

Writing and Language Test

Answer Explanations

Question 1

Choice D is the best answer because the pronoun “it” in the independent clause that begins “it has been . . .” needs the antecedent “coffee.” The passive voice phrase “coffee was introduced” is acceptable in this context because indicating who introduced coffee to Italy is not important to the passage.

Choices A, B, and C are incorrect because each results in a vague or ambiguous pronoun (“it,” “they,” “their”).

KEY: D

DIFFICULTY: Easy

Question 2

Choice B is the best answer because the phrase “in fact” signals the relationship between the preceding sentence, which states a fact (coffee “has been a ubiquitous part of Italian culture”), and the following sentence, which provides evidence for the fact (“one cannot visit . . .”).

Choices A, C, and D are incorrect because these transitional expressions don’t signal an accurate relationship between the two sentences they connect. “However,” “even so,” and “despite” indicate that a contrast will follow, not support for a previous statement.

KEY: B

DIFFICULTY: Easy

Question 3

Choice C is the best answer because the plural pronoun “they” agrees in number with the plural noun “coffeehouses,” and the plural verb “have become” is used correctly to show that the action is current and ongoing.

Choices A and B are incorrect because the singular pronoun “it” does not agree in number with the plural noun “coffeehouses.” Choice D is incorrect because the helping verb “had” cannot describe an action that began in the past and continues into the present.

KEY: C

DIFFICULTY: Hard

Question 4

Choice C is the best answer because the subjective pronoun “who” is used correctly as the subject of the clause to refer to those people who frequent coffeehouses, and the plural verb “love” agrees with the plural pronoun “those.”

Choice A is incorrect because “which” is not the correct pronoun to use when referring to people. Choice B is incorrect because “loves” is a singular verb and a plural one is needed to agree with the plural

KEY: C

DIFFICULTY: Medium

pronoun “those.” Choice D is incorrect because “whom” is the objective case of the pronoun; in this instance the subjective case “who” is needed.

Question 5

Choice B is the best answer because the singular present tense verb “contributes” agrees with the singular noun “way” and is consistent with the previous verb in the sentence, “functions.”

Choice A is incorrect because the plural verb “contribute” doesn’t agree in number with the singular noun “way.” Choice C is incorrect because it offers a participle instead of the basic present tense verb needed for the clause. Choice D is incorrect; the pronoun “which” is unnecessary since a clause isn’t being introduced.

KEY: B

DIFFICULTY: Medium

Question 6

Choice B is the best answer because the example of a fee that is “three to four times as much as the price per drink” most clearly supports the statement that coffeehouses “charge a premium for table service.”

Choices A, C, and D are incorrect because they do not support or explain what “charge a premium” means. Choice A focuses on being able to sit and rest; choice C focuses on the surprise of tourists; and choice D focuses on being waited on at a table.

KEY: B

DIFFICULTY: Hard

Question 7

Choice A is the best answer because it most concisely and clearly combines the two sentences (the two sentences need to be combined because “They do this” is a clunky beginning for the second sentence). The new sentence is clear in its description of standing at a coffeehouse bar and being physically very close to others drinking coffee at the bar.

Choices B, C, and D are incorrect either because they are wordy or because the syntax does not result in a cohesive sentence.

KEY: A

DIFFICULTY: Medium

Question 8

Choice B is the best answer because it provides a transition from the previous paragraph’s focus on “the coffee-drinking experience” to the topic of this paragraph, “the making of” coffee “and the timing of its consumption.”

Choices A, C, and D are incorrect either because they don’t provide a transition between the topics of the two paragraphs or because they include irrelevant information.

KEY: B

DIFFICULTY: Medium

Question 9

Choice A is the best answer because the adjective “correct” is clear and concise.

Choices B, C, and D are incorrect because they all include redundant words. “Correct,” “proper,” “properly,” and “appropriate” all convey the same idea, and any combination of these words should not be used together.

KEY: A

DIFFICULTY: Medium

Question 10

Choice D is the best answer because two commas are necessary to set off a transitional phrase such as “for example” when it is used in the middle of a sentence.

Choices A, B, and C are incorrect because they all include incorrect punctuation. When needed, commas should be used in pairs to set off transitions and cannot be partnered with colons or dashes.

