

Grammar

Question 1

A species of *Byropsis* algae produces toxins to avoid being eaten by predators. However, in some cases, the toxins the organism uses to protect itself from predation actually _____ its attractiveness to predators. The Hawaiian sea slug, for example, not only tolerates *Byropsis* toxins but actually uses them for protection in the same way the algae does.

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

- ☐ A is increasing
- ☐ B increase
- ☐ C increases
- ☐ D has increased

Question 2

At 3,020 years old, Patriarca da Floresta, a jequitibá-rosa (*Cariniana legalis*) located in Brazil, is one of the oldest known trees in the world. With over three millennia of climate data in its tree rings, a single tree like this, claims _____ Valerie Trouet, can tell the history of the world.

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

- A dendrochronologist,
- B dendrochronologist—
- C dendrochronologist:
- D dendrochronologist

Question 3

Oyster mushrooms typically get their nutrients from the damp logs on which they grow, but the fungi are also carnivorous, with the ability to kill and consume microscopic worms known as nematodes. As researcher Yen-Ping Hsueh has shown, the mushrooms release a toxin that is deadly to nematodes that _____ in contact with it.

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

- ☐ A has come
- ☐ B comes
- ☐ C is coming
- ☐ D come

Question 4

Proto-Atlantic-Congo—a protolanguage, or ancestral language of a family of descendant (daughter) languages—is said to be the common ancestor of all Atlantic-Congo languages. This designation is _____ Proto-Atlantic-Congo is only postulated, its characteristics being inferred from the linguistic properties of its 1,453 daughters.

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

- ☐ A hypothetical, however:
- ☐ B hypothetical: however,
- ☐ C hypothetical, however,
- ☐ D hypothetical. However,

Question 5

The liquid compounds hexadecane ($\text{C}_{16}\text{H}_{34}$) and tetrachloromethane (CCl_4) have molar masses of 226.41 and 153.80 _____. mass helps convert between the mass of the reactants and the mass of the product).

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

- A g/mol (respectively, in stoichiometry, molar
- B g/mol, respectively, (in stoichiometry, molar
- C g/mol, respectively (in stoichiometry, molar
- D g/mol. Respectively, in stoichiometry (molar

Question 6

Psychologists Roger Brown and James Kulik first proposed the concept of "flashbulb memory," a vivid and detailed memory of a surprising and consequential event. In 1977, the researchers introduced the _____ in the years that followed they studied memories of events like the assassination of John F. Kennedy.

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

- ☐ A theory and
- ☐ B theory,
- ☐ C theory
- ☐ D theory, and

Question 7

Theology in medieval European universities was shaped by Aristotelian logic, but the rediscovery of ancient texts and the rise of new intellectual centers together caused _____ to develop into a complex, systematic method—also called scholasticism—that dominated education for centuries.

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

- ☐ A it
- ☐ B them
- ☐ C she
- ☐ D he

Question 8

Le Corbusier's urban planning theories, particularly his concept of the *Ville Radieuse*, were influential throughout the 20th century: according to architectural historian Kenneth Frampton, his ideas were widely adopted, whereas urban theorist Jane Jacobs criticized their destructive impact on existing communities. This divergence in perspective can be explained in part by the fact that master-planned cities such as Brasília expand and contract as _____ demographically.

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

- ☐ A one evolves
- ☐ B it evolves
- ☐ C they evolve
- ☐ D we evolve

Question 9

In hindsight, given the ideas about the natural world circulating among British scientists in the 1800s, the theory of natural selection was an obvious next step. It may not have been a coincidence, _____ that Charles Darwin and Alfred Wallace arrived at the concept independently. Indeed, contrary to the popular myth of the lone genius, theirs is not the first paradigm-shifting theory to have emerged from multiple scholars working in parallel.

Which choice completes the text with the most logical transition?

- ☐ A however,
- ☐ B then,
- ☐ C moreover,
- ☐ D for example,

Question 10

It was the kind of challenge that would set any art curator's mind into _____ that elusive thread that could link artists as disparate as American abstract painter Anne Ryan, Romanian impressionist painter Micaela Eleutheriade, and Flemish mannerist painter Anthony van Dyck.

