Question ID ea200c39

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	

ID: ea200c39

Hypothesizing that reliance on smartphones for information retrieval will lead a person to incorrectly remember instances of phone-assisted retrieval as instances of retrieval from memory, researchers asked participants general-knowledge trivia questions, instructing them to answer certain questions using only their smartphone and other questions using only their memory. When surveyed a week later, participants exhibited higher levels of misattribution for answers retrieved in the smartphone condition than for those retrieved in the memory condition, a finding that the researchers claimed supported their hypothesis.

Which question would be most useful to answer in determining the validity of the researchers' claim as it is presented in the text?

A. Were participants as likely to remember the source of their information when asked a week later as they would have been if asked immediately after answering the trivia questions?

B. Were participants less confident about the accuracy of information they were instructed to retrieve from a smartphone than they were of that retrieved from their own memory?

C. How likely were participants to answer all the trivia questions correctly in both the smartphone and the memory conditions?

D. How did participants attribute information they were instructed to retrieve from a smartphone in instances when they already knew that information independently of their phone?

ID: ea200c39 Answer

Correct Answer: D

Rationale

Choice D is the best answer because it identifies a question that directly addresses a potential confounding factor in the research. The text discusses a study investigating source misattribution for information retrieved with the assistance of a smartphone—that is, how well people remember whether they used a smartphone to look up information or retrieved the information from their memory. The researchers hypothesized that smartphone reliance causes people to mistakenly think that they retrieved the information from their memory when they in fact used a smartphone. To test this hypothesis, the researchers instructed participants to look up answers to some trivia questions on smartphones and to answer some questions using only their memory. The text then indicates that a week later, participants were more likely to misremember smartphone-assisted answers as coming from memory than to misremember memory-based answers as coming from smartphones. The researchers claimed that the higher misattribution rates for the smartphone-retrieval condition supported their hypothesis. However, the text doesn't specify whether the study design accounted for the possibility that some participants might have known many—perhaps even all—of the trivia answers beforehand. If participants already knew some answers they were instructed to look up on their phones, their later attribution of those answers to memory might be accurate rather than a misattribution. Knowing how participants attributed information in such cases would help determine whether the observed effect reflects smartphone-induced misattribution or simply participants' recall of prior knowledge. Thus, in evaluating the validity of the researchers' claim, it would be most useful to know how participants attributed information they were instructed to retrieve from a phone in instances where they already knew the information.

Choice A is incorrect. Although survey timing is a methodological consideration, it doesn't help distinguish between genuine misattribution caused by smartphone reliance and other explanations for the observed effect. Though it's plausible that participants' recollections of their information source may have been more accurate immediately after answering the trivia questions than they would have been a week later, the one-week delay would affect both conditions equally and doesn't specifically challenge the researchers' claim about smartphone-induced misattribution. Choice B is incorrect because confidence in the accuracy of retrieved information doesn't directly pertain to source misattribution. The researchers' claim concerns whether participants believed information came from their smartphone or their memory, not how confident they were in its correctness. Instead, a useful question would need to address the source-attribution process itself. Choice C is incorrect because the accuracy of the participants' answers doesn't bear on the researchers' claim about source misattribution. The claim concerns the remembered origin of answers, not their correctness. Instead, the relevant issue is whether participants who looked up answers they already knew might have attributed those answers to memory regardless of which of the two experimental conditions they answered those questions under.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID 4cb07b12

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	

ID: 4cb07b12

The following text is adapted from William Shakespeare's 1609 poem "Sonnet 27." The poem is addressed to a close friend as if he were physically present.

Weary with toil, I [hurry] to my bed,
The dear repose for limbs with travel tired;
But then begins a journey in my head
To work my mind, when body's work's expired:
For then my thoughts—from far where I abide—
[Begin] a zealous pilgrimage to thee,
And keep my drooping eyelids open wide,

What is the main idea of the text?

A. The speaker is asleep and dreaming about traveling to see the friend.

B. The speaker is planning an upcoming trip to the friend's house.

C. The speaker is too fatigued to continue a discussion with the friend.

D. The speaker is thinking about the friend instead of immediately falling asleep.

ID: 4cb07b12 Answer

Correct Answer: D

Rationale

Choice D is the best answer it most accurately states the main idea of the text. The speaker describes going to bed for "repose" (rest) but finding that his thoughts are focused on the friend the speaker is addressing, and the thoughts are keeping the speaker awake.

Choice A is incorrect because the speaker isn't asleep; the thoughts about the friend are keeping the speaker awake. Choice B is incorrect because the speaker isn't talking about taking a literal trip; rather, the speaker uses the metaphor of a journey to describe internal thoughts. Choice C is incorrect because the speaker isn't having a discussion with the friend.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID 7ce63013

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	

ID: 7ce63013

Philosophers note that many people have an intuitive sense that while we ought not to lie, there may be circumstances in which lying is permissible. If this intuition is correct and we lack an inviolable duty to speak truthfully, what grounds opposition to lying in the first place? Japa Pallikkathayil has advanced one answer by appealing to a duty to respect others' agential interests: the possession of false beliefs constrains agency, and thus we ought not to impede the formation of true beliefs unless doing so prevents a greater constraint on someone's agency or an otherwise impermissible end.

Which choice best states the main idea of the text?

A. One potential means of justifying opposition to lying is Pallikkathayil's argument that we have an obligation to respect other people's agency that entails a commitment to truthfulness except in certain circumstances.

B. Many people have an intuitive sense that lying is permissible in some circumstances but lack a principled way to identify those circumstances, and Pallikkathayil's argument may provide a means of resolving that problem.

C. Pallikkathayil's argument suggests that if we have a duty to respect other people's agential interests and if possession of false beliefs constrains agency, then we have an inviolable duty to speak truthfully.

D. Pallikkathayil's argument shows that if our intuition that circumstances may make lying permissible is correct, then it is unclear whether there are any grounds for an opposition to lying in the first place.

