

GRE 2024 Verbal Reasoning Sample Paper with Solutions

Time Allowed : 1 Hour 58 Minutes

Maximum Marks : 340

General Instructions

Read the following instructions very carefully and strictly follow them:

1. The GRE General Test is 1 hour and 58 minutes long (with one optional 10-minute break) and consists of 54 questions in total.
2. The GRE exam is comprised of three sections:
 - Quantitative Reasoning: 27 questions, 47 minutes
 - Verbal Reasoning: 27 questions, 41 minutes
3. You can answer the two sections in any order.
4. As you move through a section, you can skip questions, flag them for review, and return to them later within the same section.
5. When you have answered all questions in a section, you can review your responses before time expires.
6. If there is no time remaining in the section, you will automatically be moved to your optional break screen or the next section (if you have already taken your optional break).
7. Each review screen includes a numbered list of the questions in that section and indicates the questions you flagged.
8. Clicking a question number will take you to that specific question.
9. You may change any answer within the time allowed for that section.

Section 1 Verbal Reasoning

25 questions

1. Centuries ago, the Maya of Central America produced elaborate, deeply cut carvings in stone. The carvings would have required a cutting tool of hard stone or metal. Iron-ore deposits exist throughout Central America, but apparently the Maya never developed the technology to use them and the metals the Maya are known to have used, copper and gold, would not have been hard enough. Therefore, the Maya must have used stone tools to make these carvings.

Which of the following, if true, most seriously weakens the argument?

(A) In various parts of the world, civilizations that could not make iron from ore fashioned tools out of fragments of iron from meteorites.

- (B) All the metallic Mayan artifacts that have been found by archaeologists are made of metals that are too soft for carving stone.
- (C) The stone out of which these carvings were made is harder than the stone used by other Central American peoples.
- (D) The technique that the Maya used to smelt gold and some other metals could not have been easily applied to the task of extracting iron from iron ore.
- (E) Archaeologists disagree about how certain stone tools that have been found among Mayan ruins were used.

Correct Answer: (A) In various parts of the world, civilizations that could not make iron from ore fashioned tools out of fragments of iron from meteorites.

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

This question asks us to find the statement that most seriously weakens the argument presented in the passage. The argument's conclusion is that the Maya **must have used stone tools** for their carvings. This is a conclusion of necessity, based on eliminating other options.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

The argument is structured as follows:

Premise 1: The carvings required a hard tool (hard stone or metal).

Premise 2: The Maya could not use iron from ore.

Premise 3: The metals they did use (copper, gold) were too soft.

Conclusion: Therefore, the Maya must have used stone tools.

To weaken this conclusion, we need to find an option that introduces a viable alternative to stone tools that the argument has overlooked. The argument assumes that the only sources of metal were smelted ore, copper, and gold.

Analyzing the Options:

(A) In various parts of the world, civilizations that could not make iron from ore fashioned tools out of fragments of iron from meteorites.

This statement introduces a new possibility: the Maya could have obtained hard iron from meteorites, without needing the technology to smelt iron ore. If they had access to meteoric iron, they could have made hard metal tools. This provides a direct alternative to stone tools and challenges the certainty of the conclusion that they **must** have used stone. Therefore, this option seriously weakens the argument.

(B) All the metallic Mayan artifacts that have been found by archaeologists are made of metals that are too soft for carving stone.

This statement strengthens, rather than weakens, the argument. It confirms Premise 3, reinforcing the idea that the known Mayan metals were inadequate for the task.

(C) The stone out of which these carvings were made is harder than the stone used by other Central American peoples.

This statement is irrelevant to the type of tool used. The hardness of the carved stone makes

the feat more impressive but doesn't challenge the logic about the tools available to the Maya.

(D) The technique that the Maya used to smelt gold and some other metals could not have been easily applied to the task of extracting iron from iron ore.

This statement also strengthens the argument. It reinforces Premise 2, explaining why the Maya couldn't use the available iron ore deposits.

(E) Archaeologists disagree about how certain stone tools that have been found among Mayan ruins were used.

This might slightly weaken the argument by introducing uncertainty, but it doesn't offer a strong alternative. Disagreement about the specific *use* of stone tools doesn't eliminate the possibility that they were used for carving. Option (A) provides a much more direct and powerful challenge to the conclusion by offering a plausible alternative tool material.

Step 3: Final Answer:

Option (A) is the only choice that introduces a new source of hard metal that the argument fails to consider, thereby breaking the logical chain that leads to the conclusion that stone tools were the only possibility.

Quick Tip

In "weaken the argument" questions, look for a new piece of information that attacks the author's assumption or provides a viable alternative explanation for the evidence presented. The correct answer often opens up a possibility the author has ignored.

Questions 2 and 3 are based on the following reading passage.

In early-twentieth-century England, it was fashionable to claim that only a completely new style of writing could address a world undergoing unprecedented transformation — just as one literary critic recently claimed that only the new "aesthetic of exploratory excess" can address a world undergoing . . . well, you know. Yet in early-twentieth-century England, T. S. Eliot, a man fascinated by the "presence" of the past, wrote the most innovative poetry of his time. The lesson for today's literary community seems obvious: a reorientation toward tradition would benefit writers no less than readers. But if our writers and critics indeed respect the novel's rich tradition (as they claim to), then why do they disdain the urge to tell an exciting story?

2. The author of the passage suggests that present-day readers would particularly benefit from which of the following changes on the part of present-day writers and critics?

- (A) An increased focus on the importance of engaging the audience in a narrative
- (B) Modernization of the traditional novelistic elements already familiar to readers
- (C) Embracing aspects of fiction that are generally peripheral to the interest of readers
- (D) A greater recognition of how the tradition of the novel has changed over time
- (E) A better understanding of how certain poets such as Eliot have influenced fiction of the present time

Correct Answer: (A) An increased focus on the importance of engaging the audience in a narrative

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

This question asks what change, according to the author, would benefit present-day readers. We need to identify the author's main critique of contemporary writers and critics to find the suggested improvement.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

The author's argument builds to a final, critical question: "But if our writers and critics indeed respect the novel's rich tradition (as they claim to), then why do they disdain the urge to tell an exciting story?"

This rhetorical question is the core of the author's point. The author implies that modern writers and critics are failing to uphold a key part of the literary tradition: storytelling. They "disdain the urge to tell an exciting story."

Therefore, the author suggests that a change for the better would be to reverse this disdain and once again embrace the tradition of telling exciting stories. Engaging the audience with a narrative is synonymous with telling an exciting story.

Analyzing the Options:

(A) An increased focus on the importance of engaging the audience in a narrative.

This directly addresses the author's final point. "Engaging the audience in a narrative" is another way of saying "tell an exciting story." This aligns perfectly with the author's implied suggestion.

(B) Modernization of the traditional novelistic elements already familiar to readers.

The author advocates for a "reorientation toward tradition," not necessarily its modernization. The example of T.S. Eliot shows that innovation and tradition can coexist, but the author's specific complaint is about abandoning storytelling, not a failure to modernize.

(C) Embracing aspects of fiction that are generally peripheral to the interest of readers.

This is the opposite of the author's point. An "exciting story" is central to engaging readers, not peripheral.

(D) A greater recognition of how the tradition of the novel has changed over time.

The author's focus is not on the evolution of tradition but on the neglect of one of its fundamental components (storytelling).

(E) A better understanding of how certain poets such as Eliot have influenced fiction of the present time.

Eliot is used as an example to make a broader point about tradition and innovation. The main lesson the author draws is about storytelling in the novel, not about Eliot's specific influence.

Step 3: Final Answer:

The author's critique culminates in the observation that modern writers disdain telling an exciting story. Therefore, a beneficial change would be to refocus on engaging the audience with a narrative, as stated in option (A).

Quick Tip

In reading comprehension, pay close attention to the author's concluding statements or rhetorical questions. They often encapsulate the main argument or the key takeaway message of the passage.

3. The word "address" appears in the first sentence of the passage. Part of that sentence reads, "...a completely new style of writing could address a world undergoing unprecedented transformation...". In the context of the passage as a whole, "address" is closest in meaning to

- (A) reveal
- (B) belie
- (C) speak to
- (D) direct attention toward
- (E) attempt to remediate

Correct Answer: (C) speak to

Solution:**Step 1: Understanding the Concept:**

This is a vocabulary-in-context question. We need to determine the meaning of the word "address" as it is used in the first sentence, considering the overall theme of the passage.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

The sentence discusses the relationship between a style of writing and the world it exists in. It posits that a "new style of writing" was thought to be necessary to engage with or respond to a "world undergoing unprecedented transformation." The word "address" here means to deal with, confront, or be relevant to this changing world.

Analyzing the Options:

(A) reveal: While writing can reveal truths about the world, "address" implies a more active form of engagement or commentary, not just passive showing.

(B) belie: This means to contradict or misrepresent. It is the opposite of the intended meaning.

(C) speak to: This idiomatic phrase means to be relevant to, to resonate with, or to deal with a particular topic or audience. A writing style that "speaks to" a changing world is one that is relevant and responsive to it. This fits the context perfectly.

(D) direct attention toward: This is a possible meaning, but it's narrower than "speak to." To address an issue is not just to point it out, but to engage with it, analyze it, and comment on it. "Speak to" captures this broader sense of engagement.

(E) attempt to remediate: To remediate means to fix or provide a remedy. While some literature may aim to do this, the primary function being described here is one of engagement and relevance, not necessarily of fixing societal problems.

Step 3: Final Answer:

In this context, "address a world" means to engage with and be relevant to that world's conditions. The phrase "speak to" best captures this meaning of relevance and active engagement.

Quick Tip

When faced with a vocabulary-in-context question, substitute each answer choice back into the original sentence. The correct answer will maintain the logical flow and intended meaning of the sentence and the passage as a whole.

4. Electric washing machines, first introduced in the United States in 1925, significantly reduced the amount of time spent washing a given amount of clothes, yet the average amount of time households spent washing clothes increased after 1925. This increase is partially accounted for by the fact that many urban households had previously sent their clothes to professional laundries. But the average amount of time spent washing clothes also increased for rural households with no access to professional laundries.

Which of the following, if true, most helps to explain why the time spent washing clothes increased in rural areas?

- (A) People with access to an electric washing machine typically wore their clothes many fewer times before washing them than did people without access to electric washing machines.
- (B) Households that had sent their clothes to professional laundries before 1925 were more likely than other households to purchase an electric washing machine when they became available.
- (C) People living in urban households that had previously sent their clothes to professional laundries typically owned more clothes than did people living in rural households.
- (D) The earliest electric washing machines required the user to spend much more time beside the machine than do modern electric washing machines.
- (E) In the 1920's and 1930's the proportion of rural households with electricity was smaller than the proportion of urban households with electricity.

Correct Answer: (A) People with access to an electric washing machine typically wore their clothes many fewer times before washing them than did people without access to electric washing machines.

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

This question presents a paradox: a time-saving device (the electric washing machine) led to an increase in the total time spent on the related activity (washing clothes). We need to find an explanation for this paradox, specifically for rural households who did not use professional laundries.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

The core of the paradox is that efficiency per task decreased, but total time spent on the task increased. Mathematically, $\text{Total Time} = (\text{Time per Load}) \times (\text{Number of Loads})$. The passage states that "Time per Load" decreased. Therefore, for the "Total Time" to increase, the "Number of Loads" (or the frequency of washing) must have increased significantly. We are looking for an answer that explains why people started washing more often.

Analyzing the Options:

(A) People with access to an electric washing machine typically wore their clothes many fewer times before washing them than did people without access to electric washing machines.

This provides a direct explanation. The convenience of the new machine changed people's behavior. Instead of waiting for a full load or wearing clothes multiple times, they washed them more frequently. Washing clothes more often, even if each load is quicker, can lead to a greater total amount of time spent on the chore. This resolves the paradox.

(B) Households that had sent their clothes to professional laundries before 1925 were more likely than other households to purchase an electric washing machine when they became available.

This is irrelevant because the question specifically asks to explain the increase in *rural* areas, which the passage notes had "no access to professional laundries."

(C) People living in urban households that had previously sent their clothes to professional laundries typically owned more clothes than did people living in rural households.

This compares urban and rural households but does not explain the *change over time* in washing habits within rural households after they acquired washing machines.

(D) The earliest electric washing machines required the user to spend much more time beside the machine than do modern electric washing machines.

This compares early machines to modern machines. The question requires a comparison between the time spent *before* getting a machine (i.e., hand washing) and *after*. Hand washing was extremely time-consuming, so it's unlikely that even an early, inefficient machine would take more time per load. This option doesn't resolve the paradox.

(E) In the 1920's and 1930's the proportion of rural households with electricity was smaller than the proportion of urban households with electricity.

This explains why the effect might have been less widespread in rural areas, but it does not explain why the time increased for those specific rural households that *did* get a machine.