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

- ☐ A motion, finding:
- ☐ B motion. Finding
- ☐ C motion; finding
- ☐ D motion: finding

Question 11

In his essay "Of Coaches," French philosopher Michel de Montaigne explores a relatively light subject, but he expresses heavier fare in "Of the Inconvenience of Greatness." Regardless of subject matter, Montaigne works to question his own perceptive throughout his essay. _____ his personal motto was "What do I know?"

Which choice completes the text with the most logical transition?

- ☐ A Still,
- ☐ B Conversely,
- ☐ C Fittingly,
- ☐ D Nowadays,

Question 12

Blanche K. Bruce was an outspoken abolitionist whose Washington, DC, home was a stop on the underground railroad (the network of people and places that some enslaved people used to escape to freedom). It was relatively rare for supporters of the railroad to be secretive about their antislavery views. _____ they were vocal abolitionist like Bruce.

Which choice completes the text with the most logical transition?

- ☐ A Fittingly,
- ☐ B Granted,
- ☐ C For example,
- ☐ D More often,

Question 13

The concept of the 'zone of proximal development' was introduced by psychologist Lev Vygotsky to describe the gap between what a learner can do without help and what they can achieve with guidance. A learner completes a task with the assistance of a more knowledgeable other, such as a teacher or peer; _____ the learner internalizes the skill and can perform the task independently.

Which choice completes the text with the most logical transition?

- ☐ A moreover,
- ☐ B in contrast,
- ☐ C for example,
- ☐ D subsequently,

Question 14

Historian Orlando Figes's book *A People's Tragedy* provides an exhaustive analysis of the Russian Revolution. With _____ detailed accounts of the social, political, and cultural upheavals of the era, the book offers readers a panoramic view of one of the twentieth century's most pivotal events.

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

- ☐ A their
- ☐ B its
- ☐ C his
- ☐ D her

Question 15

Cut, bent, and welded from discarded metal materials, the sculptures of London-based Nigerian artist Sokari Douglas Camp are meant to challenge viewers to consider their own relationships to material _____ her thought-provoking works in the 1999 exhibition Sokari Douglas Camp at the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of African Art in Washington, DC, were no different.

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

- ☐ A wastes;
- ☐ B wastes and to
- ☐ C wastes,
- ☐ D wastes

Question 16

Many historical analyses focus on ignorance as a simple lack of knowledge. In 2008, _____ a study by Robert Proctor and Londa Schiebinger argued that ignorance can be actively constructed for political or commercial gain. Termed agnotology, it is the deliberate creation of doubt.

Which choice completes the text with the most logical transition?

- ☐ A however,
- ☐ B thus,
- ☐ C similarly,
- ☐ D for instance,

Question 17

Though not closely related, the hedgehog tenrecs of Madagascar share basic _____ true hedgehogs, including protective spines, pointed snouts, and small body size—traits the two groups of mammals independently developed in response to equivalent roles in their respective habitats.

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

- ☐ A examples of
- ☐ B concerns about
- ☐ C indications of
- ☐ D similarities with

Question 18

Physicists have long explored the unusual behavior of heat in certain materials at extremely low temperatures. For decades, it was assumed that heat always diffused through a material from hot to cold. _____ researchers led by a team including Zhang, X. found strong evidence for heat moving as a wave, a phenomenon known as second sound, in graphite.

Which choice completes the text with the most logical transition?

- ☐ A Lastly,
- ☐ B However,
- ☐ C For instance,
- ☐ D Thus,

Question 19

In a 2022 analysis of 200 terms, researchers found a broad pattern of valence-dependent mutation in which negative adjectives saw a faster rate of cognate replacement—the rate at which a word will be replaced over time with a noncognate form—than other words. _____ the adjective “illegal” would be expected to mutate faster than the noun “crisis.”

Which choice completes the text with the most logical transition?

- ☐ A Thus,
- ☐ B Moreover,
- ☐ C Meanwhile,
- ☐ D However,

Question 20

A key figure in nuclear physics (the study of atomic nuclei and their interactions), _____ with no electric charge, was a fundamental component of the atomic nucleus alongside the proton.