ID: 7ce63013 Answer

Correct Answer: A

Rationale

Choice A is the best answer because it most accurately states the main idea of the text. The text begins by noting a common intuition that lying might sometimes be permissible, which raises the question of what is the reason for being against lying. The text then presents Pallikkathayil's answer to this question: we have a duty to respect others' agential interests (that is, we have an obligation to allow people to exercise their free will in order to best serve their own ends), false beliefs constrain agency (the implication here being that people who are deceived about what is true are impeded in acting in their own best interests), and so we should not hinder the formation of true beliefs (we should not deliberately deceive a person) unless doing so prevents a greater limitation on someone's agency or prevents some otherwise impermissible end (for example, it might be morally permissible to lie to someone in the rare circumstance where a false belief would lead a person to act in their own best interest, and where they would not do so if they knew the truth). Thus, the main idea of the text is that Pallikkathayil offers a potential justification for opposing lying based on respecting agency, while still allowing for exceptions in specific circumstances.

Choice B is incorrect because the text doesn't focus on people's lack of a principled way to identify circumstances where lying is permissible or indicate that Pallikkathayil's argument resolves this specific problem. Rather, the text presents Pallikkathayil's argument that lies limit agency but may be permitted in very specific situations (to prevent a greater limitation on someone's agency or an otherwise unacceptable outcome) as one of a number of possible arguments about why lies are undesirable but sometimes permissible. Choice C is incorrect because it directly contradicts the text. Pallikkathayil's argument, as described in

the text, wouldn't lead to an "inviolable duty to speak truthfully." On the contrary, the text explicitly states that Pallikkathayil's position is that interfering with people developing accurate beliefs is wrong, except when such interference prevents either a more significant limitation on someone's agency or an outcome that would be unacceptable for other reasons. This indicates that Pallikkathayil's argument allows for some exceptions to the duty to speak truthfully, making it not inviolable. Choice D is incorrect because Pallikkathayil's argument doesn't suggest that if it is permissible to lie in at least some circumstances, then it is unclear whether there are good reasons for opposing lying in any circumstances. Instead, the text presents Pallikkathayil as offering a specific ground for opposing lying (respecting others' ability to act in their own best interests) while qualifying that assertion by presenting a situation in which lying might sometimes be morally permissible.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID 4da09374

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	

ID: 4da09374

Paleontologists searching for signs of ancient life have found many fossilized specimens of prehistoric human ancestors, including several from the Pleistocene era discovered in a geological formation in the Minatogawa quarry in Japan. However, to study the emergence of the earliest multicellular organisms to appear on Earth, researchers must turn elsewhere, such as to the Ediacaran geological formation at Mistaken Point in Canada. A UNESCO World Heritage Site, the 146-hectare reserve contains more than 10,000 fossils that together document a critical moment in evolutionary history.

What does the text indicate about the geological formation at Mistaken Point?

A. It holds a greater number of fossils but from a smaller variety of species than the formation in the Minatogawa quarry does.

B. It has provided evidence that the earliest human species may have emerged before the Pleistocene era.

C. It is widely considered by paleontologists to be the most valuable source of information about prehistoric life forms.

D. It contains specimens from an older time period than those found in the formation in the Minatogawa quarry.

ID: 4da09374 Answer

Correct Answer: D

Rationale

Choice D is the best answer. The text says that the formation at Mistaken Point contains fossils of “the earliest multicellular organisms,” which implies that these fossils are from an older time period than the fossils of “prehistoric human ancestors” found in the Minatogawa quarry.

Choice A is incorrect. The text says that the formation at Mistake Point contains “more than 10,000 fossils,” but it doesn’t compare this number to the number of fossils in the Minatogawa quarry. It also doesn’t say anything about the variety of species in either formation. Choice B is incorrect. The text says that the formation at Mistaken Point contains fossils of “the earliest multicellular organisms,” but it never says that the site contains early human fossils too. Rather, the early human fossils mentioned in the text were found in the formation at Minatogawa quarry. Choice C is incorrect. The text says that the fossils at Mistaken Point “document a critical moment in evolutionary history,” but it never says that Mistaken Point is the most valuable source of information about prehistoric life forms.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID 24916063

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	

ID: 24916063

For many years, the only existing fossil evidence of mixopterid eurypterids—an extinct family of large aquatic arthropods known as sea scorpions and related to modern arachnids and horseshoe crabs—came from four species living on the paleocontinent of Laurussia. In a discovery that expands our understanding of the geographical distribution of mixopterids, paleontologist Bo Wang and others have identified fossilized remains of a new mixopterid species, *Terropterus xiushanensis*, that lived over 400 million years ago on the paleocontinent of Gondwana.

According to the text, why was Wang and his team's discovery of the *Terropterus xiushanensis* fossil significant?

A. The fossil constitutes the first evidence found by scientists that mixopterids lived more than 400 million years ago.

B. The fossil helps establish that mixopterids are more closely related to modern arachnids and horseshoe crabs than previously thought.

C. The fossil helps establish a more accurate timeline of the evolution of mixopterids on the paleocontinents of Laurussia and Gondwana.

D. The fossil constitutes the first evidence found by scientists that mixopterids existed outside the paleocontinent of Laurussia.

ID: 24916063 Answer

Correct Answer: D

Rationale

Choice D is the best answer because it states why Wang and his team's discovery of the *Terropterus xiushanensis* fossil was significant. The text explains that up until Wang and his team's discovery, the only fossil evidence of mixopterids came from the paleocontinent of Laurussia. Wang and his team, however, identified fossil remains of a mixopterid species from the paleocontinent Gondwana. Therefore, the team's discovery was significant because the fossil remains of a mixopterid species were outside of the paleocontinent Laurussia.

Choice A is incorrect. Although the text states that Wang and his team identified fossilized remains of a mixopterid species that lived more than 400 million years ago, it doesn't indicate that mixopterid fossils previously found by scientists dated to a more recent period than that. Choice B is incorrect. Although the text states that mixopterids are related to modern arachnids and horseshoe crabs, it doesn't suggest that the fossil discovered by Wang and his team confirmed that this relationship is closer than scientists had previously thought. Choice C is incorrect because the team's fossil established the presence of mixopterids on Gondwana, not on Laurussia. Moreover, the text only discusses the fossil in relation to the geographical distribution of mixopterids, not in relation to their evolution.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID c90795fe

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	

ID: c90795fe

At over a thousand pages across two volumes, *The Fifty-Year Mission*, compiled by Edward Gross and Mark A. Altman, is presented as the “complete, uncensored, unauthorized oral history” as told by the people behind the media franchise *Star Trek*. The work aspires to be comprehensive by, for example, including accounts from cast and crew members of every *Star Trek* television series and film to date. But while *The Fifty-Year Mission* is clearly a unique and valuable resource, it has a shortcoming common among oral histories: it lacks a clear authorial point of view that could otherwise unite the various accounts into a cohesive whole.