Step 3: Final Answer:

Option (A) resolves the paradox by showing how the new technology induced a behavioral change (increased washing frequency) that more than offset the time savings per load.

Quick Tip

When faced with a paradox, look for a hidden factor or a change in behavior that the initial statement overlooks. The correct answer will bridge the logical gap between the two contradictory pieces of information.

5. In the 1950's, the country's inhabitants were BLANK: most of them knew very little about foreign countries.

- (A) partisan
- (B) erudite
- (C) insular
- (D) cosmopolitan
- (E) imperturbable

Correct Answer: (C) insular

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

This is a sentence completion question that tests vocabulary. The second part of the sentence, following the colon, defines or explains the word that should go in the blank.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

The clue in the sentence is "most of them knew very little about foreign countries." This description points to a word that means isolated, inward-looking, or having a narrow worldview. We need to find the vocabulary word that best matches this definition.

Analyzing the Options:

(A) partisan: Means a strong supporter of a party, cause, or person. This is unrelated to knowledge of foreign countries.

(B) erudite: Means having or showing great knowledge or learning. This is the opposite of knowing "very little."

(C) insular: Comes from the Latin word "insula," meaning island. It means ignorant of or uninterested in cultures, ideas, or peoples outside one's own experience. This perfectly describes people who know very little about foreign countries.

(D) cosmopolitan: Means familiar with and at ease in many different countries and cultures. This is the direct opposite of the clue.

(E) imperturbable: Means unable to be upset or excited; calm. This describes a temperament, not a level of worldly knowledge.

Step 3: Final Answer:

The word "insular" accurately describes a population that knows very little about the outside

world, matching the clue given in the sentence.

Quick Tip

In sentence completion questions with a colon, the part of the sentence after the colon often defines, explains, or gives an example of the word in the blank. Use this clue to pinpoint the correct meaning.

6. Since she believed him to be both candid and trustworthy, she refused to consider the possibility that his statement had been BLANK.

- (A) irrelevant
- (B) facetious
- (C) mistaken
- (D) critical
- (E) insincere

Correct Answer: (E) insincere

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

This sentence completion question is based on logic and word relationships, specifically antonyms. The first part of the sentence establishes a cause ("Since she believed him to be..."), and the second part describes the effect ("...she refused to consider...").

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

The keywords in the first clause are "candid" (truthful and straightforward) and "trustworthy." Because she believed he possessed these qualities, she would refuse to believe his statement was the opposite of these qualities. We are looking for a word that means the opposite of candid and trustworthy.

Analyzing the Options:

(A) irrelevant: A statement can be irrelevant without being dishonest. This is not a direct opposite of "candid."

(B) facetious: Means treating a serious issue with inappropriate humor. While this can be a form of dishonesty, it's very specific. "Insincere" is a more direct and general antonym.

(C) mistaken: An honest and trustworthy person can still be mistaken. Believing someone is trustworthy doesn't mean you think they are infallible. So, she might consider the possibility that he was mistaken.

(D) critical: A statement can be critical while still being candid and trustworthy. This is not an opposite.

(E) insincere: Means not expressing genuine feelings; hypocritical or deceptive. This is the direct antonym of "candid" and "trustworthy." If she believes he is sincere and honest, she would refuse to consider that his statement was insincere.

Step 3: Final Answer:

The word "insincere" provides the most logical contrast to "candid and trustworthy," fitting the cause-and-effect structure of the sentence.

Quick Tip

Look for trigger words like "since," "because," "therefore," "although," and "but." These words signal the logical relationship (e.g., cause-effect, contrast) between different parts of the sentence and help you predict the meaning of the missing word.

7. It is his dubious distinction to have proved what nobody would think of denying, that Romero at the age of sixty-four writes with all the characteristics of BLANK.

- (A) maturity
- (B) fiction
- (C) inventiveness
- (D) art
- (E) brilliance

Correct Answer: (A) maturity

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

This is a sentence completion question that relies on understanding the tone and specific phrasing of the sentence. The key phrases are "dubious distinction" and "proved what nobody would think of denying."

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

A "dubious distinction" is an achievement that is not worthy of praise, often because it is unimpressive or obvious. "To have proved what nobody would think of denying" means to have demonstrated something that is completely self-evident or expected.

The sentence is saying that the writer has the unimpressive achievement of showing that Romero, a 64-year-old, writes with the characteristics one would expect from a 64-year-old. We need to find the word that represents the most obvious and expected characteristic of a writer of that age.

Analyzing the Options:

(A) maturity: It is a common and widely held expectation that a 64-year-old writer would exhibit maturity in their work. Stating this would be stating the obvious, making it a "dubious distinction." This fits the context perfectly.

(B) fiction: This is a genre, not a characteristic of a writer's style. It doesn't fit the blank.

(C) inventiveness: This is a positive quality, but it is not something automatically expected of every 64-year-old writer. Proving this would be a real achievement, not a dubious one.

(D) art: This is too general. It doesn't describe a specific characteristic.

(E) brilliance: Like inventiveness, brilliance is a high compliment and not an obvious or

expected trait. Proving a writer has brilliance would be a significant claim, not a "dubious distinction."

Step 3: Final Answer:

"Maturity" is the most logical and expected characteristic for a writer of sixty-four. Proving this obvious fact is rightly described as a "dubious distinction."

Quick Tip

Pay close attention to words that indicate tone, such as "dubious," "ironically," or "unfortunately." These words provide crucial clues about the intended meaning and help you select the word that best fits the sentence's overall sentiment.

Questions 8 through 11 are based on the following reading passage, which consists of four paragraphs.

In the 1970's, two debates engaged many scholars of early United States history. One focused on the status of women, primarily White women. Turning on the so-called golden age theory, which posited that during the eighteenth-century colonial era, American women enjoyed a brief period of high status relative to their English contemporaries and to nineteenth-century American women, this debate pitted scholars who believed women's lives deteriorated after 1800 against those who thought women's lives had been no better before 1800. At issue were the causes of women's subordination: were these causes already in place when the English first settled North America or did they emerge with the rise of nineteenth-century industrial capitalism? The second debate, the so-called origins debate, concerned the emergence of racial slavery in the southern colonies: was slavery the inevitable result of the deep-rooted racial prejudice of early British colonists or did racial prejudice arise only after these planters instituted slave labor?

Although these debates are parallel in some respects, key differences distinguished them. Whereas the debate over women's status revolved around implicit comparisons of colonial women to their counterparts in the antebellum period (1800-1860), thus inviting comment from scholars of both historical periods, the origins debate was primarily confined to a discussion about slavery in colonial America. Second, in contrast to the newness of the debate over women's status and its continued currency throughout the early 1980's, the debate over race and slavery, begun in the 1950's, had lost some of its urgency with the publication of Morgan's *American Slavery, American Freedom* (1975), widely regarded as the last word on the subject. Each debate also assumed a different relationship to the groups whose histories it concerned. In its heyday, the origins debate focused mainly on White attitudes toward Africans rather than on Africans themselves. With few exceptions, such as Wood's *Black Majority* (1974) and Mullin's *Flight and Rebellion* (1972), which were centrally concerned with enslaved African men, most works pertaining to the origins debate focused on the White architects, mostly male, of racial slavery. In contrast, although women's historians were interested in the institutions and ideologies contributing to women's subordination, they were equally concerned with documenting women's experiences. As in the origins debate, however, early scholarship on colonial women defined its historical constituency narrowly, women's historians focusing mainly on affluent White women.

Over time, however, some initial differences between the approaches taken by scholars in the two fields faded. In the 1980's, historians of race and slavery in colonial America shifted their attention to enslaved people; interest in African American culture grew, thereby bringing enslaved women more prominently into view. Historians of early American women moved in similar directions during the decade and began to consider the effect of racial difference on women's experience.

8. The passage is primarily concerned with

- (A) showing how historians who were engaged in a particular debate influenced historians engaged in another debate
- (B) explaining why two initially parallel scholarly debates diverged in the 1980's
- (C) comparing two scholarly debates and discussing their histories
- (D) contrasting the narrow focus of one scholarly debate with the somewhat broader focus of another
- (E) evaluating the relative merits of the approaches used by historians engaged in two overlapping scholarly debates

Correct Answer: (C) comparing two scholarly debates and discussing their histories

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

This question asks for the main idea or primary purpose of the entire passage. To answer this, we need to synthesize the information from all four paragraphs to understand the author's overall goal.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

The passage introduces two historical debates from the 1970s: one on women's status and one on the origins of slavery.

Paragraph 1: Introduces both debates.

Paragraph 2: Discusses key differences between them (scope, timeline, urgency).

Paragraph 3: Compares their different approaches and notes a similarity in their narrow focus (origins debate on White men, women's debate on affluent White women).

Paragraph 4: Describes how the two fields converged in the 1980s.

The entire structure is a comparison and contrast of two scholarly fields, tracing their development over time.

Analyzing the Options:

(A) This is too specific. While the passage shows convergence, it doesn't focus heavily on direct "influence" from one group of historians on the other.

(B) This is incorrect. The passage states that the debates **converged** in the 1980s, not diverged.

(C) This accurately describes the overall structure and content. The author compares the debates on multiple points (their central questions, timelines, methodologies, and focus) and discusses their historical progression from their origins to their convergence in the 1980s.

(D) This is a misreading. The passage suggests both debates initially had a narrow focus.

While there were differences, this option doesn't capture the full scope of the comparison.

(E) The author describes the debates but does not "evaluate the relative merits" or judge one approach as superior to the other. The tone is descriptive and analytical, not evaluative.

Step 3: Final Answer:

The passage is primarily a comparative discussion of two scholarly debates, outlining their histories, differences, similarities, and eventual convergence. Therefore, option (C) is the best description of its main purpose.

Quick Tip

For "primary purpose" questions, consider the overall structure of the passage. Look for an answer choice that accurately reflects the function of each paragraph. A good main idea will encompass the introduction, development, and conclusion of the text.

9. It can be inferred that the author of the passage mentions *American Slavery, American Freedom* primarily in order to

(A) substantiate a point about the methodology that came to be prevalent among scholars engaged in the origins debate

(B) cite a major influence on those scholars who claimed that racial prejudice preceded the institution of slavery in colonial America

(C) show that some scholars who were engaged in the origins debate prior to the 1980's were interested in the experiences of enslaved people

(D) identify a reason for a certain difference in the late 1970's between the origins debate and the debate over American women's status

(E) contrast the kind of work produced by scholars engaged in the origins debate with the kind produced by scholars engaged in the debate over American women's status

Correct Answer: (D) identify a reason for a certain difference in the late 1970's between the origins debate and the debate over American women's status

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

This is a detail-in-context question. We need to understand why the author included the specific reference to Morgan's book, *American Slavery, American Freedom*, within the argument of the second paragraph.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

Let's examine the context in paragraph 2: "Second, in contrast to the newness of the debate over women's status and its continued currency throughout the early 1980's, the debate over race and slavery, begun in the 1950's, had lost some of its urgency with the publication of Morgan's *American Slavery, American Freedom* (1975), widely regarded as the last word on the subject."

The author is highlighting a **difference** between the two debates. The women's status debate

was new and ongoing, while the origins debate was older and had lost momentum. The book is cited as the **reason** for this loss of momentum.

Analyzing the Options:

- (A) The passage mentions the book's impact (being seen as the "last word"), not its methodology.
- (B) The passage does not specify which side of the origins debate the book supported.
- (C) The passage does not describe the content of the book, so we cannot infer this.
- (D) This aligns perfectly with the analysis. The book is mentioned to explain a key difference—the varying levels of "urgency" and "currency" of the two debates in the late 1970s and early 1980s.
- (E) The book is used to contrast the timelines and scholarly energy of the debates, not the specific "kind of work" produced.

Step 3: Final Answer:

The author mentions the book to explain why the origins debate had lost urgency, which was a key difference compared to the then-current debate on women's status.

Quick Tip

When a question asks why an author mentions a specific detail ("in order to..."), locate the detail in the passage and read the sentences immediately before and after. The purpose is almost always tied to the main point of that specific paragraph or section.

10. The passage suggests which of the following about the women's historians mentioned in the third paragraph?

- (A) They disputed certain claims regarding the status of eighteenth-century American women relative to women in England during the same period.
- (B) Their approach to the study of women's subordination had been partly influenced by earlier studies published by some scholars engaged in the origins debate.
- (C) Their work focused on the experiences of both White and African American women.
- (D) Their approach resembled the approach taken in studies by Wood and by Mullin in that they were interested in the experiences of people subjected to a system of subordination.
- (E) To some extent, they concurred with Wood and with Mullin about the origins of racism in colonial America.

Correct Answer: (D) Their approach resembled the approach taken in studies by Wood and by Mullin in that they were interested in the experiences of people subjected to a system of subordination.

