses relevant information from the notes to accomplish this goal?

A) Benoit challenged Plot's reputation for being the first person to have discovered M. carinatus remains.

B) Evidence that Khoesan and Basotho peoples may have found an M. carinatus phalanx as long ago as 1100 CE suggests that Plot may not have been the first person to have discovered dinosaur remains.

C) According to Benoit's analysis of the 1990 discovery, Indigenous peoples in southern Africa may have brought the fossilized phalanx to the cave as long ago as 1100 CE.

D) In 1990, more than three centuries after Plot claimed in his book that he had found fossilized dinosaur bones, archaeologists uncovered evidence in southern Africa that disproved his claims.

27 Rhetorical synthesis

While researching a topic, a student has taken the following notes:

• Power conversion efficiency (PCE) measures the percentage of sunlight an electronic solar cell can convert into electricity.
• 2014: Early solar cells made of the material perovskite achieved an initial PCE of around 12%.
• These PCEs usually fell to around 75% of their initial values after only a few hours of sunlight exposure.
• 2024: The most stable perovskite solar cells had initial PCEs of 18.2% and maintained over 95% of that value after 12,000 hours of exposure.
• 2024: A review of devices found that the most efficient perovskite solar cells (initial PCEs over 28%) were usually less stable, dropping to 75% of their initial values within 1,500 hours.
• The review concluded that PCE stability in perovskite cells increases with more durable charge-collecting materials, though less durable materials can allow for higher efficiency.

The student wants to emphasize a trade-off between efficiency and stability despite advances in perovskite solar cells from 2014 to 2024. Which choice most effectively uses relevant information from the notes to accomplish this goal?

A) Stability improvements enabled the development of perovskite cells with initial PCEs over 28%, as discussed in a 2024 review that linked more durable charge-collecting materials to increased PCE stability.

B) Both the efficiency and stability of perovskite solar cells improved significantly, with devices achieving initial PCEs over 28% and the most stable cells retaining 95% of their initial values after 12,000 hours.

C) Although perovskite solar cells' PCE stability improved dramatically, the most efficient devices experienced more modest stability gains, indicating a trade-off between optimizing for stability and efficiency.

D) Perovskite solar cells saw dramatic efficiency gains, with initial PCEs rising from around 12% to 95% in the most advanced redesigns.

Answer key

Learn the reasoning behind each answer.

01	**A**	**10**	**C**	**19**	**D**
02	**B**	**11**	**A**	**20**	**A**
03	**C**	**12**	**C**	**21**	**C**
04	**A**	**13**	**D**	**22**	**C**
05	**B**	**14**	**A**	**23**	**D**
06	**C**	**15**	**D**	**24**	**B**
07	**C**	**16**	**A**	**25**	**B**
08	**A**	**17**	**A**	**26**	**B**
09	**A**	**18**	**B**	**27**	**C**

Use our elimination language

Too General: goes beyond what the passage supports.
Too Narrow: gives a true detail but misses the main point.
Too Extreme: changes may or suggests into certainty.
Extra Information: adds an unsupported motive, cause, or result.
Contradiction: reverses what the passage says.
Wrong Comparison: changes the groups, conditions, or quantities being compared.

01 Answer A • Subject and verb

Clue: Herrera ... ___ that

Cross out the phrase between the commas. The sentence becomes 'Marine ecologist Tomas Herrera ___ that ...'. Herrera is one person, so the verb must be singular.

A: Correct. 'He argues' matches the singular subject.

B: 'They argue' is plural; Herrera is singular.

C: 'Are arguing' needs a plural subject here.

D: 'Have argued' needs a plural subject here; a singular subject would take 'has argued'.

TAKEAWAY

Find the head of the subject before choosing the verb. A nearby plural noun is often a distraction.

02 Answer B • Modifier placement

Clue: Stretching more than 1,400 miles

Ask what stretches along the coast. The reef does. The noun immediately after the opening modifier must identify that reef.

A: Scientists do not stretch along 1,400 miles of coastline.

B: Correct. The Great Barrier Reef directly follows the modifier.

C: The grammatical subject is 'species,' not the reef.

D: The head of the subject is still 'species'; the possessive 'reef's' does not fix the mismatch.

TAKEAWAY

After an opening modifier, ask 'Who or what is doing this?' Then check the next subject.