Which choice best states the main idea of the text?

A. The compilers of *The Fifty-Year Mission* had lofty goals for their oral history of the *Star Trek* franchise, but the published work lacks information about many key events in the franchise’s history.

B. *The Fifty-Year Mission* includes more accounts from people involved with *Star Trek* television shows than it does from people involved with *Star Trek* films.

C. The large amount of material compiled into *The Fifty-Year Mission* is surprising given that many of the people involved in the *Star Trek* franchise did not participate in the oral history project.

D. *The Fifty-Year Mission* represents a worthwhile attempt to thoroughly recount the history of the *Star Trek* franchise, but its approach has an important limitation.

ID: c90795fe Answer

Correct Answer: D

Rationale

Choice D is the best answer because it most accurately states the main idea of the text. According to the text, Gross and Altman’s book is a "valuable resource" because it’s a "complete, uncensored, unauthorized oral history" that features accounts from people involved with "every *Star Trek* television series and film" made. However, the text also points out an inherent shortcoming of the oral history approach used by the book’s creators: the lack of an authorial voice that could unify the many accounts into a coherent narrative. Thus, the text’s main idea is that while the book’s attempt at presenting a comprehensive oral history of the *Star Trek* franchise is a worthwhile one, the approach the creators selected has an important limitation.

Choice A is incorrect. While the goal of the book’s creators (providing a comprehensive history of the *Star Trek* franchise) could be described as lofty, the text’s criticism of the book is focused on the shortcomings of the oral history form, not on events in the *Star Trek* franchise that were not reflected in the book. Choice B is incorrect because the text doesn’t suggest that the book includes more accounts from people involved with television shows than with films. In fact, the text explicitly states that the book includes accounts from people involved with "every *Star Trek* television series and film" ever made. Choice C is incorrect because the text doesn’t indicate that many people involved with the *Star Trek* franchise failed to participate in the book’s oral history project. The only mention of the scope of participation states that the book includes accounts "from cast and crew members of

every *Star Trek* television series and film to date." This information implies a high level of participation from relevant individuals, not a lack of participation.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID bc1b021e

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	

ID: bc1b021e

In 2019, 20 previously unknown moons were confirmed to be orbiting Saturn. Three of the moons have prograde orbits (orbiting in the direction the planet spins), and the other 17 have retrograde orbits (orbiting in the opposite direction of the planet's spin). All but one of the 20 moons are thought to be remnants of bodies that orbited Saturn until they broke apart in collisions. Although the one exceptional moon orbits in the same direction as the planet's spin, its orbit is highly eccentric compared to the rest, which may suggest that it has a different origin than the other 19 moons.

Based on the text, which choice best describes the moon with the eccentric orbit?

A. It doesn't have a retrograde orbit, but it likely has the same origin as the moons with retrograde orbits.

B. Its orbit is so tilted with respect to the other moons' orbits that it's neither prograde nor retrograde.

C. It has a prograde orbit that is likely the result of having collided with another body orbiting Saturn.

D. It has a prograde orbit and may not be a remnant of an earlier body that orbited Saturn.

ID: bc1b021e Answer

Correct Answer: D

Rationale

Choice D is the best answer because it most accurately describes the moon with the eccentric orbit. The text indicates that three of the 20 newly discovered moons have prograde orbits, meaning that they orbit Saturn in the same direction as the planet's spin, while the other 17 moons have retrograde orbits, meaning that they orbit Saturn in the opposite direction of the planet's spin. The text then states that 19 of the 20 moons appear to be the remains of earlier bodies that orbited Saturn but were broken apart in collisions. The one exception is a moon that orbits Saturn in the same direction as the planet's spin, meaning that the exceptional moon's orbit is prograde. The text goes on to state that the exceptional moon's orbit is so eccentric that the moon may have formed through a different process than the other 19 moons. The moon with the eccentric orbit, therefore, has a prograde orbit and may not be a remnant of an earlier body that orbited Saturn.

Choice A is incorrect because nothing in the text supports the idea that the moon with the eccentric orbit likely has the same origin as the moons with retrograde orbits. Although it's true that the moon has a prograde orbit (and thus doesn't have a retrograde orbit), the only information the text provides about the moon's origin is that it may be different than the origin of the other 19 moons. Choice B is incorrect because the text states that the moon in question orbits Saturn in the same direction as the planet's spin, meaning that the moon's orbit is prograde, not that its orbit is neither prograde nor retrograde. Choice C is incorrect because the text merely notes that the moon in question has a prograde orbit without giving any indication of what likely caused that orbit.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID c6033bf0

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	

ID: c6033bf0

The following text is adapted from William Shakespeare's 1597 play *The Tragedy of King Richard III*. Richard is reflecting on the recent arrest of his brother, the Duke of Clarence, on suspicion of treason against King Edward IV. Derby, Hastings, Buckingham, Rivers, Dorset, and Grey are also members of the English nobility.

> RICHARD: I do the wrong, and first begin to brawl.
> The secret mischiefs that I set [flowing]
> I lay unto the grievous charge of others.
> Clarence, whom I indeed have cast in darkness,
> I do beweep to many simple [gullible people],
> Namely, to Derby, Hastings, Buckingham;
> And tell them 'tis the Queen and her allies
> That stir the King against the Duke my brother.
> Now they believe it, and withal whet me
> To be revenged on Rivers, Dorset, Grey.

Which choice best describes what happens in the text?

A. Richard describes having wept as he informed Derby, Hastings, and Buckingham that the queen and her allies convinced the king to act against Clarence, and says that the earnestness of his grief caused them to accept his version of events.

B. Richard attributes Clarence's troubles to both his own secret plotting and the distrust of Clarence that the queen and her allies Derby, Hastings, and Buckingham have planted in the king's mind.

C. Richard indicates that he has pretended to be aggrieved about Clarence's situation and has proclaimed it to be the fault of the queen and her allies, but in reality, he has caused the hostility the king feels toward Clarence.

D. Richard acknowledges that his mischievous nature has spurred him to commit misdeeds in the past, including instigating enmity between the king and Clarence, but he reports that he has hitherto not lost the trust of the queen and her allies.