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

This is an inference question that asks us to draw a conclusion about the "women's historians"

based on the information provided in the third paragraph.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

Paragraph 3 contrasts the focus of the two debates. The origins debate "focused mainly on White attitudes toward Africans rather than on Africans themselves." The exceptions were Wood and Mullin, who were "centrally concerned with enslaved African men." In contrast, the women's historians "were equally concerned with documenting women's experiences."

The key insight is to see the parallel: the mainstream origins debate focused on the powerful (the "White architects"), while both the women's historians and the exceptional historians (Wood and Mullin) focused on the experiences of the subordinated group.

Analyzing the Options:

(A) This refers to the "golden age theory" from the first paragraph, but the third paragraph doesn't discuss this specific dispute.

(B) The passage suggests a later convergence (in paragraph 4), not an early influence on the women's historians' approach.

(C) This is explicitly contradicted. Paragraph 3 states that these historians focused "mainly on affluent White women."

(D) This is the correct inference. The women's historians' focus on "documenting women's experiences" is analogous to Wood's and Mullin's focus on the experiences of "enslaved African men." Both groups centered their work on the people who were subjected to subordination, which set them apart from the main trend in the origins debate.

(E) The passage provides no information about the women's historians' views on the origins of racism.

Step 3: Final Answer:

The passage supports the inference that the women's historians shared a methodological focus with Wood and Mullin: they studied the experiences of the subordinated group itself.

Quick Tip

For inference questions, look for an answer that is a logical extension of the information given. The correct answer will not be stated directly but will be strongly supported by a synthesis of details presented in the text.

11. According to the passage, historical studies of race and slavery in early America that were produced during the 1980's differed from studies of that subject produced prior to the 1980's in that the studies produced during the 1980's

(A) gave more attention to the experiences of enslaved women

(B) gave less attention to the cultures of enslaved people

(C) were read by more scholars in other fields

(D) were more concerned with the institutions and ideologies that perpetuated racial prejudice in postcolonial America

(E) made direct comparisons between the subordination of White women and the subordination

of African American people

Correct Answer: (A) gave more attention to the experiences of enslaved women

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

This is a specific detail question asking about the changes in the field of race and slavery studies during the 1980s as described in the passage.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

The answer can be found directly in the final paragraph: "In the 1980's, historians of race and slavery in colonial America shifted their attention to enslaved people; interest in African American culture grew, thereby bringing enslaved women more prominently into view."

This sentence explicitly outlines the key differences between pre-1980s and 1980s studies. The new focus was on the enslaved people, their culture, and particularly enslaved women.

Analyzing the Options:

(A) gave more attention to the experiences of enslaved women.

This is directly supported by the phrase "bringing enslaved women more prominently into view."

(B) gave less attention to the cultures of enslaved people.

This contradicts the text, which says, "interest in African American culture grew."

(C) were read by more scholars in other fields.

The passage does not provide any information about the readership of these studies.

(D) were more concerned with the institutions and ideologies...

This describes the focus of the *earlier* studies (on the "White architects" of slavery), not the studies from the 1980s.

(E) made direct comparisons between the subordination of White women and... African American people.

While the two fields moved in "similar directions," the passage does not state that the slavery studies themselves began making these direct comparisons. It states that their focus shifted internally.

Step 3: Final Answer:

The passage explicitly states that the studies in the 1980s brought enslaved women more prominently into view, making option (A) the correct answer.

Quick Tip

For questions about a specific time period ("during the 1980's"), scan the passage for that date or time-related keywords. The answer is often located in the sentence containing that keyword.

13. I've long anticipated this retrospective of the artist's work, hoping that it would make BLANK judgments about him possible, but greater familiarity with

his paintings highlights their inherent BLANK and actually makes one's assessment BLANK.

Blank 1 Options: (A) modish, (B) settled, (C) detached

Blank 2 Options: (D) gloom, (E) ambiguity, (F) delicacy

Blank 3 Options: (G) similarly equivocal, (H) less sanguine, (I) more cynical

Correct Answer: (B) settled, (E) ambiguity, (G) similarly equivocal

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

This sentence completion question follows a contrast structure. The narrator hoped for one outcome from the retrospective (clarity), but the opposite occurred, leading to a different final result (uncertainty). We need to select words that fit this logical progression.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

Blank 1: The narrator hoped the retrospective would make a certain type of judgment possible. A retrospective is a comprehensive review, which typically aims to provide a clear and final understanding. Therefore, the narrator was hoping for definitive or conclusive judgments. Of the choices, **(B) settled** best captures this idea of finality and certainty.

Blank 2: The word "but" signals a turn. Instead of leading to settled judgments, greater familiarity with the paintings revealed an inherent quality that prevents certainty. **(E) ambiguity** is the perfect word, as it directly opposes the idea of a "settled" judgment. If the works are inherently ambiguous, it is difficult to come to a final conclusion about them.

Blank 3: This blank describes the consequence of the ambiguity. If the paintings are ambiguous, then the narrator's assessment of them would naturally become uncertain or hard to define. **(G) similarly equivocal** means similarly ambiguous or open to more than one interpretation. This logically follows from the discovery of the paintings' "inherent ambiguity."

Step 3: Final Answer:

The sentence logically flows as follows: The narrator hoped for **settled** judgments, but the paintings' inherent **ambiguity** made the final assessment **similarly equivocal**.

Quick Tip

In sentences with contrast words like "but," "however," or "although," look for words that create a logical opposition between the first part of the sentence and the second. The expectation set up in the first clause is usually reversed in the second.

14. Stories are a haunted genre; hardly BLANK kind of story, the ghost story is almost the paradigm of the form, and BLANK was undoubtedly one effect that Poe had in mind when he wrote about how stories work.

Blank 1 Options: (A) a debased, (B) a normative, (C) a meticulous

Blank 2 Options: (D) pessimism, (E) goose bumps, (F) curiosity

Correct Answer: (A) a debased, (E) goose bumps

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

This sentence makes a claim about the status of the ghost story within the larger "haunted genre." It uses a specific sentence structure to contrast a potential misconception with the actual reality.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

Blank 1: The structure "hardly X, ... is almost the paradigm" means "It is not X; on the contrary, it is the prime example." A "paradigm" is the quintessential model or pattern. The sentence is arguing against the idea that the ghost story is an inferior or low-quality form. The word **(A) a debased**, meaning lowered in quality or value, fits this structure perfectly. The sentence argues that the ghost story is hardly a debased form; in fact, it is the central example of the genre.

Blank 2: The sentence shifts to discuss an intended effect of such stories, specifically in the context of Edgar Allan Poe, a master of the genre. The "haunted genre" aims to provoke feelings of fear, suspense, and horror. **(E) goose bumps** is a colloquial but very effective term for the physical sensation of fear or unease that these stories are designed to create. It is a more direct and visceral effect than "pessimism" or "curiosity."

Step 3: Final Answer:

The completed sentence argues that the ghost story is hardly **a debased** form but rather the paradigm of the genre, and that creating **goose bumps** was a key intended effect for a writer like Poe.

Quick Tip

Pay attention to idiomatic structures like "hardly X...". This phrase is often used to strongly deny that something is X and to set up a contrasting point. Understanding this structure helps identify the correct word for the blank.

15. Given how BLANK the shortcomings of the standard economic model are in its portrayal of human behavior, the failure of many economists to respond to them is astonishing. They continue to fill the journals with yet more proofs of yet more BLANK theorems.

Blank 1 Options: (A) overlooked, (B) occasional, (C) patent

Blank 2 Options: (D) comprehensive, (E) improbable, (F) pervasive

Correct Answer: (C) patent, (F) pervasive

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

This sentence criticizes a group of economists. The first sentence establishes a cause-and-effect relationship: because the shortcomings of a model are so X, the failure to respond is astonishing. The second sentence describes the economists' misguided actions.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

Blank 1: The author finds the economists' failure to act "astonishing." This implies that the shortcomings of their model are extremely obvious and should not be ignored. The word **(C) patent**, which means easily recognizable or obvious, perfectly fits this context. If the shortcomings were "overlooked" or "occasional," the failure to respond would not be astonishing.

Blank 2: This blank describes the theorems that the economists continue to prove instead of addressing the model's flaws. The sentence suggests they are engaged in redundant or irrelevant work within their flawed system. They are proving theorems that are already widespread and accepted within that system, rather than challenging it. **(F) pervasive**, meaning widespread or prevalent, accurately describes such theorems. They are reinforcing the very system whose shortcomings are so patent.

Step 3: Final Answer:

The full sentence argues that given how **patent** (obvious) the model's shortcomings are, it's astonishing that economists keep proving yet more **pervasive** (widespread) theorems within that same flawed model.

Quick Tip

Look for words that signal the author's tone. Here, "astonishing" is a key indicator of the author's critical stance. The correct words for the blanks must align with this critical tone.

16. The playwright's approach is BLANK in that her works BLANK the theatrical devices normally used to create drama on the stage.

Blank 1 Options: (A) pedestrian, (B) startling, (C) celebrated

Blank 2 Options: (D) jettison, (E) experiment with, (F) distill

Correct Answer: (B) startling, (D) jettison

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

This sentence has two linked blanks. The second blank describes an action (what the playwright does with theatrical devices), and the first blank is a word that characterizes the approach defined by that action.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

Blank 2: Let's first analyze the action. To **(D) jettison** something means to abandon or discard it. If a playwright jettisons the devices normally used to create drama, they are taking a radical, unconventional step by throwing away the standard toolkit.

Blank 1: Now we need a word to describe this approach. An approach that abandons all normal conventions would be highly unusual and surprising. Therefore, **(B) startling** is the most appropriate description. It would not be "pedestrian" (which means dull and unoriginal, the opposite of this action) or necessarily "celebrated" (the sentence describes the approach itself, not its critical reception).

Putting them together: The combination of **startling** and **jettison** creates a logical and coherent sentence: "The playwright's approach is startling in that her works jettison the theatrical devices normally used to create drama on the stage." The surprising nature of her approach is explained by her radical act of discarding conventions.

Step 3: Final Answer:

The most logical pairing is **(B) startling** and **(D) jettison**.

Quick Tip

For questions with two interdependent blanks, try evaluating the second blank first. The second blank often describes a specific action or quality, making it easier to define. Once you understand the action, you can more easily choose the correct adjective in the first blank to describe it.

17. Scientists are not the only persons who examine the world about them by the use of rational processes, although they sometimes BLANK this impression by extending the definition of "scientist" to include anyone who is BLANK in his or her investigational practices.

Blank 1 Options: (A) conceal, (B) create, (C) undermine

Blank 2 Options: (D) intuitive, (E) haphazard, (F) logical

Correct Answer: (C) undermine, (F) logical

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

The sentence starts by stating a truth, then uses "although" to introduce a contrasting action by scientists that goes against this truth. We need to find words that correctly describe this contradictory behavior.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

Blank 1: The initial truth or "impression" is that people other than scientists can be rational. The word "although" indicates that scientists sometimes act in a way that opposes this idea.

Therefore, they must try to weaken or diminish this impression. The word **(C) undermine** fits perfectly, as it means to erode or weaken. "Create" would contradict the "although," and "conceal" is less precise.

Blank 2: This blank describes how scientists undermine the impression of shared rationality. They do so by "extending the definition of 'scientist' to include anyone who is...". To claim rationality as their own domain, they would define anyone who exhibits the core scientific trait of rational thought as a scientist. Therefore, the word must be **(F) logical**. By defining anyone who is logical as a scientist, they are essentially claiming that logic is the exclusive property of their group, thus undermining the idea that non-scientists can be rational in their own right.

Step 3: Final Answer:

The sentence correctly reads: Scientists are not the only ones who use rational processes, although they sometimes **undermine** this impression by extending the definition of "scientist" to include anyone who is **logical** in their practices.

Quick Tip

When you see a pronoun like "this" or "that," make sure you understand exactly what it refers to. In this sentence, "this impression" refers to the idea in the first clause ("Scientists are not the only persons who... use rational processes"). Correctly identifying the antecedent is key to solving the logic of the sentence.

Questions 18 and 19 are based on the following reading passage.

The most plausible justification for higher taxes on automobile fuel is that fuel consumption harms the environment and thus adds to the costs of traffic congestion. But the fact that burning fuel creates these "negative externalities" does not imply that no tax on fuel could ever be too high. Economics is precise about the tax that should, in principle, be levied to deal with negative externalities: the tax on a liter of fuel should be equal to the harm caused by using a liter of fuel. If the tax is more than that, its costs (including the inconvenience to those who would rather have used their cars) will exceed its benefits (including any reduction in congestion and pollution).

18. Which of the following best characterizes the function of the phrase, "the tax on a liter of fuel should be equal to the harm caused by a liter of fuel"? (This phrase occurs in the third sentence.)

- (A) It restates a point made earlier in the passage.
- (B) It provides the evidence on which a theory is based.
- (C) It presents a specific application of a general principle.
- (D) It summarizes a justification with which the author disagrees.
- (E) It suggests that the benefits of a particular strategy have been overestimated.