03 Answer C • Sentence boundaries and interruptions

Clue: testimony. Though, as later records revealed, the witness was mistaken, officials ...

There are two main statements: officials reconstructed the accident; officials accepted the account. In the second sentence, 'Though the witness was mistaken' is a dependent clause. 'As later records revealed' interrupts it and takes a matching pair of commas.

A: The comma after 'testimony' does not properly separate the two main statements.

B: This choice opens the interruption after 'Though' but does not close it after 'revealed'. This is a missing paired comma, not a comma splice.

C: Correct. The period separates the statements and both commas enclose the interruption.

D: Even with the paired commas, the boundary after 'testimony' is still only a comma.

TAKEAWAY

First find the main clauses. Then check interruptions separately. 'Though' can introduce a dependent clause.

04 Answer A • Punctuation with however

Clue: Cajal receives recognition, but he did not work alone

The contrast is between the first sentence and 'Cajal did not make this discovery alone.' Therefore, 'however' belongs with that second statement. The next clause supplies evidence of his collaboration; it does not oppose it.

A: Correct. 'Alone, however;' attaches however to the statement about not working alone, then separates two independent clauses.

B: The punctuation can form grammatical clauses, but it attaches however to 'he worked closely ...'. That clause supports, rather than contrasts with, 'did not ... alone'.

C: There is no valid boundary before 'he worked closely'.

D: Commas around however do not join two independent clauses.

TAKEAWAY

Do not place however mechanically after every semicolon. Decide which statement actually carries the contrast.

05 Answer B • Sentence boundaries

Clue: entered San Francisco Bay / the celebrated ship set a record

Those are the two main clauses. 'Having left New York Harbor ... earlier' is an opening modifier for the second sentence. It is long, but the subject 'the celebrated ship' and its verb 'set' still arrive later.

A: 'And having' does not correctly connect the two main clauses in this construction.

B: Correct. A period closes the first sentence. 'Having ...' introduces the second.

C: A comma leaves the two main clauses improperly joined.

D: No punctuation leaves a run-on sentence.

TAKEAWAY

Read beyond a long -ing phrase. Find the subject and finite verb that follow it before deciding where the sentence ends.

06 Answer C • Verb tense

Clue: As nanotechnology evolves

The passage describes an ongoing development and an expected consequence. Among these choices, the future form fits that forward-looking relationship.

A: 'Would ... have continued' suggests an unreal or conditional past situation that the passage does not supply.

B: Past perfect places the continuation before another past event; no such event is given.

C: Correct. 'Will likely continue' states the expected future development.

D: Past perfect progressive also needs a past-time context that is absent.

TAKEAWAY

Choose tense from the time relationship in the passage. Present tense does not automatically require future tense; these choices and this context determine the answer.

07 Answer C • Colon before a list

Clue: The human body has three types of muscle tissue

This is a complete sentence. The next words name those three types. A colon can introduce that explanatory list.

A: There is no punctuation separating the complete introduction from its explanatory list.

B: The semicolon would introduce a fragment, not another independent clause.

C: Correct. The colon follows a complete clause and introduces the three types.

D: The added 'and' produces an illogical construction rather than introducing the three-item list.

TAKEAWAY

For a colon, check the words BEFORE it: they must form a complete clause. The material after it may be a list or explanation.

08 Answer A • Names and titles

Clue: experimental musicians Lena Ortiz and Felix Chen wove

The names identify which experimental musicians the sentence discusses. Keep the identifying phrase together, then connect that subject directly to its verb, 'wove'.

A: Correct. No punctuation interrupts the title-name subject or separates it from the verb.

B: The comma after the names separates the subject from 'wove'.

C: The semicolon follows an unfinished clause and breaks the identifying phrase.

D: The comma after 'musicians' unnecessarily breaks the identifying title-name phrase.

TAKEAWAY

A title or description followed by an identifying name usually stays together. Do not put a lone comma between a subject and its verb.

09 Answer A • Words in context

Clue: a scar forms only ... under particular conditions

A fire can occur without leaving a surviving, wounded tree with a visible scar. Therefore, missing scars cannot rule out a past fire. 'Preclude' means rule out or prevent.

A: Correct. 'Cannot preclude' means cannot rule out the possibility.

B: 'Illuminate' means clarify; it does not express the required idea of ruling something out.