ID: c6033bf0 Answer

Correct Answer: C

Rationale

Choice C is the best answer because it accurately describes what happens in the text. Richard admits he committed "the wrong" and blames others for his own "secret mischiefs." He reveals that he has "cast [Clarence] in darkness" (that is, caused his imprisonment) but feigns grief—"I do beweep"—before "many simple [gullible people]," namely Derby, Hastings, and Buckingham. He tells them that the queen and her allies are the ones who turned the king against Clarence. Richard's use of "beweep" and his labeling of his audience as gullible confirm that his grief is a performance. Thus, Richard pretends to be aggrieved and blames the queen while actually being responsible for Clarence's predicament.

Choice A is incorrect because it characterizes Richard's grief as earnest, claiming that his sincere grief moved others to accept his claims. However, Richard admits his wrongdoing and calls his audience "simple [gullible people]," making clear that they were deceived by a calculated performance rather than persuaded by genuine emotion. Rather than being sincere, Richard's weeping is part of a deliberate scheme to blame the queen and her allies for what he did. Choice B is incorrect because Richard does not attribute any portion of Clarence's troubles to the queen; he reveals that he "cast [Clarence] in darkness" and merely tells others the queen is responsible. Additionally, Derby, Hastings, and Buckingham are not identified as the queen's allies; rather, Rivers, Dorset, and Grey are implied to be the queen's allies. Choice D is incorrect because the text does not address whether Richard has maintained the trust of the queen and her allies. Instead, Richard tells Derby, Hastings, and Buckingham that the queen is to blame for Clarence's troubles, and they in turn urge him to seek revenge on Rivers, Dorset, and Grey, who are implied to be the queen's allies. The speech focuses on Richard's manipulation of others, not on his standing with the queen.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID ae9d0163

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	

ID: ae9d0163

Believing that living in an impractical space can heighten awareness and even improve health, conceptual artists Madeline Gins and Shusaku Arakawa designed an apartment building in Japan to be more fanciful than functional. A kitchen counter is chest-high on one side and knee-high on the other; a ceiling has a door to nowhere. The effect is disorienting but invigorating: after four years there, filmmaker Nobu Yamaoka reported significant health benefits.

Which choice best states the main idea of the text?

A. Although inhabiting a home surrounded by fanciful features such as those designed by Gins and Arakawa can be rejuvenating, it is unsustainable.

B. Designing disorienting spaces like those in the Gins and Arakawa building is the most effective way to create a physically stimulating environment.

C. As a filmmaker, Yamaoka has long supported the designs of conceptual artists such as Gins and Arakawa.

D. Although impractical, the design of the apartment building by Gins and Arakawa may improve the well-being of the building's residents.

ID: ae9d0163 Answer

Correct Answer: D

Rationale

Choice D is the best answer because it most accurately states the main idea of the text. According to the text, conceptual artists Gins and Arakawa have designed an apartment building that is disorienting because of several unconventional elements, such as uneven kitchen counters and "a door to nowhere." The text goes on to suggest that there may be benefits to this kind of design because filmmaker Yamaoka lived in the apartment building for four years and reported health benefits. Thus, although the design is impractical, it may improve the well-being of the apartment building's residents.

Choice A is incorrect. Although the text mentions that Yamaoka lived in the apartment for four years, it doesn't address how long someone can beneficially live in a home surrounded by fanciful features or whether doing so can be sustained. Choice B is incorrect. Although the text mentions the potential benefits of living in a home with disorienting design features, it doesn't suggest that this is the most effective method to create a physically stimulating environment. Choice C is incorrect because the text refers to Yamaoka to support the claim that Gins and Arakawa's apartment building design may be beneficial, but the text doesn't indicate that Yamaoka supports the designs of other conceptual artists.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID c725ee5a

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	

ID: c725ee5a

Given the immense scope of space, the search for extraterrestrial life is almost necessarily concentrated on the exoplanets deemed to have the most plausible chance of success—typically, atmosphere-bearing terrestrial planets orbiting within a certain range of their stars (termed the habitable zone). Claiming that Earth experienced a long transition from single-lid to plate tectonics that accelerated the emergence and evolution of complex organisms, researchers Robert J. Stern and Taras V. Gerya hold that consideration of tectonics, an often overlooked factor, could help further narrow the search for advanced extraterrestrial species.

Based on the text, what do Stern and Gerya most likely believe about the development of complex life on exoplanets?

A. It is more likely to occur on habitable zone planets with atmospheres and plate tectonics than on otherwise similar planets that lack plate tectonics.

B. It is more likely to occur if habitable zone planets with atmospheres transition from single-lid to plate tectonics late in their history than if they transition early in their history.

C. It is unlikely unless the transition from single-lid to plate tectonics occurs before the acquisition of a lasting atmosphere.

D. It is probably more dependent on the presence of plate tectonics than on orbital distance from a host star or the presence of an atmosphere.

ID: c725ee5a Answer

Correct Answer: A

Rationale

Choice A is the best answer because it most accurately describes what Stern and Gerya most likely believe about the development of complex life on exoplanets. The text indicates that the search for extraterrestrial life already focuses on atmosphere-bearing planets in the habitable zone because their conditions are best suited for complex organisms. Stern and Gerya claim that plate tectonics on Earth accelerated the emergence of complex organisms, and they therefore hold that tectonics could "help further narrow the search." This phrase implies that plate tectonics should be added to the existing criteria. In other words, the text implies that among habitable zone planets with atmospheres, those that also have plate tectonics would be more likely to enable the development of complex life than otherwise similar planets lacking plate tectonics.

Choice B is incorrect because the text doesn't address whether the timing of the transition to plate tectonics—early versus late in a planet's history—affects the likelihood of complex life. Although the text mentions that plate tectonics emerged on Earth after a "long transition" and that this process accelerated the development of complex life, it presents these details as context for why plate tectonics matter, not as a claim about when the transition would have needed to occur within the planet's history. Choice C is incorrect because the text doesn't discuss the timing of the acquisition of an atmosphere in relation to that of the transition to plate tectonics or explain why this would be relevant to the development of complex life. Rather, the text presents these as independent factors relevant to the search for extraterrestrial life. Choice D is incorrect because the text presents plate tectonics as an additional factor to consider alongside orbital distance from a host star and atmosphere, not as a more important one.