Correct Answer: (C) It presents a specific application of a general principle.

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

This question asks us to identify the rhetorical function of a specific phrase within the passage's argument. We need to analyze how this phrase relates to the ideas that come before it.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

The passage first introduces the **general principle** of using taxes to deal with "negative externalities." This is a broad economic concept.

The third sentence then becomes more specific: "Economics is precise about the tax that should, in principle, be levied to deal with negative externalities: the tax on a liter of fuel should be equal to the harm caused by using a liter of fuel."

The phrase in question takes the general idea of taxing externalities and applies it directly to the specific case of automobile fuel. It provides a concrete rule for how the general principle should be implemented in this particular context.

Analyzing the Options:

(A) It restates a point made earlier in the passage.

This is incorrect. The earlier points are more general; this phrase introduces a new, more specific idea.

(B) It provides the evidence on which a theory is based.

This is incorrect. The phrase is part of the theory or principle itself, not the empirical evidence supporting it.

(C) It presents a specific application of a general principle.

This is correct. The general principle is how to tax negative externalities, and the phrase describes the specific application to fuel taxes.

(D) It summarizes a justification with which the author disagrees.

This is incorrect. The author presents this as the correct, precise economic view. The author's disagreement is with any tax that is **too high**, not with this principle for setting the tax.

(E) It suggests that the benefits of a particular strategy have been overestimated.

This is incorrect. The phrase is about how to properly calculate the tax, not about whether the benefits of the tax are overestimated.

Step 3: Final Answer:

The phrase serves to apply the general economic principle of taxing negative externalities to the specific context of fuel consumption.

Quick Tip

When asked about the function of a sentence or phrase, look for a "general to specific" or "claim to evidence" structure. Here, the author moves from a broad economic idea to a precise, practical rule, which is a classic example of applying a general principle.

19. The word "exceed" appears in the last sentence of the passage. That sentence reads, "If the tax is more than that, its costs (including the inconvenience to those who would rather have used their cars) will exceed its benefits (including any reduction in congestion and pollution)." In the context in which it appears, "exceed" most nearly means

- (A) outstrip
- (B) magnify
- (C) delimit
- (D) offset
- (E) supplant

Correct Answer: (A) outstrip

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

This is a vocabulary-in-context question. We need to find the synonym for "exceed" that best fits the meaning of the final sentence.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

The sentence describes a situation where a tax is set too high. In this case, the negative consequences ("costs") of the tax will be greater than the positive consequences ("benefits"). The word "exceed" is used to mean "be greater than" or "surpass."

Analyzing the Options:

(A) outstrip: This word means to move faster than and overtake someone or something, or to surpass. In a comparative context, it means to be greater than or to become larger than. This is a perfect match for the meaning of "exceed" in the sentence.

(B) magnify: This means to make something appear larger than it is. The costs don't magnify the benefits; they are simply larger than them.

(C) delimit: This means to determine the limits or boundaries of something. This does not fit the context.

(D) offset: This means to counteract something by having an opposing force or effect. This is the opposite of the intended meaning.

(E) supplant: This means to supersede and replace. The costs do not replace the benefits; they just outweigh them.

Step 3: Final Answer:

"Outstrip" is the best synonym for "exceed" in this context, as both convey the idea of the costs being greater than the benefits.

Quick Tip

When testing synonyms in a vocabulary-in-context question, substitute each option into the sentence. The correct answer will preserve the original meaning and logical sense of the sentence without introducing any awkwardness.

Questions 20 and 21 are based on the following reading passage.

Objectively, of course, the various ecosystems that sustain life on the planet proceed independently of human agency, just as they operated before the hectic ascendancy of Homo sapiens. But it is also true that it is difficult to think of a single such system that has not, for better or worse, been substantially modified by human culture. Nor is this simply the work of the industrial centuries. It has been happening since the days of ancient Mesopotamia. It is coeval with the origins of writing, and has occurred throughout our social existence. And it is this irreversibly modified world, from the polar caps to the equatorial forests, that is all the nature we have.

20. It can be inferred from the passage that the author would agree with which of the following statements? (Select all that apply.)

- (A) Over time, the impact of human culture on the natural world has been largely benign.
- (B) It is a mistake to think that the natural world contains many areas of pristine wilderness.
- (C) The only substantial effects that human agency has had on ecosystems have been inadvertent.

Correct Answer: (B) It is a mistake to think that the natural world contains many areas of pristine wilderness.

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

This question asks us to identify which statement(s) can be logically inferred from the passage. We must evaluate each option based on the information and tone provided by the author.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

The author's central argument is that human culture has "substantially modified" nearly every ecosystem on Earth. This modification is described as ancient, widespread ("from the polar caps to the equatorial forests"), and "irreversible." The conclusion is that this "modified world ... is all the nature we have."

Analyzing the Options:

(A) Over time, the impact of human culture on the natural world has been largely benign.

The passage does not support this. The author explicitly states the modifications have been "for better or worse," which is a neutral stance, not a positive one like "benign."

(B) It is a mistake to think that the natural world contains many areas of pristine wilderness.

This is a direct and strong inference from the text. "Pristine wilderness" means an area untouched by humans. If virtually every system has been "substantially modified" and this "irreversibly modified world... is all the nature we have," then it is indeed a mistake to believe that many pristine areas still exist. The author's argument is that such areas are nearly impossible to find.

(C) The only substantial effects that human agency has had on ecosystems have been inadvertent.

The passage does not discuss the *intent* of human actions. It focuses on the effects, not whether they were deliberate or accidental ("inadvertent"). Therefore, this statement cannot be inferred.

Step 3: Final Answer:

Only statement (B) is strongly supported by the author's argument that the entire planet has been modified by human culture.

Quick Tip

For inference questions, be wary of answer choices that use absolute words ("only," "always") or introduce concepts not mentioned in the text (like "benign" or "inadvertent"). The correct inference should be a logical consequence of the author's stated claims.

21. The phrase "coeval with" appears in the fifth sentence of the passage. That sentence reads, "It is coeval with the origins of writing, and has occurred throughout our social existence." In the context in which it appears, "coeval with" most nearly means

- (A) influenced by
- (B) older than
- (C) coincident with
- (D) unimpeded by
- (E) similar to

Correct Answer: (C) coincident with

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

This is a vocabulary-in-context question. We must determine the meaning of "coeval with" based on the sentence and the overall argument of the passage.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

The passage argues that human modification of the environment is not a recent phenomenon but an ancient one, dating back to Mesopotamia. The fifth sentence reinforces this point by

stating that this modification ("It") is "coeval with the origins of writing." The author is establishing a temporal link, suggesting that human modification of nature has been happening for as long as human civilization (as marked by writing) has existed. Therefore, "coeval with" means existing or originating during the same time period.

Analyzing the Options:

(A) **influenced by:** This suggests a causal relationship, which is not the primary meaning here. The point is about timing, not cause.

(B) **older than:** This contradicts the intended meaning of occurring at the same time.

(C) **coincident with:** This means occurring at or during the same time. This is a perfect synonym for "coeval with."

(D) **unimpeded by:** This means not obstructed by, which is irrelevant to the context of time.

(E) **similar to:** This suggests a resemblance, but the relationship described is temporal, not comparative.

Step 3: Final Answer:

"Coincident with" best captures the meaning of "coeval with," which is used to indicate that two things originated or existed at the same time.

Quick Tip

When you encounter a difficult vocabulary word, use the context clues around it. The author is tracing a historical timeline ("since the days of ancient Mesopotamia," "origins of writing," "throughout our social existence"). These clues strongly suggest the word relates to time.

22. Dreams are BLANK in and of themselves, but, when combined with other data, they can tell us much about the dreamer. Select the two answer choices that, when substituted for the blank, fit the context and produce the two sentences most nearly alike in meaning.

- (A) astonishing
- (B) disordered
- (C) harmless
- (D) inscrutable
- (E) revealing
- (F) uninformative

Correct Answer: (D) inscrutable, (F) uninformative

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

This is a sentence equivalence question. We need to find two words that are synonymous in this specific context and create sentences with the same meaning. The sentence structure hinges on

the contrast word "but."

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

The sentence sets up a contrast: Dreams by themselves are BLANK, *but* with other data, they are informative ("can tell us much"). This means the word in the blank must be the opposite of informative. We are looking for words that mean "not informative" or "difficult to understand" when considered in isolation.

Analyzing the Options:

(D) inscrutable: This word means impossible to understand or interpret. If dreams are inscrutable on their own, it creates a perfect contrast with them becoming informative when combined with other data.

(F) uninformative: This word means not providing useful or interesting information. This also fits the logic of the sentence perfectly and is a direct synonym for "inscrutable" in this context.

The other options do not fit the logical contrast:

(A) astonishing: Creates no contrast.

(B) disordered: While dreams can be disordered, this doesn't directly contrast with being informative.

(C) harmless: Irrelevant to the theme of information.

(E) revealing: This is the opposite of the required meaning.

Step 3: Final Answer:

Both "inscrutable" and "uninformative" correctly convey the idea that dreams, when viewed alone, are difficult or impossible to get meaning from, which contrasts with their potential when analyzed with more data.

Quick Tip

In sentence equivalence, always identify the key structural words. Words like "but," "although," "however," and "while" signal a contrast, which is a powerful clue for determining the meaning of the missing word.

23. Linguistic science confirms what experienced users of ASL—American Sign Language—have always implicitly known: ASL is a grammatically BLANK language, as capable of expressing a full range of syntactic relations as any natural spoken language. Select the two answer choices that, when substituted for the blank, fit the context and produce the two sentences most nearly alike in meaning.

- (A) complete
- (B) economical
- (C) redundant
- (D) spare
- (E) unique

(F) unlimited

Correct Answer: (A) complete, (F) unlimited

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

This is a sentence equivalence question where the second part of the sentence defines the word in the blank. We need to find two words that match the given definition.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

The colon (:) indicates that the second clause will explain or elaborate on the first. The sentence describes ASL as "as capable of expressing a full range of syntactic relations as any natural spoken language." This means it lacks nothing in grammatical structure or expressive power. We are looking for words that mean "whole," "full," or "not lacking anything."

Analyzing the Options:

(A) complete: This word means having all the necessary or appropriate parts. A "grammatically complete" language is one that has a full system of grammar and syntax, which perfectly matches the definition provided.

(F) unlimited: This word, in context, means not limited or restricted in its capabilities. An "unlimited language" would be one that can express a full range, just like any other natural language. It serves as a good synonym for "complete" in describing ASL's expressive capacity.

The other options are incorrect:

(B) economical / (D) spare: These suggest efficiency or brevity, not fullness of range.

(C) redundant: This means not or no longer needed or useful, the opposite of the intended meaning.

(E) unique: The sentence explicitly compares ASL's capability to other languages, suggesting it is equivalent, not necessarily one-of-a-kind.

Step 3: Final Answer:

Both "complete" and "unlimited" describe a language that is fully formed and not deficient in its expressive capabilities, fitting the definition given in the sentence.

Quick Tip

Look for punctuation clues. A colon (:) often signals that a definition, explanation, or example is about to follow. Use the information after the colon to predict the meaning of the word in the blank before it.

24. The macromolecule RNA is common to all living beings, and DNA, which is found in all organisms except some bacteria, is almost as BLANK. Select the two answer choices that, when substituted for the blank, fit the context and produce the two sentences most nearly alike in meaning.

- (A) comprehensive
- (B) fundamental
- (C) inclusive
- (D) universal
- (E) significant
- (F) ubiquitous

Correct Answer: (D) universal, (F) ubiquitous

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

This sentence equivalence question uses a parallel structure to define the blank. We need to find two words that describe DNA's prevalence, similar to how RNA is described.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

The sentence establishes a baseline: "RNA is common to all living beings." The word "and" and the phrase "almost as" indicate that the word in the blank should have a similar meaning to "common to all." We are looking for words that mean "widespread" or "found everywhere."

Analyzing the Options:

(D) universal: This word means relating to or done by all people or things in the world or in a particular group. In a biological context, it means found throughout the living world. This is a perfect match.

(F) ubiquitous: This word means present, appearing, or found everywhere. It is a direct and strong synonym for "universal" in this context.

The other options do not fit as well:

(A) comprehensive / (C) inclusive: These words refer to containing all elements, not being present in all places.

(B) fundamental / (E) significant: These words mean "important" or "basic." While DNA is both, the sentence's logic is about its prevalence, not its importance.

Step 3: Final Answer:

Both "universal" and "ubiquitous" accurately describe DNA as being nearly as widespread among living things as RNA is, thus completing the sentence's comparison logically.

Quick Tip

Pay attention to comparison and parallel structures. Words like "and," "similarly," "like," and "as" often indicate that the blank requires a word that echoes a concept already mentioned in the sentence.

25. Early critics of Emily Dickinson's poetry mistook for simple-mindedness the surface of artlessness that in fact she constructed with such BLANK. Select the two answer choices that, when substituted for the blank, fit the context and produce

the two sentences most nearly alike in meaning.