C: 'Approximate' means estimate or come close to; it does not fit 'the possibility' here.

D: 'Magnify' means increase or enlarge, which is not the relationship being explained.

TAKEAWAY

Predict a plain meaning before looking at the choices. Here the prediction is 'rule out'. Watch negatives such as cannot.

10 Answer C • Meaning in context

Clue: consulting the ship's chart

Peter looks at a chart to work out the ship's route and arrival date. Consulting a chart means examining or referring to it, not advising it.

A: This is a possible sense of consulting in other contexts, but Peter is not giving advice to the chart.

B: He is not persuading the chart.

C: Correct. Considering is the closest offered meaning to examining the chart for information.

D: He is not blocking the chart or its use.

TAKEAWAY

A familiar word can have an unfamiliar use. Replace it inside the sentence and test that particular meaning.

11 Answer A • Words in context

Clue: conceding ... but maintaining ...

Wright agrees that some writers have departed from facts, but she also defends combining imagination with science. She accepts part of each position without fully taking either side.

A: Correct. A middle ground combines qualified agreement with a defense of imagination.

B: The passage does not say she reluctantly accepted a negotiated settlement.

C: Her position is clear, not deliberately unclear.

D: There is no evidence of pretending, indecision, or a hidden tactical motive.

TAKEAWAY

Two-part clues matter. 'Conceding X but maintaining Y' often signals a qualified position, not total agreement or uncertainty.

12 Answer C • Sentence function

Clue: They are much less confident ... about when

The second sentence identifies the unresolved problem: astronomers cannot confidently determine the timing. The third sentence describes a method that did not solve that problem.

A: The method is introduced in the third sentence; the second identifies the earlier problem.

B: The second sentence does not report the team's finding.

C: Correct. It sets up the problem the investigation tried, unsuccessfully, to solve.

D: No other researchers' reactions to the work are described.

TAKEAWAY

For function questions, identify the sentence's JOB in the argument. Read what comes before and after it.

13 Answer D • Overall structure

Clue: negative reputation / But Nixon's legacy is complex

The passage first supports the familiar negative view with Watergate. It then adds positive actions to show that this view alone is incomplete.

A: The first point is that Nixon is famous for Watergate. The later facts do not provide evidence against that fame.

B: The associates are background details; the passage does not rank several historical figures.

C: The passage does not explain why an achievement is disregarded by historians.

D: Correct. Additional facts complicate the initial perception.

TAKEAWAY

Make a short map: first the author does X; then the author does Y. Match that movement, not merely the topic.

14 Answer A • Main idea

Clue: earliest evidence ... 45 million years earlier
The egg-bearing fossils matter because they push back the known evidence of insect brood care. The best main idea combines the finding with its larger significance.
A: Correct. It captures the study and the earlier timeline supported by the fossils.
B: The passage gives no ranking of Chinese fossil sites.
C: The passage does not compare when carrion beetles and water boatmen lived there.
D: This repeats a supporting observation but leaves out why the observation matters.
TAKEAWAY
A true detail can still be too narrow. Ask: what does the discovery show overall?

15 Answer D • Main idea

Clue: whether ... greater ... when evidence was equivocal
The team varies evidence strength and narrative coherence to ask whether the effect of coherence changes with evidence strength. The passage describes a question and a study design, not a result.
A: Wrong comparison. The team is not asking whether coherence matters more than evidence strength overall.
B: Too certain. It turns an open question into an established effect and then asks why.
C: Contradiction. The experiment varies evidence strength instead of holding it at one level.
D: Correct. It preserves the question about how coherence's influence varies with evidence strength.
TAKEAWAY
Keep 'whether' as whether. Do not turn a research question, hypothesis, or possibility into a proven finding.

16 Answer A • Main purpose

Clue: surface quiescence is ambiguous ... repercussions elsewhere
The author questions an inference: fewer riots do not necessarily prove loyalty or justify using the same policy elsewhere. Hidden motives and different local conditions can change the policy's effects.
A: Correct. It describes the author's act of questioning whether apparent success warrants expanding the strategy.
B: Too broad. The passage presents several possible responses; it does not establish a general tendency for coercion to change only the outward form of dissent.
C: Too prescriptive. It does not say private feelings should replace public behavior as the measure.
D: The passage stresses uncertainty rather than supplying sufficient conditions for a durable decline.
TAKEAWAY
Main idea asks WHAT the passage says. Main purpose asks what the author DOES: question, explain, compare, argue, or describe.