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

- A** it was discovered in a 1932 experiment by James Chadwick that the neutron, a subatomic particle
- B** James Chadwick discovered in a 1932 experiment that the neutron, a subatomic particle
- C** the neutron, a subatomic particle, was discovered in a 1932 experiment by James Chadwick
- D** a 1932 experiment—by James Chadwick—discovered that the neutron, a subatomic particle

Answers

Question 1

Correct Answer: B

The correct answer is (B). This question tests subject-verb agreement. The subject of the verb is 'the toxins the organism uses to protect itself from predation'. The core subject here is 'toxins', which is plural. Therefore, the verb must be plural as well.

Question 2

Correct Answer: D

This question tests the punctuation of titles and names. The phrase "dendrochronologist Valerie Trouet" functions as a subject with an essential title. "Dendrochronologist" is the profession of Valerie Trouet and is essential information that cannot be removed. Therefore, no punctuation is needed between the title and the name.

Question 3

Correct Answer: D

This question tests subject-verb agreement. To determine the correct verb form, we must first identify the subject that the verb refers to.

In this sentence, the relative pronoun "**that**" refers back to the plural noun "**nematodes**." Because the subject is plural, the verb must also be plural to ensure proper agreement.

(**D**) is the correct answer because "*come*" is the plural form of the verb, matching the plural subject "**nematodes**."

Note that while some choices like (A) and (B) are singular, the context of the sentence regarding multiple worms requires a plural construction.

Question 4

Correct Answer: D

Look at the clauses on both sides of the blank:

- 'This designation is hypothetical'
- 'Proto-Atlantic-Congo is only postulated, its characteristics being inferred from the linguistic properties of its 1,453 daughters.'

Clause 1 is an independent clause. Clause 2 is also an independent clause. To connect two independent clauses, we need a period, a semicolon, or a comma + FANBOYS. The word 'However' is a conjunctive adverb, not a FANBOYS conjunction. Therefore, 'hypothetical. However,' is the correct punctuation. A period correctly separates the two independent clauses, and 'However,' then introduces the second clause as an independent clause.

Question 5

Correct Answer: C

This question tests the correct use of commas and parentheses to set off non-essential information and adverbs. The relevant rule is that non-essential information, such as the explanation provided in the parentheses, should be clearly separated from the main sentence. Additionally, adverbs like "respectively" are often set off by commas when they appear at the end of a clause.

The correct answer is (C) because it correctly places a comma before "respectively" to separate it from the preceding list. It then uses an opening parenthesis to begin the non-essential explanatory phrase. Finally, it correctly uses a comma after the introductory phrase "in stoichiometry" within the parenthetical information.

Question 6

Correct Answer: D

Look at the clauses on both sides of the blank:

- "In 1977, the researchers introduced the theory"
- "in the years that followed they studied memories of events like the assassination of John F. Kennedy"

Both clauses are **independent clauses**—each contains a subject and verb and can stand alone as complete sentences.

In the SAT, to separate two independent clauses, we must use a **period, semicolon, or comma + FANBOYS** (For, And, Nor, But, Or, Yet, So).

Looking at the answer choices, only option (D) provides "comma + and," which follows this rule.

The word "and" is a FANBOYS conjunction that belongs to the second clause, connecting it logically to the first clause.

Therefore, **(D) theory, and** is the correct answer.

Question 7

Correct Answer: A

This question tests **subject-pronoun agreement**. We need to identify what the pronoun is referring to in order to determine whether we need a singular or plural pronoun, and whether it should refer to a person or a thing.

The subject that the pronoun replaces is "**theology**" at the beginning of the sentence. Since "theology" is singular and refers to a field of study (not a person), we need a singular pronoun that can refer to things.

(A) "it" is the correct answer because it is a singular pronoun used for things, which correctly agrees with "theology."

Note: Options (B), (C), and (D) are incorrect because (B) is plural, while (C) and (D) are pronouns specifically used for people, not academic disciplines or fields of study.

Question 8

Correct Answer: C

This question tests *subject-pronoun agreement*. The pronoun in the blank must agree in number with the subject it refers to.

The subject that the pronoun refers to is "master-planned cities such as Brasília." Since "cities" is plural, we need a plural pronoun and verb form.

Looking at the answer choices, only (C) *they evolve* uses a plural pronoun ("they") that correctly agrees with the plural subject "cities."

(C) is the correct answer.