- (A) astonishment
- (B) craft
- (C) cunning
- (D) innocence
- (E) naïveté
- (F) vexation

Correct Answer: (B) craft, (C) cunning

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

This sentence equivalence question is built on a contrast between appearance and reality. The word for the blank must describe the true nature of Dickinson's method, which is the opposite of the "simple-mindedness" that critics perceived.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

The key phrases are "mistook" and "in fact." The critics were wrong. What appeared to be "simple-mindedness" and "artlessness" was actually a "constructed" surface. The act of constructing something to look artless requires skill, deliberation, and cleverness. Therefore, the blank needs words that mean "skill" or "cleverness."

Analyzing the Options:

(B) craft: This word means skill and expertise in an artistic practice. To construct something with craft implies great skill and intention, which directly contradicts the idea of simple-mindedness.

(C) cunning: This word means having skill in achieving one's ends, often by deceit. Since Dickinson's "artlessness" was a constructed illusion, "cunning" fits well, highlighting the deceptive skill involved.

The other options are incorrect:

(A) astonishment / (F) vexation: These are emotions and do not describe a quality of construction.

(D) innocence / (E) naïveté: These words describe the very qualities the critics mistakenly saw. They are the opposite of what is needed to describe how the surface was constructed.

Step 3: Final Answer:

Both "craft" and "cunning" describe the high level of skill and deliberate artistry Dickinson used to create a surface that appeared simple, fitting the sentence's contrast between perception and reality.

Quick Tip

Look for "appearance vs. reality" contrasts. Phrases like "mistook for," "seemed," "appeared," and "in fact" often signal that the author is correcting a common misconception. The correct word for the blank will represent the hidden reality.

Section 2 Verbal Reasoning

25 questions

1. In the long run, high-technology communications cannot BLANK more traditional face-to-face family togetherness, in Aspinall's view. Select the two answer choices that, when substituted for the blank, fit the context and produce the two sentences most nearly alike in meaning.

- (A) ameliorate
- (B) compromise
- (C) supersede
- (D) approximate
- (E) enervate
- (F) supplant

Correct Answer: (C) supersede, (F) supplant

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

This is a sentence equivalence question. We need to find two words that fit the sentence's meaning and are synonymous in this context. The sentence expresses the idea that technology, despite its advances, cannot take the place of or replace traditional family interaction.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

The sentence argues for the enduring value of face-to-face interaction. The blank requires a word that means "replace" or "take the place of." We are looking for verbs that convey this sense of substitution.

Analyzing the Options:

(C) supersede: This means to take the place of (a person or thing previously in authority or use); to supplant. This fits the context perfectly.

(F) supplant: This means to supersede and replace. This is a direct synonym of "supersede" and also fits the context perfectly.

The other options do not fit:

(A) ameliorate: to make better.

(B) compromise: to weaken or undermine.

- (D) approximate: to come close to or be similar to something. While technology might approximate face-to-face contact, the sentence is making a stronger claim that it cannot fully replace it.
- (E) enervate: to weaken.

Step 3: Final Answer:

Both "supersede" and "supplant" correctly convey the meaning that technology cannot replace traditional family togetherness.

Quick Tip

In sentence equivalence questions, focus on the core idea of the sentence. Here, the core idea is "technology vs. tradition." The sentence argues that tradition (face-to-face togetherness) cannot be replaced by technology. Look for words that directly mean "replace."

2. Even in this business, where BLANK is part of everyday life, a talent for lying is not something usually found on one's resume. Select the two answer choices that, when substituted for the blank, fit the context and produce the two sentences most nearly alike in meaning.

- (A) aspiration
- (B) mendacity
- (C) prevarication
- (D) insensitivity
- (E) baseness
- (F) avarice

Correct Answer: (B) mendacity, (C) prevarication

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

This is a sentence equivalence question where the second part of the sentence provides a strong clue to the meaning of the word in the blank. We need to find two words that are synonyms for the concept described.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

The sentence explicitly mentions "a talent for lying." This is a direct definition of the word that should fill the blank. The sentence structure implies that although some level of dishonesty is common in "this business," outright lying isn't advertised. We are looking for nouns that mean "dishonesty" or "lying."

Analyzing the Options:

(B) mendacity: This means untruthfulness; the tendency to lie. This is a perfect match.

(C) prevarication: This means to speak or act in an evasive way; to lie. This is also a perfect

match and a strong synonym for mendacity.

The other options are incorrect:

- (A) aspiration: a hope or ambition.
- (D) insensitivity: lack of concern for others' feelings.
- (E) baseness: lack of moral principles. While related, it's more general than lying.
- (F) avarice: extreme greed.

Step 3: Final Answer:

Both "mendacity" and "prevarication" refer to lying or untruthfulness, fitting the clue "a talent for lying" provided in the sentence.

Quick Tip

Look for direct definitions within the sentence. Often, a sentence will define the missing word either before or after the blank. Here, "a talent for lying" is a clear pointer to the correct answer.

3. A restaurant's menu is generally reflected in its decor; however despite this restaurant's BLANK appearance it is pedestrian in the menu it offers. Select the two answer choices that, when substituted for the blank, fit the context and produce the two sentences most nearly alike in meaning.

- (A) elegant
- (B) tawdry
- (C) modern
- (D) traditional
- (E) conventional
- (F) chic

Correct Answer: (A) elegant, (F) chic

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

This is a sentence equivalence question based on contrast. The word "however" signals that the restaurant's appearance is the opposite of its "pedestrian" menu. We need to find two words that describe an appearance that contrasts with a dull, ordinary menu.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

"Pedestrian" means dull, uninspired, or commonplace. The restaurant's menu is being criticized as such. The contrast word "however" tells us that its appearance is the opposite of pedestrian. Therefore, we are looking for words that mean stylish, sophisticated, or impressive.

Analyzing the Options:

(A) elegant: This means graceful and stylish in appearance or manner. This is a strong

contrast to "pedestrian."

(F) chic: This means elegantly and stylishly fashionable. It is a direct synonym for "elegant" in this context and also provides the necessary contrast.

The other options do not fit the contrast:

(B) tawdry: cheap and gaudy. This would match a pedestrian menu, not contrast with it.

(C) modern: could be pedestrian.

(D) traditional / (E) conventional: These words are close in meaning to "pedestrian" and do not create a contrast.

Step 3: Final Answer:

Both "elegant" and "chic" describe a stylish and sophisticated appearance that would contrast sharply with a "pedestrian" menu.

Quick Tip

Identify contrast words like "however," "despite," "although," and "but." These are critical signposts that tell you to look for a word with the opposite meaning of a key concept in the sentence. Here, the opposite of "pedestrian" is "elegant" or "chic."

4. International financial issues are typically BLANK by the United States media because they are too technical to make snappy headlines and too inaccessible to people who lack a background in economics. Select the two answer choices that, when substituted for the blank, fit the context and produce the two sentences most nearly alike in meaning.

- (A) neglected
- (B) slighted
- (C) overrated
- (D) hidden
- (E) criticized
- (F) repudiated

Correct Answer: (A) neglected, (B) slighted

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

This is a sentence equivalence question with a cause-and-effect structure. The word "because" introduces the reasons why the media treats financial issues in a certain way. We need to find two words that describe the effect of these reasons.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

The reasons given are that the issues are "too technical" and "too inaccessible." Issues with these qualities are unlikely to receive much media attention. The media would likely ignore them or give them minimal coverage. We are looking for words that mean "ignored" or "given

little attention.”

Analyzing the Options:

(A) neglected: This means suffering from a lack of proper care or attention. This perfectly describes how the media would treat complex topics.

(B) slighted: This means to treat with indifference or to give little attention to. It is an excellent synonym for “neglected” in this context.

The other options are incorrect:

(C) overrated: to have a higher opinion of than is deserved. This doesn’t fit the reasons given.

(D) hidden: this implies a deliberate act of concealment, whereas “neglected” suggests a passive lack of attention.

(E) criticized: the media isn’t paying enough attention to criticize them.

(F) repudiated: to reject or deny the validity of.

Step 3: Final Answer:

Both “neglected” and “slighted” accurately describe the lack of attention given by the media to technical and inaccessible financial issues.

Quick Tip

Use the “because” clause to predict the word in the blank. The reasons provided (too technical, too inaccessible) lead to a logical consequence. What is the logical result of something being hard to report on? It gets ignored. This prediction points directly to “neglected” and “slighted.”

5. While in many ways their personalities could not have been more different—she was ebullient where he was glum, relaxed where he was awkward, garrulous where he was BLANK — they were surprisingly well suited. Select the two answer choices that, when substituted for the blank, fit the context and produce the two sentences most nearly alike in meaning.

(A) solicitous

(B) munificent

(C) irresolute

(D) laconic

(E) fastidious

(F) taciturn

Correct Answer: (D) laconic, (F) taciturn

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

This sentence equivalence question is built on a series of parallel contrasts. We need to find

two words that are synonyms and provide the logical opposite to the word "garrulous."

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

The sentence lists pairs of opposite personality traits: ebullient (lively) vs. glum (sullen), and relaxed vs. awkward. The final pair contrasts "garrulous" with the word in the blank. "Garrulous" means excessively talkative, especially on trivial matters. Therefore, we need words that mean "not talkative," "reserved in speech," or "using few words."

Analyzing the Options:

(D) laconic: This means (of a person, speech, or style of writing) using very few words. This is a direct antonym of garrulous.

(F) taciturn: This means (of a person) reserved or uncommunicative in speech; saying little. This is also a direct antonym of garrulous and a strong synonym for laconic.

The other options do not fit the contrast:

(A) solicitous: showing interest or concern.

(B) munificent: very generous.

(C) irresolute: indecisive.

(E) fastidious: very attentive to detail; hard to please.

Step 3: Final Answer:

Both "laconic" and "taciturn" describe someone who says very little, providing the correct parallel contrast to "garrulous."

Quick Tip

In sentences with parallel structure, the relationships between words will be consistent. If the structure is a series of contrasts (A vs. B, C vs. D), then the final pair must also be a contrast. Identify the meaning of the known word ("garrulous") and find two options that mean the opposite.

Questions 6 through 8 are based on the following reading passage.

Music critics have consistently defined James P. Johnson as a great early jazz pianist, originator of the 1920's Harlem "stride" style, and an important blues and jazz composer. In addition, however, Johnson was an innovator in classical music, composing symphonic music that incorporated American, and especially African American, traditions.

Such a blend of musical elements was not entirely new: by 1924 both Milhaud and Gershwin had composed classical works that incorporated elements of jazz. Johnson, a serious musician more experienced than most classical composers with jazz, blues, spirituals, and popular music, was particularly suited to expand Milhaud's and Gershwin's experiments. In 1927 he completed his first large-scale work, the blues- and jazz-inspired *Yamekraw*, which included borrowings from spirituals and Johnson's own popular songs. *Yamekraw*, premiered successfully in Carnegie Hall, was a major achievement for Johnson, becoming his most frequently performed extended work. It demonstrated vividly the possibility of assimilating contemporary popular music into the symphonic tradition.

6. The passage states that Johnson composed all of the following EXCEPT

- (A) jazz works
- (B) popular songs
- (C) symphonic music
- (D) spirituals
- (E) blues pieces

Correct Answer: (D) spirituals

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

This is a detail-oriented question with the negative keyword "EXCEPT." We need to scan the passage to find which of the listed musical forms Johnson composed, and identify the one that is not mentioned as his own composition.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

Let's check the passage for each option:

(A) jazz works: The first sentence calls him a "great early jazz pianist" and "jazz composer." So, he composed jazz works.

(B) popular songs: The second paragraph mentions that his work *Yamekraw* included "Johnson's own popular songs." So, he composed popular songs.

(C) symphonic music: The first paragraph states he was an "innovator in classical music, composing symphonic music." So, he composed symphonic music.

(E) blues pieces: The first sentence calls him an "important blues... composer," and the second paragraph describes *Yamekraw* as "blues- and jazz-inspired." So, he composed blues pieces.

(D) spirituals: The second paragraph states that Johnson was experienced with spirituals and that *Yamekraw* "included borrowings from spirituals." This indicates he used or incorporated existing spirituals, not that he composed them himself. The passage contrasts this with "Johnson's own popular songs," further highlighting the distinction.

Step 3: Final Answer:

The passage states that Johnson borrowed from spirituals, but it does not state that he composed them. Therefore, spirituals are the correct answer for this EXCEPT question.

Quick Tip

For "EXCEPT" questions, use a process of elimination. Go through each answer choice one by one and find the exact sentence in the passage that supports it. The one choice that you cannot find direct support for is the correct answer. Pay close attention to precise wording like "borrowings from."

7. The author suggests which of the following about most classical composers of the early 1920's? (Select all that apply.)