17 Answer A • Supporting evidence

Clue: neither bacterium ... significant role
The relevant link is colony formation. If neither bacterium tends to trigger colonies, that supports the conclusion that neither played the proposed role in the development of multicellularity.
A: Correct. Neither bacterium tends to induce colony formation.
B: This supports a role for both bacteria, the opposite of the conclusion.
C: This supports a possible role for S. ruber, conflicting with 'neither'.
D: This supports a possible role for C. crescentus, also conflicting with 'neither'.
TAKEAWAY
Translate neither into two checks: NOT the first and NOT the second. Test every part of the claim.

18 Answer B • Supporting evidence

Clue: prioritize observers over directly affected people

The hypothesis is about which audience wins when their interests conflict. The strongest evidence must separate those interests, then show professionals choosing observers' trust.

A: Both audiences react favorably, so the result does not show which audience is prioritized.

B: Correct. The professionals reject a victim-friendly change when it hurts observers' trust and accept the reverse trade-off.

C: Both audiences again approve the same drafts. Their agreement cannot reveal a priority.

D: Whom an apology addresses is not necessarily whose approval the professionals prioritize.

TAKEAWAY

When a claim says 'X over Y,' look for a conflict between X and Y. Evidence where both improve may not distinguish the explanations.

19 Answer D • Weakening evidence

Clue: also more accurate / fidelity preserves nuances

The composite score averages brevity and accuracy. A higher average can result from much better brevity even if accuracy is worse. To weaken the extra accuracy claim, find evidence that Kestrel preserves fewer nuances.

A: This compares two ratings within each engine; it does not establish which engine has greater fidelity.

B: This still gives Kestrel a lead in fidelity, supporting the accuracy claim.

C: A remaining composite lead does not show that Kestrel's fidelity is worse.

D: Correct. Omitting more source nuances means lower fidelity, directly opposing the accuracy claim.

TAKEAWAY

Attack the exact claim. A higher total or average does not prove superiority on every component.

20 Answer A • Inference

Clue: otters prey on crabs / relatively little effect

The California example connects a predator population with reduced harm from the invasive crabs. The supported recommendation is to consider predator-based control, not an unrelated response.

A: Correct. It follows the mechanism described: predators limit the crab population.

B: The passage does not show that moving lobsters would control the invasion.

C: No evidence establishes that competing crab species would help.

D: Returning crabs to their native range is not the method supported by the California example.

TAKEAWAY

Extend the passage's stated mechanism only as far as the evidence permits. A plausible outside idea is not automatically a supported inference.

21 Answer C • Quantitative evidence

Clue: twice the thermal protection per layer

For this question's model, divide each woven-fabric requirement by two: Strashnaya 6 becomes 3; Aitzbitarte 4 becomes 2; Shizitan 2 becomes 1. Then check every claim in the answer.

A: False. The two named sites require about 2 and 3 layers, not fewer than 2.

B: False. Strashnaya and Shizitan give 3 and 1 layers, not the same number.

C: Correct. Three is fewer than five, and one layer corresponds to Shizitan.

D: Unsupported extension. The table provides Shizitan, not all sites below 42 degrees. It also estimates minimum requirements, not a universal maximum.

TAKEAWAY

Data answers need two checks: correct numbers AND correct scope. Minimum and maximum are different claims.

22 Answer C • Cross-text connections

Clue: catalog selection favored one binding material

Text 1 treats catalog proportions as evidence of historical preferences. Text 2 reveals that the cataloging method favored sheepskin and missed many pigskin books. The catalog is therefore a biased sample for that inference.

A: Too extreme. Uncataloged pigskin books do not prove pigskin was the majority throughout the valley.

B: Wrong issue. Text 2 questions how books entered the catalog, not whether lower cost or durability drove historical choices.

C: Correct. It identifies the unsupported assumption that a material-biased catalog represents historical customs.

D: Contradiction. Text 2 undermines the inference about relative prevalence rather than leaving it valid.

TAKEAWAY

Summarize Text 1's claim and Text 2's response separately. Then name the link: supports, qualifies, challenges, or explains.