Note: Be careful not to be distracted by the singular example "Brasília" that appears right before the blank. The actual subject is the plural noun "master-planned cities," which requires a plural pronoun. This is a common trap where the SAT places a singular noun close to the blank to mislead you.

Question 9

Correct Answer: B

As always, remember to identify the clauses that the transition connects:

- 'In hindsight, given the ideas about the natural world circulating among British scientists in the 1800s, the theory of natural selection was an obvious next step.'

- 'It may not have been a coincidence, _____ that Charles Darwin and Alfred Wallace arrived at the concept independently.'

The first clause states that natural selection was an "obvious next step." The second clause then introduces the idea that Darwin and Wallace arriving at

the concept independently “may not have been a coincidence.” This suggests a cause-and-effect relationship: because it was an obvious next step, it's not a coincidence that two people thought of it. Thus, a causal transition is needed. Therefore, (B) 'then,' is the correct answer.

Question 10

Correct Answer: D

This question tests the correct use of punctuation to introduce an explanation. The rule is that a colon can be used to introduce an explanation, elaboration, or example that follows an independent clause (a complete sentence).

Look at the clauses on both sides of the blank:

- 'It was the kind of challenge that would set any art curator's mind into motion'
- 'finding that elusive thread that could link artists...'

The first clause is an independent clause because it can stand on its own as a complete sentence. The second phrase, starting with 'finding,' is a participial phrase that explains the nature of the challenge mentioned in the first clause. A colon is the most appropriate punctuation to connect an independent clause to a phrase that explains it.

Therefore, (D) is the correct answer.

Question 11

Correct Answer: C

As always, remember to identify the clauses that the transition connects:

Clause 1: 'Regardless of subject matter, Montaigne works to question his own perceptive throughout his essay.'Clause 2: 'his personal motto was "What do I know?"'

The first clause states that the philosopher Montaigne constantly questions his own perceptions. The second clause reveals his personal motto. The motto 'What do I know?' is a very appropriate or suitable summary of his habit of self-questioning. Therefore, we need a transition that shows this suitability.

The transition '*Fittingly*,' which means 'in a suitable or appropriate way,' perfectly captures this relationship, showing that his motto was appropriate for his philosophical approach. The correct answer is **(C)**.

Question 12

Correct Answer: D

As always, remember to identify the clauses that the transition connects:

- *'It was relatively rare for supporters of the railroad to be secretive about their antislavery views.'*

- *'they were vocal abolitionist like Bruce.'*

The first sentence states what was uncommon for supporters of the Underground Railroad: being secretive. The second sentence then describes what was common instead: being vocal about their abolitionist views. This creates a relationship of contrast, where the second sentence clarifies the first by presenting the more frequent or typical situation.

The transition '**More often,**' (D) perfectly captures this relationship by indicating that being a vocal abolitionist was the more common scenario, directly contrasting with the 'rare' secrecy mentioned in the previous sentence.

Question 13

Correct Answer: D

As always, remember to identify the clauses that the transition connects:

- "A learner completes a task with the assistance of a more knowledgeable other, such as a teacher or peer"

- "the learner internalizes the skill and can perform the task independently"

These two clauses describe a **sequential relationship**—the second action happens *after* the first action in time. First, the learner completes a task with help, and then, at a later point, the learner can perform the task alone. This temporal sequence requires a **sequential transition** to show the progression from one step to the next.

(D) "subsequently" is the correct answer because it indicates that the second event follows the first event in time, which perfectly captures the progression from guided practice to independent mastery that Vygotsky's concept describes.

Question 14

Correct Answer: B

This question tests subject-pronoun agreement. We need to identify what noun the pronoun is referring to and ensure they agree in number.

The pronoun in the blank refers to "the book" (or more specifically, "Historian Orlando Figes's book *A People's Tragedy*"). Since "book" is a singular noun and refers to a thing (not a person), we need a singular pronoun that can refer to objects.

Let's examine the options: (A) "their" is plural, so it cannot refer to the singular "book." (C) "his" and (D) "her" can only refer to people, not to things like books. (B) "its" is singular and can refer to things, making it the correct match for "book."

Therefore, **(B) its** is the correct answer.

Note: Be careful not to be distracted by "Historian Orlando Figes" appearing earlier in the sentence. The pronoun refers to "the book," not to the historian.