- (A) They were strongly influenced by the musical experiments of Milhaud and Gershwin.
- (B) They had little working familiarity with such forms of American music as jazz, blues, and popular songs.
- (C) They made few attempts to introduce innovations into the classical symphonic tradition.

Correct Answer: (B) They had little working familiarity with such forms of American music as jazz, blues, and popular songs.

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

This is an inference question asking what the passage implies about typical classical composers of the era. We need to look at how the author contrasts James P. Johnson with these other composers.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

The key sentence is in the second paragraph: "Johnson, a serious musician more experienced than most classical composers with jazz, blues, spirituals, and popular music, was particularly suited to expand Milhaud's and Gershwin's experiments."

The phrase "more experienced than most classical composers" is a direct comparison. If Johnson was *more* experienced, it logically implies that "most classical composers" were *less* experienced with these forms of music.

Analyzing the Options:

(A) They were strongly influenced by the musical experiments of Milhaud and Gershwin.

The passage presents Milhaud and Gershwin as innovators. It does not state that most other composers were influenced by them.

(B) They had little working familiarity with such forms of American music as jazz, blues, and popular songs.

This is a direct inference from the statement that Johnson was "more experienced than most classical composers" with these genres. If he had more experience, they must have had less, or "little working familiarity." This is a valid inference.

(C) They made few attempts to introduce innovations into the classical symphonic tradition.

The passage states that the blend of styles was "not entirely new," citing Milhaud and Gershwin as examples of innovators. It doesn't give enough information to make a general statement about what "most" composers were doing.

Step 3: Final Answer:

The only statement that can be reliably inferred is (B), based on the direct comparison made between Johnson and his contemporaries.

Quick Tip

Inference questions often rely on comparative language. When an author says someone is "more X than Y," it provides a powerful clue about the characteristics of Y. Use these direct comparisons to draw logical conclusions.

8. The author suggests that most critics have

- (A) underrated the popularity of Yamekraw
- (B) undervalued Johnson's musical abilities
- (C) had little interest in Johnson's influence on jazz
- (D) had little regard for classical works that incorporate popular music
- (E) neglected Johnson's contribution to classical symphonic music

Correct Answer: (E) neglected Johnson's contribution to classical symphonic music

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

This question asks about the author's view of "most critics." We need to analyze the beginning of the passage where the author describes the typical critical assessment of Johnson.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

The passage opens with: "Music critics have consistently defined James P. Johnson as a great early jazz pianist... and an important blues and jazz composer." This is what critics *do* acknowledge.

The author then introduces a contrast with the phrase "In addition, however...": "In addition, however, Johnson was an innovator in classical music..."

The structure "Critics see X. However, there is also Y" implies that critics have overlooked or failed to emphasize Y. In this case, Y is Johnson's role as an innovator in classical music.

Analyzing the Options:

(A) underrated the popularity of Yamekraw: The passage says *Yamekraw* was "premiered successfully" and became his "most frequently performed extended work," but doesn't mention critics' views on its popularity.

(B) undervalued Johnson's musical abilities: Critics called him a "great" pianist and "important" composer, so they clearly valued his abilities in jazz and blues.

(C) had little interest in Johnson's influence on jazz: This is the opposite of what the passage states. They consistently define him by his role in jazz.

(D) had little regard for classical works that incorporate popular music: The passage does not discuss the general views of critics on this topic.

(E) neglected Johnson's contribution to classical symphonic music: This is the correct inference. By framing Johnson's classical work as an "In addition, however," the author strongly suggests that this is an area that critics have not focused on, or have neglected, in their assessments.

Step 3: Final Answer:

The author's argument structure implies that critics have focused on Johnson's jazz and blues work while neglecting his important contributions to classical music.

Quick Tip

Pay attention to structural words that signal the author's own argument, like "however," "in addition," "but," and "yet." These words often introduce a point the author feels is overlooked or needs to be added to the conventional view.

Questions 9 and 10 are based on the following reading passage.

Scholarship on political newspapers and their editors is dominated by the view that as the United States grew, the increasing influence of the press led, ultimately, to the neutral reporting from which we benefit today. Pasley considers this view oversimplified, because neutrality was not a goal of early national newspaper editing, even when editors disingenuously stated that they aimed to tell all sides of a story. Rather, the intensely partisan ideologies represented in newspapers of the early republic led to a clear demarcation between traditional and republican values. The editors responsible for the papers' content—especially those with republican agendas—began to see themselves as central figures in the development of political consciousness in the United States.

9. The passage suggests that Pasley would agree with which of the following statements about the political role of newspapers? (Select all that apply.)

- (A) Newspapers today are in many cases much less neutral in their political reporting than is commonly held by scholars.
- (B) Newspapers in the early United States normally declared quite openly their refusal to tell all sides of most political stories.
- (C) The editorial policies of some early United States newspapers became a counterweight to proponents of traditional values.

Correct Answer: (C) The editorial policies of some early United States newspapers became a counterweight to proponents of traditional values.

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

This question asks us to identify statements that align with Pasley's views as presented in the passage. We need to carefully analyze Pasley's argument and evaluate each option against it.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

Pasley's main points are:

1. The traditional view of a linear progression to neutral reporting is "oversimplified."
2. Early newspapers were not neutral; they were "intensely partisan."

3. Editors sometimes "disingenuously stated" they were telling all sides, meaning they were not open about their bias.
4. The partisan ideologies led to a "clear demarcation between traditional and republican values."
5. Editors, especially republican ones, saw themselves as central to developing political consciousness.

Analyzing the Options:

(A) Newspapers today are in many cases much less neutral in their political reporting than is commonly held by scholars.

The passage only discusses Pasley's views on "early national newspaper editing." It provides no information about Pasley's opinion on newspapers "today." Therefore, this cannot be inferred.

(B) Newspapers in the early United States normally declared quite openly their refusal to tell all sides of most political stories.

This is contradicted by the passage. Pasley argues that editors "disingenuously stated that they aimed to tell all sides of a story." "Disingenuously" means insincerely. This implies they pretended to be fair rather than openly declaring their bias.

(C) The editorial policies of some early United States newspapers became a counterweight to proponents of traditional values.

This is strongly supported by the text. The passage states that "intensely partisan ideologies... led to a clear demarcation between traditional and republican values." It also notes that editors with "republican agendas" were especially important. This implies that these republican newspapers were actively promoting a set of values that were distinct from and opposed to "traditional" values, thus acting as a counterweight.

Step 3: Final Answer:

Only statement (C) is supported by Pasley's argument as presented in the passage.

Quick Tip

For questions asking about a specific scholar's view within a passage, isolate all the claims attributed to that person. Be careful not to generalize beyond the scope of the text (e.g., from "early newspapers" to "newspapers today").

10. The word "disingenuously" appears in the second sentence of the passage. That sentence reads, "Pasley considers this view oversimplified, because neutrality was not a goal of early national newspaper editing, even when editors disingenuously stated that they aimed to tell all sides of a story." In the context in which it appears, "disingenuously" most nearly means:

- (A) insincerely
- (B) guilelessly
- (C) obliquely

- (D) resolutely
- (E) pertinaciously

Correct Answer: (A) insincerely

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

This is a vocabulary-in-context question. We need to determine the meaning of "disingenuously" based on the logic of the sentence.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

Pasley's argument is that "neutrality was not a goal" for early editors. The sentence then presents a piece of conflicting evidence: these same editors "stated that they aimed to tell all sides of a story." The word "disingenuously" must resolve this conflict. If the editors' true goal was not neutrality, but they claimed it was, then their claim must not have been genuine or honest. They were pretending.

Analyzing the Options:

(A) insincerely: This means not expressing genuine feelings; not sincere. This perfectly captures the idea that the editors were saying something they did not truly mean or intend to do.

(B) guilelessly: This means innocently and without deception. It is the direct opposite of the required meaning.

(C) obliquely: This means indirectly or not in a direct way. While their statements might have been indirect, "insincerely" better captures the intentional deception implied by Pasley's argument.

(D) resolutely: This means with firm determination. It describes the manner of an action, not its truthfulness.

(E) pertinaciously: This means holding firmly to an opinion or course of action; stubbornly. It also does not relate to sincerity.

Step 3: Final Answer:

"Insincerely" is the best fit, as it explains the contradiction between the editors' stated aims (telling all sides) and their actual partisan goals.

Quick Tip

When trying to define a word in context, look for contradictions or contrasts in the sentence. The word in question often serves to bridge the logical gap. Here, the gap is between the editors' real goal (partisanship) and their stated goal (neutrality). The bridge is insincerity.

11. The BLANK nature of classical tragedy in Athens belies the modern image of tragedy: in the modern view tragedy is austere and stripped down, its representations of ideological and emotional conflicts so superbly compressed that there's nothing BLANK for time to erode.

Blank 1 Options: (A) unadorned, (B) harmonious, (C) multifaceted

Blank 2 Options: (D) inalienable, (E) exigent, (F) extraneous

Correct Answer: (C) multifaceted, (F) extraneous

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

This text completion question is built on a contrast, indicated by the word "believes." The nature of classical tragedy is the opposite of the "modern image." We must first understand the modern image to determine the nature of the classical one.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

Blank 1: The modern image of tragedy is described as "austere and stripped down." "Believes" means contradicts. Therefore, classical tragedy must have been the opposite of austere and stripped down. It must have been complex, rich, and . (C) **multifaceted**, meaning having many faces or aspects, is the perfect word to describe this complexity and contrast with the "stripped down" modern view.

Blank 2: This blank describes what is missing from the modern, "superbly compressed" version of tragedy. If something is compressed and stripped down, it contains only the essential elements. There is nothing non-essential or superfluous. The word (F) **extraneous**, meaning irrelevant or unrelated to the subject being dealt with, fits perfectly. In a compressed work, there is nothing extraneous to be worn away.

Putting them together: The **multifaceted** nature of classical tragedy contradicts the modern "stripped down" view, in which there is nothing **extraneous** left to be removed. This creates a logical and consistent argument.

Step 3: Final Answer:

The correct pairing is (C) multifaceted and (F) extraneous.

Quick Tip

Break down complex sentences. The colon (:) often separates a main idea from its definition or explanation. Here, the phrase after the colon defines the "modern image." Understanding this definition is the key to solving both blanks.

12. Murray, whose show of recent paintings and drawings is her best in many years, has been eminent hereabouts for a quarter century, although often regarded with BLANK, but the most BLANK of these paintings BLANK all doubts.

Blank 1 Options: (A) partiality, (B) credulity, (C) ambivalence

Blank 2 Options: (D) problematic, (E) successful, (F) disparaged

Blank 3 Options: (G) exculpate, (H) assuage, (I) whet

Correct Answer: (C) ambivalence, (E) successful, (H) assuage

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

This sentence describes a shift in the reception of an artist's work. It moves from a state of uncertainty to a state of clarity and success. The words in the blanks must reflect this progression.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

Blank 1: The sentence begins by stating Murray has been "eminent" (famous and respected), but the word "although" introduces a contrast. So, while eminent, her work has been met with some form of mixed or uncertain feelings. **(C) ambivalence**, which means having mixed feelings or contradictory ideas about something, fits this context perfectly.

Blank 3: The final clause states that something about the new paintings removes "all doubts." This is the key outcome. The verb that fits here is one that means to soothe, remove, or satisfy these doubts. **(H) assuage** means to make an unpleasant feeling less intense, which is a perfect fit for what a great work of art would do to pre-existing doubts.

Blank 2: This blank describes the quality of the paintings that assuage all doubts. If the paintings resolve ambivalence and remove doubt, they must be very good. **(E) successful** is the most logical choice. The "most successful" paintings of the show would be the ones that definitively prove her talent and silence the doubters. "Problematic" or "disparaged" paintings would increase doubts, not assuage them.

Step 3: Final Answer:

The logical sequence is: Murray was regarded with **ambivalence**, but the most **successful** of her new paintings **assuage** all doubts.

Quick Tip

For multi-blank questions, don't always solve in order. Sometimes the final blank, which describes the outcome, is the easiest to solve first. Here, figuring out that the paintings must remove ("assuage") doubts helps you work backward to find the other correct words.

13. Far from viewing Jefferson as a skeptical but enlightened intellectual, historians of the 1960's portrayed him as BLANK thinker, eager to fill the young with his political orthodoxy while censoring ideas he did not like.

- (A) an adventurous
- (B) a doctrinaire
- (C) an eclectic
- (D) a judicious
- (E) a cynical

Correct Answer: (B) a doctrinaire

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

This is a sentence completion question where the second half of the sentence defines the word in the blank. The structure "Far from viewing..." also establishes a contrast.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

The sentence contrasts two views of Jefferson. The first view is of a "skeptical but enlightened intellectual." The second view, held by 1960s historians, is defined by the clause that follows the blank: "eager to fill the young with his political orthodoxy while censoring ideas he did not like."

This description points to someone who rigidly imposes their own set of beliefs (orthodoxy) on others and is intolerant of different ideas. We need an adjective that means this.