Stern and Gerya propose that tectonics could “help further narrow the search,” which implies supplementing, rather than superseding, the existing criteria.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID 3d52112e

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	

ID: 3d52112e

The recovery of a 1,000-year-old Chinese shipwreck in the Java Sea near present-day Indonesia has yielded a treasure trove of artifacts, including thousands of small ceramic bowls. Using a portable X-ray fluorescence analyzer tool, Lisa Niziolek and her team were able to detect the chemical composition of these bowls without damaging them. By comparing the chemical signatures of the bowls with those of the materials still at old Chinese kiln sites, Niziolek and her team can pinpoint which Chinese kilns likely produced the ceramic bowls.

Which choice best states the main idea of the text?

A. Because of a new technology, researchers can locate and recover more shipwrecks than they could in the past.

B. Researchers have been able to identify the location of a number of Chinese kilns in operation 1,000 years ago.

C. With the help of a special tool, researchers have determined the likely origin of bowls recovered from a shipwreck.

D. Before the invention of portable X-ray fluorescence, researchers needed to take a small piece out of an artifact to analyze its components.

ID: 3d52112e Answer

Correct Answer: C

Rationale

Choice C is the best answer because it most accurately states the main idea of the text. According to the text, thousands of ceramic bowls were found in a recovered Chinese shipwreck. The text goes on to say that Niziolek and her team used a special tool, a portable X-ray fluorescence analyzer, to determine the bowls' chemical signatures. Comparing these chemical signatures with the chemical signatures of materials they had collected from old Chinese kiln sites, the text says, allowed the researchers to identify which kilns had produced the bowls. In other words, the researchers determined the bowls' origin.

Choice A is incorrect. Although the text indicates that the researchers used technology in the form of a portable X-ray fluorescence analyzer, it doesn't specifically state that this technology is new. In addition, the text says that Niziolek and her team used the tool to determine the chemical composition of bowls that were found in a Chinese shipwreck, not to locate and recover the shipwreck itself. There's no indication in the text that a new technology can help researchers locate and recover shipwrecks. Choice B is incorrect because the text indicates that the researchers collected materials from old kiln sites for chemical comparison with the ceramic bowls, which means that the researchers must have already known the location of those kiln sites. Rather than identifying the location of the kilns, the researchers determined which kilns in operation 1,000 years ago had likely produced the bowls that were found in the shipwreck. Choice D is incorrect. Although the text says that using a portable X-ray fluorescence analyzer tool enabled Niziolek and her team to analyze artifacts in the form of ceramic bowls without damaging them, the text doesn't discuss how researchers analyzed artifacts before this tool was invented. Moreover, the point that the bowls were left undamaged isn't the text's main idea. Rather, it's a detail that's provided to develop the main idea, which is that the researchers used a special tool to determine where the bowls had been produced.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID 90865757

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	

ID: 90865757

Some animal-behavior studies involve observing wild animals in their natural habitat, and some involve capturing wild animals and observing them in a laboratory. Each approach has advantages over the other. In wild studies, researchers can more easily presume that the animals are behaving normally, and in lab studies, researchers can more easily control factors that might affect the results. But if, for example, the results from a wild study and a lab study of Western scrub-jays (*Aphelocoma californica*) contradict each other, one or both of the studies must have failed to account for some factor that was relevant to the birds' behavior.

Which choice best states the main idea of the text?

A. When the results of a natural-habitat study and those from a lab study of a wild animal such as the Western scrub-jay conflict, the study in the natural habitat is more likely than the lab study to have accurate results.

B. Studying wild animals such as the Western scrub-jay in both their natural habitat and lab settings is likely to yield conflicting results that researchers cannot fully resolve.

C. Wild animals such as the Western scrub-jay can be effectively studied in their natural habitat and in the lab, but each approach has drawbacks that could affect the accuracy of the findings.

D. Differing results between natural-habitat and lab studies of wild animals such as the Western scrub-jay are a strong indication that both of the studies had design flaws that affected the accuracy of their results.

ID: 90865757 Answer

Correct Answer: C

Rationale

Choice C is the best answer because it most accurately states the main idea of the text. The text begins by explaining that wild animals can be studied in their natural habitat or in a laboratory setting, with each setting offering unique advantages to researchers. The text then highlights an instance in which Western scrub-jays were studied in both settings but with conflicting results, indicating that one or both studies may have failed to account for the disadvantages of its research setting. Thus, the main idea of the text is that while wild animals can be effectively studied in natural or lab settings, there are drawbacks to each that need to be considered to ensure accurate results.

Choice A is incorrect because the text does not position one study setting (natural or lab) as superior to the other; rather, the text states that each one has advantages over the other. Choice B is incorrect. The text provides a hypothetical example of two studies in different environments with conflicting results, but this single example cannot be extrapolated to a general claim about the likelihood that results of studies in different environments will conflict. Additionally, the text does not assert anything about how researchers can or cannot resolve conflicting study results. Choice D is incorrect because the text does not state that discrepancies between natural-habitat and lab-based animal behavior studies are due to both of the designs being flawed. Rather, the text states that the conflict in results can be the consequence of one or both of the studies having failed to account for some factor.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID 27dad141

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	

ID: 27dad141

Through adaptive radiation, multiple species of *Tetragnatha*—a genus of orb-weaving spiders—have significantly diversified their web architecture over a relatively short timescale. To investigate whether the material properties of *Tetragnatha* silk have been similarly affected by this evolutionary process, Angela M. Alicea-Serrano et al. examined the chemical composition of both the radial (non-sticky threads extending from the center) and capture (sticky threads that hold prey) silks that form the web as well as tested the tensile strength and viscosity of samples collected from three *Tetragnatha* species at two sites in the Hawaiian archipelago. The team found significant interspecies variation in these biomaterials.

Which choice best states the main idea of the text?

A. Research reveals that web architecture among species of *Tetragnatha* spiders has likely diversified more rapidly than the material properties of *Tetragnatha*'s silk have.

B. Research suggests that the material properties of silk from species of *Tetragnatha* spiders have diversified during adaptive radiation.

C. A study indicates that variations in web architecture among species of *Tetragnatha* spiders can likely be explained by corresponding variations in the material properties of their silks.

D. A study shows that adaptive radiation can explain interspecies variation in the web architecture of *Tetragnatha* spiders but not in the material properties of the spiders' silk.