Question 15

Correct Answer: A

Look at the clauses on both sides of the blank:

- 'Cut, bent, and welded from discarded metal materials, the sculptures of London-based Nigerian artist Sokari Douglas Camp are meant to challenge viewers to consider their own relationships to material wastes'
- 'her thought-provoking works in the 1999 exhibition Sokari Douglas Camp at the Smithsonian Institution's National Museum of African Art in Washington, DC, were no different.'

Both clauses are independent because they both contain a subject and a verb and can stand alone as complete sentences.

In the SAT, to separate an independent clause and an independent clause, we have to use a semicolon.

Therefore, **(A)** is the correct answer.

Note that using a comma alone (as in *C*) would result in a comma splice, and using no punctuation at all (as in *D*) would create a run-on sentence.

Question 16

Correct Answer: A

As always, remember to identify the clauses that the transition connects:

- "Many historical analyses focus on ignorance as a simple lack of knowledge."
- "a study by Robert Proctor and Londa Schiebinger argued that ignorance can be actively constructed for political or commercial gain."

These two clauses present **contrasting ideas**. The first clause describes the traditional view that ignorance is merely "a simple lack of knowledge," while the second clause introduces a different perspective—that ignorance

can be "actively constructed" as a deliberate tool.

This relationship requires an **adversative transition** to signal the shift from one viewpoint to another. The correct answer is **(A) however**, which effectively introduces this contrast and indicates that the 2008 study challenged or departed from the traditional understanding described in the first sentence.

Question 17

Correct Answer: D

The question asks for the most logical and precise word to complete the text. **(D)** is the correct answer.

This question tests the logical connection between two groups of animals—hedgehog tenrecs and true hedgehogs. The passage states that although they are not closely related, they share certain physical traits like *protective spines* and *pointed snouts*. These shared traits are described as being developed independently in response to *equivalent roles*.

In this context, the word *similarities* correctly identifies that these two different groups possess traits that are like one another. Using the preposition *with* correctly completes the phrase *similarities with true hedgehogs*.

Therefore, **(D)** is the most precise choice because it accurately reflects the relationship described between the physical characteristics of the two groups.

Question 18

Correct Answer: B

As always, remember to identify the clauses that the transition connects:

- "For decades, it was assumed that heat always diffused through a material

from hot to cold."

- "researchers led by a team including Zhang, X. found strong evidence for heat moving as a wave, a phenomenon known as second sound, in graphite."

These two clauses present **contrasting ideas**. The first clause describes the long-held assumption that heat moves in one specific way (diffusion from hot to cold). The second clause introduces new research findings that demonstrate a *different* behavior of heat—moving as a wave.

Since we need to show this contrast between the old assumption and the new discovery, we require an **adversative transition**. Choice **(B)**

"However" is the correct answer because it effectively signals this shift from the conventional understanding to the unexpected research findings.

Question 19

Correct Answer: A

As always, remember to identify the clauses that the transition connects:

- 'researchers found a broad pattern of valence-dependent mutation in which negative adjectives saw a faster rate of cognate replacement... than other words.'
- 'the adjective "illegal" would be expected to mutate faster than the noun "crisis."'

These clauses present a causal relationship. The first sentence describes a general scientific finding or rule: negative adjectives undergo mutation faster than other types of words. The second sentence applies this general rule to a specific scenario involving the words "illegal" (a negative adjective) and "crisis" (a noun).

Because the second sentence describes a logical consequence or a prediction based on the evidence provided in the first sentence, we need a causal transition. **(A) Thus**, is the correct answer as it signals that the second statement follows logically from the first.

Question 20

Correct Answer: B

This question tests **subject-modifier placement**. As a rule of thumb, modifiers should be placed right next to the words or phrases they modify.

The phrase "A key figure in nuclear physics (the study of atomic nuclei and their interactions)" is a modifier that describes a person. Therefore, this modifier must be placed directly next to the name of that person.

Looking at the answer choices, we need to identify which one places a person immediately after the opening modifier. In choice **(B)**, "James Chadwick" appears right after the comma following the modifier, making it clear that James Chadwick is the key figure in nuclear physics being described.

(B) is the correct answer.

Note: Be careful with questions like this where the modifier appears at the beginning of the sentence. The subject that the modifier describes must immediately follow the comma, not appear later in the sentence.