(B) a doctrinaire thinker is someone who seeks to impose doctrine (a set of beliefs) without regard to practical considerations or counter-arguments. This is a perfect match for the description.

Analyzing the other options:

(A) adventurous: open to new experiences, the opposite of the description.

(C) eclectic: deriving ideas from a broad range of sources. The opposite of adhering to a single orthodoxy.

(D) judicious: having good judgment. The actions described (censorship) are not judicious.

(E) a cynical: believing people are motivated by self-interest. While related, "doctrinaire" is more specific to the imposition of beliefs.

Step 3: Final Answer:

The word "doctrinaire" accurately reflects the description of Jefferson as someone imposing his political orthodoxy and censoring opposing views.

Quick Tip

Use the definition provided within the sentence to find your answer. The phrase "eager to fill the young with his political orthodoxy" is a textbook definition of a doctrinaire person.

14. Dramatic literature often BLANK the history of a culture in that it takes as its subject matter the important events that have shaped and guided the culture.

- (A) confounds
- (B) repudiates
- (C) recapitulates
- (D) anticipates
- (E) polarizes

Correct Answer: (C) recapitulates

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

This sentence completion question uses the phrase "in that" to signal that the second part of the sentence explains or defines the word in the blank.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

The explanatory clause is "it takes as its subject matter the important events that have shaped and guided the culture." This means that dramatic literature often retells, summarizes, or presents the key historical events of a culture. We need a verb that means this.

(C) recapitulates means to summarize and state again the main points of. This is the perfect word to describe how drama uses historical events as its subject matter, effectively re-telling the story of the culture.

Analyzing the other options:

(A) confounds: confuses or puzzles.

(B) repudiates: rejects or denies.

(D) anticipates: predicts or expects.

(E) polarizes: divides into two sharply contrasting groups.

None of these other options fit the explanatory clause.

Step 3: Final Answer:

"Recapitulates" is the best choice as it accurately describes the act of summarizing or restating the key historical events that shape a culture, which is what the sentence says dramatic literature does.

Quick Tip

The phrase "in that" is a strong clue that a definition is coming. It functions similarly to "because" or a colon (:). Use the definition that follows to predict the meaning of the missing word.

Questions 15 through 17 are based on the following reading passage.

In *Raisin in the Sun*, Lorraine Hansberry does not reject integration or the economic and moral promise of the American dream; rather, she remains loyal to this dream while looking, realistically, at its incomplete realization. Once we recognize this dual vision, we can accept the play's ironic nuances as deliberate social commentaries by Hansberry rather than as the "unintentional" irony that Bigsby attributes to the work. Indeed, a curiously persistent refusal to credit Hansberry with a capacity for intentional irony has led some critics to interpret the play's thematic conflicts as mere confusion, contradiction, or eclecticism. Isaacs, for example, cannot easily reconcile Hansberry's intense concern for her race with her ideal of human reconciliation. But the play's complex view of Black self-esteem and human solidarity as compatible is no more "contradictory" than Du Bois's famous, well-considered ideal of ethnic self-awareness coexisting with human unity, or Fanon's emphasis on an ideal internationalism that also accommodates national identities and roles.

15. The author's primary purpose in the passage is to

- (A) explain some critics' refusal to consider *Raisin in the Sun* a deliberately ironic play
- (B) suggest that ironic nuances ally *Raisin in the Sun* with Du Bois's and Fanon's writings
- (C) analyze the fundamental dramatic conflicts in *Raisin in the Sun*
- (D) emphasize the inclusion of contradictory elements in *Raisin in the Sun*
- (E) affirm the thematic coherence underlying *Raisin in the Sun*

Correct Answer: (E) affirm the thematic coherence underlying *Raisin in the Sun*

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

This question asks for the main purpose of the passage. We need to identify the author's central argument and the overall goal of the text.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

The author starts by establishing Hansberry's "dual vision." Then, the author argues against critics (like Bigsby and Isaacs) who see the play's complexities as "unintentional," "confusion, contradiction, or eclecticism." The author's main effort is to refute this view.

The final sentence provides the core of the author's counter-argument: the play's complex view is "no more 'contradictory'" than the respected ideas of Du Bois and Fanon. By showing that what critics call a contradiction is actually a "complex view" and thematically consistent (like Du Bois's work), the author is defending the play's unity and intellectual integrity.

Thus, the primary purpose is to argue that the play is not confused or contradictory, but is in fact thematically coherent.

Analyzing the Options:

(A) The author does explain this, but it's a step in their larger argument, not the main purpose. The main purpose is to refute those critics.

(B) The comparison to Du Bois and Fanon is the final piece of evidence, not the primary purpose. It's a tool to achieve the main goal.

(C) The passage discusses thematic conflicts but does not analyze them in detail; it defends their coherence.

(D) The author argues against the idea that the elements are "contradictory." They argue for a "complex view," not contradiction.

(E) This is the best summary of the author's goal. They are affirming that beneath the apparent conflicts lies a coherent and deliberate theme, refuting critics who see only confusion.

Step 3: Final Answer:

The author's main goal is to defend *Raisin in the Sun* against charges of thematic confusion, thereby affirming its underlying coherence.

Quick Tip

For primary purpose questions, look at the overall argumentative arc. The author often starts by presenting a common view or a problem, and then spends the rest of the passage arguing for their own position. The primary purpose is usually to advance the author's own position.

16. This question refers to the third sentence of the passage... "Indeed, a curiously persistent refusal to credit Hansberry with a capacity for intentional irony has led some critics to interpret the play's thematic conflicts as mere confusion, contradiction, or eclecticism."

The author of the passage would probably consider which of the following judgments to be most similar to the reasoning of the critics described in the third sentence?

- (A) The world is certainly flat; therefore, the person proposing to sail around it is unquestionably foolhardy.
- (B) Radioactivity cannot be directly perceived; therefore, a scientist could not possibly control it in a laboratory.
- (C) The painter of this picture could not intend it to be funny; therefore, its humor must result from a lack of skill.
- (D) Traditional social mores are beneficial to culture; therefore, anyone who deviates from them acts destructively.
- (E) Filmmakers who produce documentaries deal exclusively with facts; therefore, a filmmaker who reinterprets particular events is misleading us.

Correct Answer: (C) The painter of this picture could not intend it to be funny; therefore, its humor must result from a lack of skill.

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

This is an analogy question. We need to understand the flawed logic of the critics mentioned in sentence three and find an answer choice that exhibits the same type of flawed reasoning.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

The critics' reasoning is as follows:

1. **Premise (often unstated and flawed):** They have a "refusal to credit Hansberry with a capacity for intentional irony." They assume she is not capable of complex, deliberate artistry.
2. **Observation:** They observe "thematic conflicts" in her play.
3. **Conclusion:** Because they deny her the capacity for intention, they conclude that these conflicts must be a mistake—"mere confusion, contradiction, or eclecticism."

In short, their logic is: "This artist could not have intended this complex effect; therefore, the effect must be an accident or a flaw."

Analyzing the Options:

(A) This is a conclusion based on a false premise, but the structure is different. It's a simple deduction, not an interpretation of an artwork.

(B) This is a faulty inference about capability based on perception. It's similar, but not as close as (C).

(C) This perfectly matches the critics' logic:

1. **Premise (flawed assumption):** "The painter of this picture could not intend it to be funny." (This is like the refusal to credit Hansberry with intentional irony).
2. **Observation:** The picture is humorous.
3. **Conclusion:** "therefore, its humor must result from a lack of skill." (This is like interpreting the conflicts as "mere confusion").

This is the exact same pattern of denying artistic intent and attributing an observed effect to incompetence.

(D) This is a value judgment leading to a conclusion, not an interpretation of art.

(E) This reasoning is based on a definition of a genre (documentary), not an assumption about an artist's capability.

Step 3: Final Answer:

The logic in option (C) is the most analogous to the reasoning of the critics, as both are based on a flawed assumption about the artist's lack of intention, leading to a misinterpretation of their work as flawed.

Quick Tip

To solve analogy questions, first break down the logic of the original situation into a simple formula. Here the formula is: "I refuse to believe the creator intended Effect X; therefore, Effect X must be a mistake." Then, test each answer choice against that formula.

17. The five sentences in the passage will be repeated... Select and indicate a sentence in the passage in which the author provides examples that reinforce an argument against a critical response cited earlier in the passage.

(A) In *Raisin in the Sun*, Lorraine Hansberry does not reject integration or the economic and moral promise of the American dream; rather, she remains loyal to this dream while looking, realistically, at its incomplete realization.

(B) Once we recognize this dual vision, we can accept the play's ironic nuances as deliberate social commentaries by Hansberry rather than as the "unintentional" irony that Bigsby attributes to the work.

(C) Indeed, a curiously persistent refusal to credit Hansberry with a capacity for intentional

irony has led some critics to interpret the play's thematic conflicts as mere confusion, contradiction, or eclecticism.

(D) Isaacs, for example, cannot easily reconcile Hansberry's intense concern for her race with her ideal of human reconciliation.

(E) But the play's complex view of Black self-esteem and human solidarity as compatible is no more "contradictory" than Du Bois's famous, well-considered ideal of ethnic self-awareness coexisting with human unity, or Fanon's emphasis on an ideal internationalism that also accommodates national identities and roles.

Correct Answer: (E)

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

This question asks us to identify the sentence that contains specific examples used to counter a critical argument. We need to trace the author's argument and pinpoint where they bring in outside evidence or analogies to make their case.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

Sentence (C) introduces the critical response the author wants to refute: the view that the play's conflicts are "mere confusion, contradiction, or eclecticism."

Sentence (D) gives a specific example of this critical response, citing the critic Isaacs.

The author's argument against this critical response starts with "But" at the beginning of sentence (E).

Sentence (E) contains the counter-argument. It argues that the play's complex view is not contradictory. To reinforce this point, it provides two specific examples of respected thinkers whose ideas are similarly complex but not considered contradictory: **Du Bois** and **Fanon**. These examples are used to show that combining racial self-awareness with human unity is a coherent and valid intellectual position, thus defending Hansberry's play from the charge of confusion.

Step 3: Final Answer:

Sentence (E) is the one that provides the examples (Du Bois and Fanon) to reinforce the author's argument against the critical response mentioned earlier (in sentence C and D).

Quick Tip

Look for sentences that use analogies or comparisons to well-known figures or ideas. Authors often use these examples to lend authority to their own argument and to refute an opposing view. The word "But" at the start of sentence (E) is a strong signal that a rebuttal is beginning.

18. As an example of the devastation wrought on music publishers by the photocopier, one executive noted that for a recent choral festival with 1,200 singers, the festival's organizing committee purchased only 12 copies of the music published by her company that was performed as part of the festival.

Which of the following, if true, most seriously weakens the support the example lends to the executive's contention that music publishers have been devastated by the photocopier?

- (A) Only a third of the 1,200 singers were involved in performing the music published by the executive's company.
- (B) Half of the singers at the festival had already heard the music they were to perform before they began to practice for the festival.
- (C) Because of shortages in funding, the organizing committee of the choral festival required singers to purchase their own copies of the music performed at the festival.
- (D) Each copy of music that was performed at the festival was shared by two singers.
- (E) As a result of publicity generated by its performance at the festival, the type of music performed at the festival became more widely known.

Correct Answer: (C) Because of shortages in funding, the organizing committee of the choral festival required singers to purchase their own copies of the music performed at the festival.

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

This is a weaken the argument question. The executive's argument consists of a conclusion and a piece of evidence.

Conclusion: Music publishers have been devastated by the photocopier.

Evidence: For a festival with 1,200 singers, the organizing committee bought only 12 copies of music.

Assumption: The executive assumes that the only reason for the low sales number (12) relative to the number of participants (1,200) is that the remaining copies were illegally photocopied. To weaken the argument, we must attack this assumption by providing a plausible alternative explanation for the low sales figure.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

We need to find an answer choice that explains why the committee might have bought only 12 copies, even if no photocopying took place.

Analyzing the Options:

- (A) If only a third of the singers (400) performed the music, there is still a massive discrepancy between 400 singers and 12 copies sold. This does not seriously weaken the assumption that photocopying occurred.
- (B) Having heard the music is irrelevant to needing the physical sheet music to perform it in a choir.
- (C) This provides a compelling alternative explanation. If the committee's policy was to require singers to buy their own copies, then the committee itself would only need a few reference copies (e.g., for the conductor, accompanists, etc.). The 12 copies sold to the committee would not represent the total sales for the festival. Many more copies could have been sold directly to the 1,200 singers. This breaks the link between the evidence (12 copies sold to the committee) and the conclusion (devastation by photocopier), thus seriously weakening the argument.
- (D) If each copy was shared by two singers, then 600 copies would be needed for 1,200 singers.

The sale of only 12 copies would actually strengthen the executive's claim that massive photocopying must have occurred.