ID: 27dad141 Answer

Correct Answer: B

Rationale

Choice B is the best answer because it most accurately states the main idea of the text. The text notes that *Tetragnatha* spiders have diversified their web architecture, or web design, through adaptive radiation and that Alicea-Serrano et al. investigated whether silk material properties were also affected by this process. After examining chemical composition, tensile strength, and viscosity of silks from three *Tetragnatha* species, the team found significant interspecies variation in these material properties, meaning that there were observable differences in these traits across the studied species. In the context of the study's research question, this finding suggests that the material properties of silk from species of *Tetragnatha* spiders have indeed diversified during adaptive radiation, which is the main idea of the text.

Choice A is incorrect because the text doesn't compare the rate of diversification in web architecture to the rate of diversification in silk properties. Although the text notes that web architecture diversified "over a relatively short timescale," it doesn't make a corresponding temporal claim about silk properties or suggest that one changed more rapidly than the other. Choice C is incorrect because the study investigated silk properties as a separate question, not as an explanation for differences in web architecture. The researchers discussed in the text investigated whether silk properties were "similarly affected" by adaptive radiation, not whether they caused the variations in web design. Choice D is incorrect because it contradicts the findings described in the text.

The study found “significant interspecies variation” in silk biomaterials, suggesting that adaptive radiation did affect the properties of *Tetragnatha* spiders’ silk rather than showing that adaptive radiation cannot explain silk variation.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID 2d476f20

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	

ID: 2d476f20

In a study by Mika R. Moran, Daniel A. Rodriguez, and colleagues, residents of Quito, Ecuador, and Lima, Peru, were surveyed about parks in their cities. Of the 618 respondents from Quito, 82.9% indicated that they use the city's parks, and of the 663 respondents from Lima, 72.7% indicated using city parks. Given that the percentage of Quito respondents who reported living within a 10-minute walk of a park was much lower than that reported by Lima respondents, greater proximity alone can't explain the difference in park use.

The text makes which point about the difference between the proportions of Quito residents and Lima residents using parks?

A. It was much larger than the researchers conducting the study expected.

B. It is caused by something other than the parks' proximity to city residents.

C. It could be due to inaccuracies in the survey results.

D. It was calculated using sources that predate the survey.

ID: 2d476f20 Answer

Correct Answer: B

Rationale

Choice B is the best answer because it presents a statement about the difference between the proportions of Quito residents and Lima residents using parks that is supported by the text. The text states that 82.9% of surveyed Quito residents and 72.7% of surveyed Lima residents reported using their city's parks. The text then notes that compared to Lima respondents, a much smaller percentage of Quito respondents said they live within a 10-minute walk of a park. The text concludes that because a greater proportion of Quito respondents used parks despite generally living farther from them than Lima respondents did, "greater proximity"—being closer to a park—"can't explain the difference in park use." That is, the text makes the point that the difference between the proportions of Quito residents and Lima residents using parks is caused by something other than the distance of the parks from city residents.

Choice A is incorrect because the text doesn't address whether the researchers had expected a particular result and doesn't indicate that they were surprised by the difference in park usage between the two cities' residents. The text simply presents the survey findings without stating the researchers' expectations. Choice C is incorrect because the text gives no indication that there might be inaccuracies in the survey results; the text presents the findings as factual information and uses them as the basis for a conclusion that a certain factor doesn't explain differences in park usage between Quito and Lima residents. Choice D is incorrect because the text doesn't mention any sources that predate the survey or suggest that the difference in proportions was calculated using such sources. According to the text, the information about park usage came directly from the survey of residents in Quito and Lima.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID 671216f3

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	

ID: 671216f3

Electronic music pioneer Wendy Carlos is credited with the music for three feature films: *A Clockwork Orange* (1971), *The Shining* (1980), and *Tron* (1982). However, her musical score for *A Clockwork Orange* is mostly made up of her arrangements of Ludwig van Beethoven's work. Also, almost all the music that she and Rachel Elkind composed for *The Shining* was unused by director Stanley Kubrick. It did not appear in the film. Of the three films, *Tron* is the one in which audiences can hear the most of Carlos's original compositions.

Which choice best states the main idea of the text?

A. Of the three films for which Carlos is credited, *Tron* features the most original music from her.

B. The director of *The Shining* used most of the music that Carlos composed for it.

C. Beethoven is widely considered to be a more important composer than Carlos.

D. Carlos is a notable innovator among film composers in the 1970s and 1980s.

ID: 671216f3 Answer

Correct Answer: A

Rationale

Choice A is the best answer because it best states the main idea of the text. The text indicates that Wendy Carlos scored three feature films: *A Clockwork Orange*, *The Shining*, and *Tron*. It also indicates that Carlos's work on *A Clockwork Orange* consisted primarily of electronic arrangements of Beethoven compositions and that very little of what she and Rachel Elkind composed for *The Shining* was used in the film. But the soundtrack for *Tron* consists largely of music composed by Carlos, so it contains more of her original music than do the soundtracks for the other two films. Thus, the main idea of the text is that of the three films for which Carlos is credited, *Tron* features the most original music from her.

Choice B is incorrect because it directly contradicts the text's claim that "very little of what she and Rachel Elkind composed for *The Shining* was used in the film." Choice C is incorrect because the text doesn't address the perceived quality of different composers, instead, it discusses how much of Carlos's original work was used in each of the three films she scored. Choice D is incorrect because it doesn't relate to any of the major themes of the text: the work Wendy Carlos did for three feature films, how much of that work was composed by Carlos, and how much of her original work was ultimately used in the film.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID d14277b4

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	

ID: d14277b4

Studies of ocean wave breaking have predominantly focused on traveling waves (those propagating along the horizontal plane), so Mark McAllister et al. utilized a circular wave tank to produce and study spike waves, axisymmetric standing waves that can erupt vertically when traveling waves propagating in opposing directions intersect. Traveling waves break when wave steepness (height-to-length ratio) passes a critical threshold; breaking thus constrains wave height. McAllister et al. found that spike waves can exceed that constraint, as other factors than just steepness (e.g., jet stability and cavity shape) mediate spike-wave breaking.

Which choice best states the main idea of the text?

A. Previous studies have suggested that steepness mediates breaking in traveling waves, but the study by McAllister et al. shows that jet stability and cavity shape may also influence breaking in such waves.

B. The process of breaking limits the height of traveling waves, but the study by McAllister et al. suggests that spike waves can exceed those limits if their height-to-length ratio reaches a critical threshold.