23 Answer D • Transitions

Clue: insisted on hand-mixed glazes / returned commercial glazes

The second sentence gives a striking example of the same artist's commitment. It reinforces the first point instead of introducing a separate comparable case.

A: There is no unexpected opposing outcome.

B: The second action does not contrast with her stated principle.

C: Similarity would fit a separate parallel case better than this reinforcing evidence.

D: Correct. Indeed introduces confirmation or emphasis.

TAKEAWAY

Decide the relationship before naming the transition. Same topic does not automatically mean similarly.

24 Answer B • Transitions

Clue: two poems each take a painting as their subject

Hayden's poem is one example of a poem about a painting. Yau's poem is another parallel example. The relationship is similarity.

A: One poem does not cause the other to have a painting as its subject.

B: Correct. Likewise links two comparable examples.

C: There is no contradiction or surprising exception.

D: The second example does not reverse the first.

TAKEAWAY

For similarly or likewise, identify the two distinct things being compared and their shared feature.

25 Answer B • Transitions

Clue: lost capacity / team changed its research priority

The loss of capacity gives the team a reason to focus on stability. The final sentence states the team's response to the problem, so a consequence transition fits.

A: The shift in focus is a response, not a more specific description of the earlier fact.

B: Correct. Accordingly means in response to that situation or as a result.

C: Meanwhile indicates timing, missing the causal relationship.

D: Even so would introduce a contrary response, but the team's action follows from the problem.

TAKEAWAY

Read the nearest relevant idea, not just the first positive sentence. A problem followed by a response often calls for a consequence transition.

26 Answer B • Rhetorical synthesis

Clue: significance ... to Plot's reputation
The notes suggest that other people may have found dinosaur remains earlier. The answer must connect that evidence to Plot's reputation as the first discoverer, while preserving the uncertainty.
A: Wrong scope. His reputation concerns dinosaur remains generally, not this particular species.
B: Correct. It connects the earlier possible discovery with the possibility that Plot was not first.
C: Accurate but incomplete. It does not explain the implication for Plot's reputation.
D: Too extreme and wrong target. It does not disprove that Plot found bones; it questions his being first.
TAKEAWAY
A notes answer must satisfy the whole goal. Preserve may, suggests, and other limits on certainty.

27 Answer C • Rhetorical synthesis

Clue: most stable cells versus most efficient cells
The best stability belongs to one kind of device; the highest initial efficiency belongs to another, less stable kind. The goal asks for that trade-off despite overall advances.
A: Unsupported causation. The notes do not say better stability enabled the highest efficiency; they describe a competing design trade-off.
B: It reports improvements but does not clearly express the requested trade-off between the properties.
C: Correct. It contrasts dramatic stability gains with more modest gains in the most efficient devices.
D: Wrong quantity. Ninety-five percent is retained initial performance, not an initial PCE of 95 percent.
TAKEAWAY
Keep groups and measurements separate. A percentage of an original value is not the original measurement itself.

Final review

What is the actual subject? Ignore interrupting phrases and nearby plural nouns. Match the head subject with the verb.
What does the opening modifier describe? That person or thing should be the subject that follows it.
Where are the complete clauses? A comma alone cannot join two independent clauses. A semicolon can. A colon needs a complete clause before it.
Are interruptions paired? Check opening and closing punctuation. A semicolon can also separate complex list items; do not treat every list identically.
Which statement carries the contrast? Place however with that statement. Though or although can introduce a dependent clause.
What meaning does the context predict? Supply a simple word first. Test the whole sentence, including negatives and contrast words.
Am I summarizing or describing a job? Main idea: the central message. Purpose or function: what the author or sentence does.
What exactly must the evidence support or weaken? Test the claim's groups, direction, and limits. A higher combined score does not prove every component is higher.
Do the data match both the numbers and the scope? Read labels and units; distinguish minimum from maximum, percentage from percentage points, and one group from another.
How does Text 2 relate to Text 1? Write one short claim for each, then connect them. Biased samples cannot safely establish population-wide proportions.
What is the transition relationship? Contrast, consequence, similarity, reinforcement, example, or restatement? Choose meaning before the word.
What is the exact goal of the notes question? Select relevant details, preserve uncertainty, and do not confuse different groups or measurements.

Genius reminder

If a question stalls you, mark it and move on. Return with a specific task: find the clause, the clue, the claim, or the requested goal.