

Standard English Conventions

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

Scholars have praised Gwendolyn Brooks's 1945 poem "Ballad of Pearl May Lee" for its nuanced portrayal of life in Brooks's South Side Chicago neighborhood. The poem shouldn't be regarded as being simply a product of Brooks's _____ the breadth of the poet's influences, which range from medieval English ballads to the poetry of Emily Dickinson and Langston Hughes.

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

- ☐ A surroundings, though, considering
- ☐ B surroundings; though, considering
- ☐ C surroundings, though, Considering
- ☐ D surroundings, though; considering

Question 4

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 5

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 6

Woven from recycled yarn and hand tufted using a carpet weaving technique passed down by the artist's Turkish grandmother; _____ so lush and tactilely inviting that you are tempted to reach out and touch them.

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

- A** the topological tapestries of Argentine textile artist Alexandra Kehayoglou are
- B** the Argentine textile artist Alexandra Kehayoglou creates topological tapestries that are
- C** when she creates her topological tapestries, Argentine textile artist Alexandra Kehayoglou makes them
- D** Alexandra Kehayoglou is an Argentine textile artist whose topological tapestries are

Question 7

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 8

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 9

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 10

While language is often seen as a stable, defined system, it shifts when speakers navigate different social contexts. One such shift is a linguistic behavior called code-switching _____ sociologist John Gumperz famously used CS to describe how bilinguals alternate between languages.

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

- A (CS) and
- B (CS)
- C (CS),
- D (CS);

Question 11

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 12

The 'elaboration likelihood model' of persuasion, developed in the 1980s by American psychologists Richard E. Petty and John Cacioppo, has been influential in the field of social psychology. In their extensive research, Petty and Cacioppo introduced changes to the understanding of attitude change, proposing a dual-process theory and making _____ a foundational concept.

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

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

Question 13

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 14

Futurism was a revolutionary art movement that celebrated dynamism, speed, and technology in the early 20th century. However, a specific sub-genre known as Aeropittura, led by artist Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, used flight to capture new perspectives _____ 1929 CE, according to Marinetti, artists were officially embracing the machine age.

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

- ☐ A imaginatively in
- ☐ B imaginatively, in
- ☐ C imaginatively. In
- ☐ D imaginatively, which in

Question 15

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 16

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 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

A sociolinguistic and pragmatic framework developed within the field of _____ politeness theory was proposed by Penelope Brown and Stephen Levinson to explain how people manage and negotiate social distance and rapport in conversation.

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

- ☐ A linguistics
- ☐ B linguistics;
- ☐ C linguistics,
- ☐ D linguistics:

Question 19

Individuals who are assigned to a group based on arbitrary criteria may exhibit favoritism toward their own group over others even when no conflict exists. This concept is known as the minimal group _____ research by Henri Tajfel suggests that it has significant implications for intergroup relations and prejudice.

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

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

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: A

Look at the clauses on both sides of the blank:

- 'The poem shouldn't be regarded as being simply a product of Brooks's surroundings'
- 'the breadth of the poet's influences, which range from medieval English ballads to the poetry of Emily Dickinson and Langston Hughes.'

Clause 1 is an independent clause. Clause 2 is a dependent clause because it lacks a main verb and is introduced by 'considering' acting as a participial phrase. Therefore, the 2 clauses combine only makes 1 sentence.

As a result, only 2 commas are needed to separate the transitional adverb 'though' from the rest of the sentence.

(A) is the correct answer.

Question 4

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 5

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 6

Correct Answer: A

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 introductory phrase “Woven from recycled yarn and hand tufted using a carpet weaving technique passed down by the artist’s Turkish grandmother” is a modifier. It describes something that is woven and tufted.

Based on the context, the items being described are the tapestries themselves, not the artist Alexandra Kehayoglou. Therefore, the subject immediately following the comma must be “the topological tapestries.”

(A) is the correct answer because it correctly places the tapestries as the subject being modified by the opening phrase.

Question 7

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 8

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 9

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 10

Correct Answer: D

Look at the clauses on both sides of the blank:

- "One such shift is a linguistic behavior called code-switching (CS)"
- "sociologist John Gumperz famously used CS to describe how bilinguals alternate between languages"

Both clauses are **independent clauses**. The first clause has the subject "one such shift" and the predicate "is a linguistic behavior called code-switching (CS)." The second clause has the subject "sociologist John Gumperz" and the predicate "famously used CS to describe how bilinguals alternate between languages."

In the SAT, to separate two independent clauses, we have to use either a semicolon or a period. Since a period is not among the answer choices, we must use a semicolon.

Therefore, **(D) (CS);** is the correct answer.

Question 11

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 12

Correct Answer: C

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 pronoun in the blank is referring to "a dual-process theory," which is a singular thing (not a person). Therefore, we need a singular pronoun that refers to things.

(C) "it" is the correct answer because it is a singular pronoun used for things, which correctly refers back to "a dual-process theory."

Note that while "Petty and Cacioppo" (plural people) are mentioned earlier in the sentence, they are not what the pronoun replaces. The sentence structure makes clear that the blank refers to the theory they introduced, not to the researchers themselves.

Question 13

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 14

Correct Answer: C

Look at the clauses on both sides of the blank:

- "However, a specific sub-genre known as Aeropittura, led by artist Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, used flight to capture new perspectives imaginatively"
- "1929 CE, according to Marinetti, artists were officially embracing the machine age"

The first clause is an independent clause—it contains a subject ("a specific sub-genre") and a complete predicate ("used flight to capture new perspectives imaginatively"). The second clause is also an independent clause, with the subject "artists" and the predicate "were officially embracing the machine age."

In the SAT, to separate two independent clauses, we have to use a **period** or a **semicolon**. Since only a period appears in the answer choices, that is what we need here.

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

Question 15

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 16

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 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: C

Look at the clauses on both sides of the blank:

- "A sociolinguistic and pragmatic framework developed within the field of linguistics"

- "politeness theory was proposed by Penelope Brown and Stephen Levinson to explain how people manage and negotiate social distance and rapport in conversation"

The first part is a dependent clause because it lacks a main verb for the subject "framework." The phrase "developed within the field of linguistics" is a participial phrase modifying "framework," but there's no predicate to complete the thought.

The second part is an independent clause with "politeness theory" as the subject and "was proposed" as the predicate.

In the SAT, to separate a dependent clause and an independent clause, we have to use a comma. The dependent clause provides introductory information that leads into the main independent clause.

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

Question 19

Correct Answer: A

Look at the clauses on both sides of the blank:

- 'This concept is known as the minimal group paradigm'
- 'research by Henri Tajfel suggests that it has significant implications for intergroup relations and prejudice'

The first clause is an independent clause with a subject ('This concept') and a complete predicate ('is known as the minimal group paradigm'). The second clause is also an independent clause with a subject ('research by Henri Tajfel') and a complete predicate ('suggests that it has significant implications for intergroup relations and prejudice').

In the SAT, to separate two independent clauses, we have to use either a period, a semicolon, or a comma + FANBOYS (for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so). Since the word "and" (a FANBOYS conjunction) appears in the answer choices and connects the two independent clauses, we need a comma

before it.

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

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.