C. McAllister et al. suggest that spike waves can form when traveling waves propagating in opposing directions intersect and that spike waves tend to be higher than traveling waves.

D. The study by McAllister et al. suggests that when traveling waves intersect in specific ways, the resulting wave may be higher than would be expected based on the properties of traveling waves.

ID: d14277b4 Answer

Correct Answer: D

Rationale

Choice D is the best answer because it most accurately states the main idea of the text. The text begins by explaining that most studies of ocean wave breaking have focused on traveling waves (those that move horizontally) but that McAllister et al. studied spike waves, which form when traveling waves moving in opposing directions intersect. The text establishes that while traveling waves break when their steepness exceeds a critical threshold (limiting their height), McAllister et al. found that spike waves can exceed these constraints because factors like jet stability and cavity shape can mitigate the effects of steepness. Thus, the main idea of the text is that spike waves resulting from traveling waves intersecting in specific ways can reach heights greater than what would be expected based on the general properties of traveling waves.

Choice A is incorrect because it misrepresents the information in the text; the text indicates that McAllister et al. showed that jet stability and cavity shape (along with steepness) influence breaking in spike waves, not in traveling waves. Further, the information about specific influences is not the main focus of the text. Choice B is incorrect because it misrepresents the information in the text; the text indicates that McAllister et al. found that spike waves can pass the steepness threshold at which traveling waves break because factors like jet stability and cavity shape affect the breaking of spike waves, not because they've simply reached a critical threshold of steepness. Choice C is incorrect. Although the text does explain that spike waves can form when traveling waves intersect, it presents this as a known fact that McAllister et al.'s study was based on, not as something the

researchers suggested. Further, the text indicates that spike waves can exceed a threshold that limits traveling wave height but doesn't focus on the idea that spike waves typically are higher than traveling waves.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID c64d66f6

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	

ID: c64d66f6

Within higher education, studying philosophy requires that students be conversant with the field's foundational texts and historical figures. By contrast, *doing* philosophy within or beyond the academy demands the creative, self-directed application of acquired expertise to enduring questions about the nature of existence and knowledge. While both approaches engage with influential figures, those who do philosophy treat such figures as vital interlocutors who facilitate new insights rather than as ossified authorities who, though relevant to the present, primarily represent the discipline's past.

Based on the text, which choice best describes the relationship between doing philosophy and studying philosophy?

A. Doing philosophy helps students formulate concrete solutions to practical issues, whereas studying philosophy prioritizes engagement with historical arguments in the field.

B. Doing philosophy involves developing novel ideas through imagined dialogue with past philosophers based on knowledge of those philosophers' views acquired by studying philosophy.

C. Doing philosophy requires students to challenge the ideas articulated by past philosophers, especially when these ideas are broadly accepted by other people studying philosophy.

D. Doing philosophy represents a departure from the norms that govern scholarly inquiry, whereas studying philosophy requires conforming to these norms.

ID: c64d66f6 Answer

Correct Answer: B

Rationale

Choice B is the best answer because it most accurately describes the relationship between doing philosophy and studying philosophy as presented in the text. According to the text, studying philosophy requires being familiar with foundational texts and historical figures, while doing philosophy demands "the creative, self-directed application of acquired expertise"—a phrase implying that doing philosophy builds on knowledge gained through study. The text adds that those who do philosophy treat influential figures as "vital interlocutors who facilitate new insights" (that is, as dialogue partners whose ideas help generate new thinking). In other words, doing philosophy involves developing novel ideas through engagement with the ideas of past philosophers, knowledge of which can be acquired only by studying philosophy.

Choice A is incorrect. While the text does state that studying philosophy requires engagement with historical texts and figures, the text describes doing philosophy as addressing "enduring questions about the nature of existence and knowledge," which are abstract philosophical questions, not practical issues. Rather than formulating concrete solutions, doing philosophy involves the creative application of expertise to these broad, enduring questions. Choice C is incorrect because the text doesn't characterize doing philosophy as requiring students to challenge past philosophers' ideas. Instead, the text suggests that those who do philosophy engage creatively with historical figures, which can, but doesn't necessarily entail, opposition. Additionally, the text doesn't claim that the ideas of past philosophers are broadly accepted by those studying philosophy. Choice D is incorrect because the text doesn't discuss norms of scholarly inquiry or characterize either approach in terms of conforming to or

departing from such norms. Rather, the text notes that doing philosophy can occur “within or beyond the academy,” which suggests compatibility with scholarly settings rather than an inevitable departure from them.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID 058faa1b

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	

ID: 058faa1b

In 2018, scientists discovered an immense aggregation of *Muusoctopus robustus* (pearl octopuses) along a hydrothermal vent 3,200 meters beneath the ocean's surface. Water temperatures at this site—named the Octopus Garden—climb as high as 11°C, much warmer than the ambient 1.6°C typical at this depth. Based on observations made over three years, scientists concluded that temperatures at the site likely confer reproductive benefits and that the site is used exclusively for reproduction—6,000 *M. robustus* adults, hatchlings, and eggs were observed at the garden, but no juveniles were present.

Which statement about *M. robustus* and the Octopus Garden is best supported by the text?

A. *M. robustus* leave the Octopus Garden upon reaching an intermediary stage of development.

B. The *M. robustus* population at the Octopus Garden remains stable despite variations in water temperature.

C. *M. robustus* nests in the Octopus Garden contain on average fewer but larger eggs than nests at similar ocean depths.

D. The Octopus Garden provides an ideal feeding ground for *M. robustus* hatchlings.

ID: 058faa1b Answer

Correct Answer: A

Rationale

Choice A is the best answer because it most logically completes the text's discussion of the *M. robustus* population at the Octopus Garden. The text states that the scientists concluded that the site is likely used only for reproduction because over three years they saw many adults, freshly hatched octopuses, and eggs but didn't see any juveniles. This suggests that the *M. robustus* octopuses that hatch at the Octopus Garden leave the site when they reach an intermediary state of development, returning only as adults for reproductive purposes.