KEY: D

DIFFICULTY: Medium

Question 11

Choice D is the best answer because the sentence should not be added. The passage focuses on coffee drinking in Italy and this suggested addition is about the United States. Choice D correctly addresses the reason the sentence should not be added: “because it digresses from the main topic.”

Choices A and B are incorrect because they result in adding a sentence that does not fit with the passage. Choice C is incorrect because it gives a reason that is not supported by the passage.

KEY: D

DIFFICULTY: Easy

Question 12

Choice B is the best answer because a comma is needed to connect the independent clause “Each year . . . Arctic” to the appositive that follows (“A journey . . . fuel up”).

Choices A and C are incorrect because a period or semicolon can’t be used to connect an independent clause to an appositive. Choice D is incorrect because a semicolon should be used to connect two independent clauses, not an independent clause and a dependent clause or phrase.

KEY: B

DIFFICULTY: Hard

Question 13

Choice C is the best answer because a comma and a conjunction are needed to connect the independent clauses “and the Arctic . . . the year” and “the shorebirds . . . pilgrimage.” Additionally, a verb (“fail”) is needed to complete the second independent clause, not a participle (“failing”).

KEY: C

DIFFICULTY: Easy

Choice A is incorrect because a participle cannot be used to replace the basic present tense verb “fail.” Choice B is incorrect because a conjunction is needed between the independent clauses. Choice D is incorrect because if a semicolon is used, what follows must be an independent clause.

Question 14

Choice C is the best answer because a pair of commas is needed to set off the nonrestrictive phrase “regardless of latitude” in the middle of the sentence.

Choices A, B, and D are incorrect because none contains a pair of commas to set off the nonrestrictive phrase.

KEY: C

DIFFICULTY: Easy

Question 15

Choice D is the best answer because the word “mortality” is clear and concise, and no ideas or words are repeated.

Choices A, B, and C are incorrect because they contain redundant words or ideas. “Continuing on” and “continue on” should not be used in the same sentence. “Keep going” and “continuing on” repeat the same idea, as do “mortality” and “death.”

KEY: D

DIFFICULTY: Hard

Question 16

Choice B is the best answer because the singular verb “provides” agrees in number with the singular noun “study.”

Choices A, C, and D are incorrect because the plural verbs “provide,” “are providing,” and “have provided” don’t agree with the singular noun “study.”

KEY: B

DIFFICULTY: Medium

Question 17

Choice B is the best answer because the phrase “four quail eggs” is plural, not possessive, and needs no apostrophe.

Choices A and C are incorrect because no apostrophe is needed in the plural “eggs.” Choice D is incorrect because “quail” should not be plural.

KEY: B

DIFFICULTY: Medium

Question 18

Choice A is the best answer because sentence 5 (the scientists returning to count the eggs “many times over nine days”) logically joins sentence 4 (how many eggs were used to bait the nests at the beginning of the nine-day period) with sentence 6 (how many eggs were required to consider a nest to have survived at the end of the nine-day period).

KEY: A

DIFFICULTY: Medium

Choices B, C, and D are incorrect because moving sentence 5 would result in a paragraph that doesn't make sense logically or chronologically.

Question 19

Choice B is the best answer because it doesn't contain a conjunctive adverb or transitional phrase, neither of which is needed here.

Choices A, C, and D are incorrect because they contain conjunctive adverbs or transitional phrases that are not needed in the middle of this sentence.

KEY: B

DIFFICULTY: Medium

Question 20

Choice C is the best answer because the figure indicates that the percent of surviving nests decreased over time at each of the four locations (all four lines show a decrease over the nine-day period).

Choices A, B, and D are incorrect because they do not correctly represent the information conveyed in the figure. The figure does not indicate that the number of predators invading the nests either increased or decreased, nor does it indicate that the percent of surviving nests increased.

KEY: C

DIFFICULTY: Medium

Question 21

Choice A is the best answer because it accurately describes the data represented in the figure. The percent of surviving nests was greater at higher latitudes (for example, 82 degrees North) than at lower latitudes (for example, 63 degrees North).

Choices B, C, and D are incorrect because the figure does not indicate that the percent of surviving nests at locations having higher latitudes was smaller or remained the same, or that the percent of eggs was lower.

KEY: A

DIFFICULTY: Easy

Question 22

Choice A is the best answer because it most clearly and concisely combines the underlined sentences to indicate the relationship between the risks to the shorebirds and rewards for their offspring.