(E) This discusses a potential positive outcome after the festival, which is irrelevant to why so few copies were sold for the festival itself.

Step 3: Final Answer:

Option (C) provides the strongest alternative reason for the low number of sales to the organizing committee, thereby weakening the executive's claim that photocopying is the cause.

Quick Tip

In "weaken the argument" questions that use statistical evidence, look for an answer choice that shows the evidence is incomplete, misinterpreted, or that the sample is not representative. Here, the executive's evidence (sales to the committee) is shown to be unrepresentative of total sales.

19. New technologies often begin by BLANK what has gone before, and they change the world later. Think how long it took power-using companies to recognize that with electricity they did not need to cluster their machinery around the power source, as in the days of steam. Instead, power could be BLANK their processes. In that sense, many of today's computer networks are still in the steam age. Their full potential remains unrealized.

Blank 1 Options: (A) uprooting, (B) dismissing, (C) mimicking

Blank 2 Options: (D) transmitted to, (E) consolidated around, (F) incorporated into

Correct Answer: (C) mimicking, (D) transmitted to

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

This text completion question describes the typical evolution of new technologies. The sentence structure contrasts the initial phase of a technology with its later, more transformative phase, using the steam-to-electricity transition as a key example.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

Blank 1: The passage argues that it took a long time for companies to understand the true potential of electricity. Initially, they used it as a direct replacement for steam, "cluster[ing] their machinery around the power source." This shows that new technologies often start by imitating the old systems they are replacing. Therefore, (C) **mimicking** is the most suitable word. The technology did not initially "uproot" or "dismiss" the old ways; it copied them.

Blank 2: The passage contrasts the old way (clustering around a central steam engine) with the new possibility offered by electricity. Electricity's advantage is that it can be sent over wires. Thus, power could be delivered from a distance to various points in a factory. The

phrase that best describes this is **(D) transmitted to**. Power could be transmitted to the processes, allowing for a more flexible and efficient factory layout. "Consolidated around" describes the old steam-age method. "Incorporated into" is too general and doesn't capture the specific technological change.

Step 3: Final Answer:

The sentence logically states that new technologies begin by **mimicking** the old, and that the breakthrough with electricity was that power could be **transmitted to** processes instead of being centralized.

Quick Tip

When a text completion question uses a historical example, make sure you understand the core logic of the example. The key difference between steam power and electric power in a factory setting is decentralization. Steam is central, while electricity can be distributed. This understanding helps select the correct words.

20. There has been much hand-wringing about how unprepared American students are for college. Graff reverses this perspective, suggesting that colleges are unprepared for students. In his analysis, the university culture is largely BLANK entering students because academic culture fails to make connections to the kinds of arguments and cultural references the students grasp. Understandably, many students view academic life as BLANK ritual.

Blank 1 Options: (A) primed for, (B) opaque to, (C) essential for

Blank 2 Options: (D) an arcane, (E) a laudable, (F) a painstaking

Correct Answer: (B) opaque to, (D) an arcane

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

This question describes a specific argument made by the scholar Graff. The blanks must be filled with words that are consistent with Graff's reversed perspective. The logic flows from cause (the state of university culture) to effect (how students perceive it).

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

Blank 1: Graff's argument is that the "university culture" is the problem because it "fails to make connections" for students. A culture that fails in this way would be confusing, unclear, and difficult for outsiders to understand. The phrase **(B) opaque to** means not transparent or easy to understand, which perfectly describes the university culture from the students' perspective according to Graff. "Primed for" and "essential for" would imply the culture is helpful, contradicting Graff's point.

Blank 2: This blank describes the effect of the opaque culture on students. If academic life is confusing and its rules are unclear, students would naturally perceive its practices and tradi-

tions as mysterious and inaccessible. A ritual that is mysterious and understood by very few is an **(D) an arcane** ritual. This logically follows from the culture being opaque. A "laudable" (praiseworthy) or "painstaking" (careful) ritual does not fit the context of student confusion.

Step 3: Final Answer:

The correct completion reflects Graff's argument: The university culture is largely **opaque** to students, leading them to view academic life as **an arcane** ritual.

Quick Tip

In two-blank questions, ensure there is a logical cause-and-effect relationship between the words you choose. Here, the cause (an opaque culture) directly leads to the effect (the perception of an arcane ritual). The two correct words must support each other.

22. For the past two years at FasCorp, there has been a policy to advertise any job opening to current employees and to give no job to an applicant from outside the company if a FasCorp employee applies who is qualified for the job. This policy has been strictly followed, yet even though numerous employees of FasCorp have been qualified for any given entry-level position, some entry-level jobs have been filled with people from outside the company.

If the information provided is true, which of the following must on the basis of it also be true about FasCorp during the past two years?

- (A) There have been some open jobs for which no qualified FasCorp employee applied.
- (B) Some entry-level job openings have not been advertised to FasCorp employees.
- (C) The total number of employees has increased.
- (D) FasCorp has hired some people for jobs for which they were not qualified.
- (E) All the job openings have been for entry-level jobs.

Correct Answer: (A) There have been some open jobs for which no qualified FasCorp employee applied.

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

This is a logical deduction question. We are given a set of rules (the policy) and facts, and we must determine what conclusion necessarily follows. The key is to reconcile the seemingly contradictory facts while respecting the stated rules.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

Let's break down the given information:

Rule 1: All job openings are advertised internally.

Rule 2: If a qualified internal employee applies, they get the job over any outsider.

Fact 1: The policy (Rules 1 and 2) has been "strictly followed."

Fact 2: There are "numerous" qualified internal employees for entry-level jobs.

Fact 3: "Some" entry-level jobs were filled by outsiders.

How can Fact 3 be true if the policy was strictly followed (Fact 1) and there were qualified internal people available (Fact 2)? According to Rule 2, an outsider can only be hired if no qualified internal employee *applies* for that specific job. Therefore, for those specific "some" jobs that went to outsiders, it must be the case that none of the "numerous" qualified employees chose to apply for them.

Analyzing the Options:

(A) There have been some open jobs for which no qualified FasCorp employee applied. This must be true. It is the only logical possibility that allows an outsider to be hired without violating the strictly followed policy.

(B) This would be a direct violation of Rule 1 of the policy, which the passage says was "strictly followed." Therefore, this must be false.

(C) We have no information about hiring vs. attrition rates, so we cannot conclude anything about the total number of employees.

(D) The passage says nothing about hiring unqualified people. The policy is about giving preference to qualified internal candidates.

(E) The passage says the policy applies to "any job opening" and gives entry-level jobs as an example. We cannot conclude that all openings were entry-level.

Step 3: Final Answer:

The only statement that must be true to reconcile all the given information is that for the jobs filled by outsiders, no qualified internal candidates applied.

Quick Tip

In "Must Be True" logic questions, focus on the strictest rule and the apparent contradiction. The correct answer will be the single condition that allows both the rule and the outcome to coexist without a contradiction.

Questions 23 through 25 are based on the following reading passage.

A tall tree can transport a hundred gallons of water a day from its roots deep underground to the treetop. Is this movement propelled by pulling the water from above or pushing it from below? The pull mechanism has long been favored by most scientists. First proposed in the late 1800's, the theory relies on a property of water not commonly associated with fluids: its tensile strength. Instead of making a clean break, water evaporating from treetops tugs on the remaining water molecules, with that tug extending from molecule to molecule all the way down to the roots. The tree itself does not actually push or pull; all the energy for lifting water comes from the sun's evaporative power.

23. This question has five answer choices, labeled A through E. Select and indicate the best answer from among these choices.

The passage is primarily concerned with

- (A) refuting a hypothesis advanced by scientists
- (B) discussing the importance of a phenomenon
- (C) presenting a possible explanation of a phenomenon
- (D) contrasting two schools of thought
- (E) discussing the origins of a theory

Correct Answer: (C) presenting a possible explanation of a phenomenon

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

This is a primary purpose question, asking for the main idea of the passage. We need to analyze the overall structure and content to determine what the author is trying to achieve.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

The passage begins by describing a phenomenon: how a tall tree transports hundreds of gallons of water. It then poses a question: is it a push or pull mechanism? The rest of the passage is dedicated to explaining the favored theory—the “pull mechanism.” It describes how this theory works, what property it relies on (tensile strength), and its energy source (the sun). The passage’s main goal is to explain this scientific theory.

Analyzing the Options:

(A) refuting a hypothesis advanced by scientists: The author does not refute the pull theory; they explain and support it as the “favored” one.

(B) discussing the importance of a phenomenon: The passage explains *how* water transport works, not *why* it is important to the tree or ecosystem.

(C) presenting a possible explanation of a phenomenon: This accurately describes the passage. The phenomenon is water transport in trees, and the passage presents the “pull mechanism” as the leading explanation.

(D) contrasting two schools of thought: While the passage briefly mentions “pushing from below,” it spends almost the entire time explaining the “pull” theory. It does not give equal weight to two schools of thought or contrast them in detail.

(E) discussing the origins of a theory: The passage mentions the theory was “first proposed in the late 1800’s,” but this is a minor detail. The primary focus is on explaining how the theory works, not on its historical development.

Step 3: Final Answer:

The main focus of the passage is to lay out the details of the “pull” theory as an explanation for the phenomenon of water transport in trees.

Quick Tip

For primary purpose questions, look at the balance of the passage. Ask yourself where the author spends the most time. In this short passage, the vast majority of the text is dedicated to explaining the details of the pull theory, making “presenting a possible explanation” the most accurate description of its purpose.

24. This question has three answer choices, labeled A through C. Consider each of the three choices separately and select all that apply.

Which of the following statements is supported by the passage?

- (A) The pull theory is not universally accepted by scientists.
- (B) The pull theory depends on one of water's physical properties.
- (C) The pull theory originated earlier than did the push theory.

Correct Answer: (A) and (B)

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

This is a "select all that apply" question that requires us to verify each statement against the information given in the passage. We must find direct or strongly implied support for each correct statement.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

Analyzing the Options:

(A) The pull theory is not universally accepted by scientists.

The passage states that the pull mechanism "has long been favored by **most** scientists." The word "most" implies that some scientists do not favor it, meaning it is not universally accepted. This statement is supported by the passage.

(B) The pull theory depends on one of water's physical properties.

The passage explicitly states that the theory "relies on a property of water not commonly associated with fluids: its **tensile strength**." Tensile strength is a physical property. This statement is directly supported by the passage.

(C) The pull theory originated earlier than did the push theory.

The passage introduces the push vs. pull question at the beginning but gives no historical information about the "push" theory. It only states that the pull theory was "first proposed in the late 1800's." We cannot compare their origins based on the text. This statement is not supported by the passage.

Step 3: Final Answer:

Based on the text, statements (A) and (B) are both supported.

Quick Tip

In "supported by the passage" questions, be very literal. Look for precise wording. The word "most" is a key qualifier that supports statement (A). The direct mention of "tensile strength" supports statement (B). If the passage gives no information on a topic (like the origin of the push theory), you cannot select that option.

25. This question has five answer choices, labeled A through E. Select and indicate the best answer from among these choices.

The passage provides information on each of the following EXCEPT

- (A) when the pull theory originated
- (B) the amount of water a tall tree can transport
- (C) the significance of water's tensile strength in the pull theory
- (D) the role of the sun in the pull theory
- (E) the mechanism underlying water's tensile strength

Correct Answer: (E) the mechanism underlying water's tensile strength

Solution:

Step 1: Understanding the Concept:

This is an "EXCEPT" question. We must find which of the five topics is NOT discussed in the passage. The correct answer will be the one for which no information is provided. We can use a process of elimination by finding the information for the other four options.

Step 2: Detailed Explanation:

Let's locate the information for each option in the passage:

(A) when the pull theory originated: The passage states, "First proposed in the **late 1800's...**". This information is provided.

(B) the amount of water a tall tree can transport: The first sentence says, "A tall tree can transport a **hundred gallons of water a day...**". This information is provided.

(C) the significance of water's tensile strength in the pull theory: The passage says the theory "**relies on** a property of water... its tensile strength." and explains how this property allows water to be tugged down from the treetop. Its significance is clearly explained. This information is provided.

(D) the role of the sun in the pull theory: The last sentence says, "...all the energy for lifting water comes from the **sun's evaporative power.**" This information is provided.

(E) the mechanism underlying water's tensile strength: The passage states that the theory relies on tensile strength, but it never explains *what causes* this property in water. It does not mention cohesion, adhesion, or hydrogen bonds, which are the underlying mechanisms. This information is NOT provided in the passage.

Step 3: Final Answer:

The passage mentions and uses the concept of tensile strength, but it does not explain the physical mechanism that causes it. Therefore, (E) is the correct answer.

Quick Tip

For EXCEPT questions, treat it as a scavenger hunt. Your goal is to find the sentence or phrase that corresponds to each of the incorrect answer choices (A, B, C, D). The choice that is left over, for which you can find no specific information, is the correct answer.