Choices B, C, and D are incorrect because they are wordy or combine ideas in a way that is not logical. Additionally, none indicates the risk-reward relationship as clearly as choice A does.

KEY: A

DIFFICULTY: Easy

Question 23

Choice C is the best answer because in this context "adhere to" means to follow or to stick to, which is the right connotation when referring to a musical score.

KEY: C

DIFFICULTY: Hard

Choices A, B, and D are incorrect because they offer options that do not work connotatively when substituted into the sentence.

Question 24

Choice D is the best answer because it creates a complete sentence by attaching the dependent clause (“As . . . improvisations”) to the independent clause (“they . . . own”) with a comma.

Choices A and C are incorrect because a period or a semicolon cannot be used to end a dependent clause. Choice B is incorrect because a comma is needed between an introductory dependent clause and the independent clause that follows it.

KEY: D

DIFFICULTY: Medium

Question 25

Choice C is the best answer because the correlative conjunctions “not only” and “but also” must be followed by parallel phrases. Since “by saxophonist Coleman Hawkins” follows “but also,” “by Armstrong” needs to follow “not only.”

Choices A, B, and D are incorrect because none contains the preposition “by,” which is needed to be consistent with the same preposition used later in the sentence.

KEY: C

DIFFICULTY: Medium

Question 26

Choice A is the best answer. The sentence should be added to provide a transition from the idea that Armstrong played solos in recordings to the idea that he played them in dance halls as well.

Choice B is incorrect because the sentence doesn’t explain why Armstrong was skilled at improvisation. Choices C and D are incorrect because the sentence should be added to provide a transition between two ideas in the paragraph.

KEY: A

DIFFICULTY: Medium

Question 27

Choice A is the best answer because it makes a connection to the main topic of the previous paragraph, the band’s solos.

Choices B, C, and D are incorrect because they do not refer to the band’s solos, which is the main topic of the previous paragraph.

KEY: A

DIFFICULTY: Medium

Question 28

Choice B is the best answer because the suggested revision provides an explanation of what a “call-and-response structure” is.

Choice A is incorrect because, while Armstrong was a trumpeter and the suggested revision does mention the trumpet section, this is not the main reason to make the revision. Choices C and D are incorrect because the sentence should be revised as suggested.

KEY: B

DIFFICULTY: Medium

Question 29

Choice D is the best answer because it clearly and concisely identifies what Redman did to accommodate Armstrong's style.

Choices A, B, and C are incorrect because they are redundant. The verbs "adjust," "alter," "change," and "rework" have essentially the same meaning and should not be used together.

KEY: D

DIFFICULTY: Hard

Question 30

Choice C is the best answer because no punctuation is needed before the quotation.

Choices A, B, and D are incorrect because they all include unnecessary punctuation.

KEY: C

DIFFICULTY: Hard

Question 31

Choice D is the best answer because only "however" indicates the contrast between the information in the previous sentence and the information in this sentence. The previous sentence states that in 1925 Armstrong left Henderson's band, while this sentence says that though he had left, his influence continued to be noticeable in the band's music.

Choices A, B, and C are incorrect because they do not indicate a contrast between the first two sentences in the paragraph.

KEY: D

DIFFICULTY: Medium

Question 32

Choice B is the best answer because it is idiomatic. When one situation changes to another, it can be said that the situation "gives way" to another.

Choices A, C, and D are incorrect because they are not idiomatic and do not make sense when substituted into the sentence.

KEY: B

DIFFICULTY: Medium

Question 33

Choice D is the best answer because the pronoun "that" is used correctly to refer to "arrangements." A comma isn't used in this context because the clause following the main clause is needed to complete the meaning of the sentence.

Choices A, B, and C are incorrect because each uses a comma inappropriately. Because the clause that follows "arrangements" is essential to the formation of the sentence, no comma should be used.

KEY: D

DIFFICULTY: Hard

Question 34

Choice D is the best answer because sentence 6 refers to commonplace “stories” about young artists being able to survive in big cities, and sentence 3 explains that “these tales” may have been true to some degree. Sentence 3 should be placed after sentence 6.

Choices A, B, and C are incorrect because “these tales” in sentence 3 must refer to something that has been discussed previously. No stories or tales are mentioned in sentences 1, 2, or 4.

KEY: D

DIFFICULTY: Medium

Question 35

Choice D is the best answer because the pronoun “you,” which refers in this context to people in general, is consistent with the other pronoun, “your,” in the sentence (“time to practice your art”).

Choices A, B, and C are incorrect because the pronoun “one” and the nouns “artist” and “artists” are not consistent in person with the pronoun “your.”

KEY: D

DIFFICULTY: Hard

Question 36

Choice B is the best answer because “however” indicates the appropriate relationship between the claim in the previous sentence (artists could once get by in a big city) and the claim in this sentence (“this life is no longer possible”). It signals the contrast between the past and present.

Choices A, C, and D are incorrect because the claim in this sentence is not a result or an example of the claim in the previous sentence.

KEY: B

DIFFICULTY: Medium

Question 37

Choice C is the best answer because “such as” indicates that examples will follow, and “upscale venues” completes the contrast with “affordable theaters, jazz cafes, and art galleries.”

Choices A, B, and D are incorrect. In choice A, “other places” is vague and doesn’t emphasize the contrast between the old and new businesses. Choice B mischaracterizes the examples as places “where artists are unlikely to spend money.” The contrast in this sentence is not between places where artists spend money and places where they don’t; rather, it is between places where artists have opportunities to perform or display their art (“affordable theaters, jazz cafes, and art galleries”) and places that do not accommodate “the artist just starting out” (“expensive restaurants, couture boutiques, and exclusive nightclubs”). Choice D is incorrect because “attractive” does not complete the contrast with “affordable.”

KEY: C

DIFFICULTY: Medium

Question 38

Choice A is the best answer because “so far as,” meaning “to the extent or degree,” is idiomatic in this context.

Choices B, C, and D are incorrect because the resulting phrases (“go too far to declare,” “go farther to declare,” “go to declare”) are unidiomatic in this context.

KEY: A

DIFFICULTY: Medium

Question 39

Choice C is the best answer because the dash is appropriate in this sentence. In this case, it draws attention to the idea that Cleveland, unlike cities that are too expensive, is a great place for young artists.

Choices A, B, and D are incorrect because the semicolon, colon, and single parenthesis are all used inappropriately in this sentence. In choice A, the semicolon links an independent clause to a dependent clause. In choice B, the colon is unnecessary and should be deleted. In choice D, the single parenthesis must be paired with another parenthesis after “artists.”

KEY: C

DIFFICULTY: Hard

Question 40

Choice D is the best answer because it is clear and doesn’t repeat information already provided in the sentence.

Choices A, B, and C are incorrect because they either repeat information or add unnecessary words.

KEY: D

DIFFICULTY: Hard

Question 41

Choice D is the best answer because the plural pronoun “those” agrees with its antecedent “prices,” and two similar things are being compared: the prices of homes and the prices of cars.

Choice A is incorrect because it compares the prices of homes to “an economy car” rather than to other prices. Choice B is incorrect because the pronoun and noun, “that” and “car,” need to be plural to be consistent with “prices” of “homes.” Choice C is incorrect because the singular possessive “car’s” doesn’t make sense in the comparison. In this context, the phrase “an economy car’s” would be understood to refer to a price, but “price” does not appear as an antecedent in the sentence. The comparison should be to “prices.”

KEY: D

DIFFICULTY: Hard

Question 42

Choice A is the best answer because the singular possessive pronoun “its” agrees in number with the antecedent “Cleveland.”

Choices B and C are incorrect because they are contractions, not possessive pronouns. Choice D is incorrect because it is a plural

KEY: A

DIFFICULTY: Hard

possessive pronoun. The correct answer needs to be singular to agree with the singular antecedent “Cleveland.”

Question 43

Choice C is the best answer because the sentence should not be added. It contains an irrelevant detail that doesn’t support previous statements.

Choices A and B are incorrect because the sentence is irrelevant and shouldn’t be added. Choice D is incorrect because the sentence would not be relevant in the final paragraph either.

Question 44

Choice B is the best answer because “discount” in this context means “disregard.”

Choice A is incorrect because “undermine” means “weaken or impair,” which does not make sense in the context of the sentence. Choices C and D are incorrect because their tone is too colloquial and inconsistent with the tone of the passage.

KEY: C

DIFFICULTY: Easy

KEY: B

DIFFICULTY: Hard