Choice B is incorrect because the text never discusses the stability of the *M. robustus* population at the site, only that the scientists observed 6,000 adults, hatchlings, and eggs there. Further, the text presents the site's temperatures as likely beneficial. Choice C is incorrect because the text doesn't provide any details about the eggs at the site and makes no mention of nests; it indicates only that eggs are present along with hatchlings and adults. Choice D is incorrect because the text makes no mention of the hatchlings feeding at the Octopus Garden, indicating only that the temperatures at the site are probably beneficial and that the site is likely used for reproduction.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID a108add5

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	

ID: a108add5

To protect themselves when being attacked, hagfish—jawless marine animals that resemble eels—will release large quantities of slimy, mucus-like threads. Because these threads are unusually strong and elastic, scientist Atsuko Negishi and her colleagues have been trying to recreate them in a lab as an eco-friendly alternative to petroleum-based fibers that are often used in fabrics. The researchers want to reproduce the threads in the lab because farming hagfish for their slime would be expensive and potentially harmful to the hagfish.

Which choice best states the text's main idea?

A. The slimy threads that hagfish release might help researchers create a new kind of fabric.

B. Hagfish have inspired researchers to develop a new petroleum-based fabric.

C. Hagfish are not well suited to being raised in captivity.

D. The ability of hagfish to slime their attackers compensates for their being jawless.

ID: a108add5 Answer

Correct Answer: A

Rationale

Choice A is the best answer. The text first describes hagfish slime and its properties, then it transitions to talking about the possibilities of using lab-made equivalents to use in eco-friendly fabrics.

Choice B is incorrect. The text says the opposite of this choice. The researchers are developing an alternative to petroleum-based fabric. Choice C is incorrect. This choice is too narrow to be the main point of the text. Only one line describes how farming would be "potentially harmful" to the hagfish. Choice D is incorrect. This choice isn't supported by the text. We don't know from the text whether being jawless makes the hagfish more vulnerable.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID 16f7b2f6

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	

ID: 16f7b2f6

In superfluorescence, electrical charges known as dipoles emit light in synchronized bursts so intense that they are visible to the eye. Until recently, this phenomenon has only been observed at extremely cold temperatures because dipoles cannot synchronize at higher temperatures. But in a study, Melike Biliroglu and colleagues observed superfluorescence at room temperature in thin films made of perovskite and other similarly crystalline materials; the researchers propose that the formation of shock-absorbing quasiparticles called polarons in the material protects dipoles from thermal interference.

Based on the text, how are polarons believed to be involved in the superfluorescence observed in Biliroglu and colleagues' study?

A. Polarons enable superfluorescent bursts to cross from one crystalline material to another.

B. Polarons allow for the dipoles to synchronize despite higher temperatures.

C. Polarons accelerate the dipoles' release of superfluorescent bursts.

D. Polarons decrease the intensity of the superfluorescent burst.

ID: 16f7b2f6 Answer

Correct Answer: B

Rationale

Choice B is the best answer because it most accurately describes Biliroglu and colleagues' claim about how the polarons function in relation to superfluorescence. The text indicates that "until recently," superfluorescence (intense, synchronized bursts of light emitted by dipoles) has solely been observed at very cold temperatures. However, it also states that, recently, Biliroglu and colleagues report observing the phenomenon at room temperature. They achieved this using "thin films made of perovskite and other similarly crystalline materials," which the researchers claim allows for the formation of polarons. They also suggest that these polarons might absorb the thermal shocks that typically disrupt dipole synchronization at warmer temperatures. Thus, based on the text, Biliroglu and colleagues believe that polarons help dipoles synchronize at temperatures well above those at which superfluorescence had previously been observed.

Choice A is incorrect because the text doesn't address the prospect of a superfluorescent burst moving between crystalline materials or any other mediums. Choice C is incorrect because the text's discussion of polarons is about how they might enable superfluorescence at higher temperatures than those at which it had previously been observed. Rather than suggesting that polarons speed up superfluorescent bursts, the text suggests that no superfluorescence can occur at room temperature in the absence of polarons. Thus, the text indicates that polarons make superfluorescent bursts more likely to occur at higher temperatures than those at which it had previously been observed, not that polarons accelerate the bursts. Choice D is incorrect because the text's discussion of polarons is about how they might enable superfluorescence at higher temperatures than those at which it had previously been observed. In the absence of polarons, the text suggests there would be no superfluorescence at room temperature. Thus, rather than decrease the intensity of superfluorescent bursts, polarons make them more likely to occur under certain circumstances.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID e16d4a26

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	

ID: e16d4a26

The following text is from Mick Herron's 2023 novel *The Secret Hours*. The narrator is describing members of a government committee.

> Finally, and adding much-needed gravitas, was Sir Winston Day, whose features seemed moulded to adorn a bust, or possibly a stamp, and whose forehead was so evidently bulging with grey matter that it would have been impertinent to inquire too closely into the actual achievements his half century of public service had produced. His recently published memoirs possibly cast light on this enigma, but given that such details were not provided until after the thirty-page mark, they might as well have remained state secrets.

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Based on the text, which choice best describes Sir Winston Day?

A. He has the appearance of a distinguished figure, but it is uncertain whether he has accomplished anything to earn distinction.

B. He looks like a person worthy of respect, but his memoirs reveal that some of his actions were dishonorable.

C. He would be a celebrated public figure if his achievements did not have to be kept secret.

D. He has maintained a modest profile even though he has served the public capably for many years.

ID: e16d4a26 Answer

Correct Answer: A

Rationale

Choice A is the best answer because it accurately describes Sir Winston Day as he is portrayed in the text. The text indicates that Sir Winston's "features seemed moulded to adorn a bust, or possibly a stamp," suggesting that he appeared distinguished. But the text also indicates that his "actual achievements" during his long public service constitute an "enigma," or mystery, highlighting the point with a joke about Sir Winston's uninteresting memoirs (any information about his achievements past the first thirty pages "might as well have remained state secrets" since, it's implied, no one bothered to read that far). Thus, the text suggests that Sir Winston appears distinguished even though his known accomplishments, if any, are relatively few.

Choice B is incorrect because nothing in the text indicates that Sir Winston behaved dishonorably. Rather, the text indicates that his "actual achievements" during his long public service constitute an enigma, or mystery, suggesting that he may have done very little, not that what he has done was disreputable. Choice C is incorrect. Although the text says that Sir Winston's achievements that appear "after the thirty-page mark" in his memoirs "might as well have remained state secrets," this is a joke about the public's lack of interest in the memoirs, not a sincere claim that secrecy was intended. Choice D is incorrect because the text does not associate Sir Winston with modesty, nor does it suggest that he was a capable public servant. Rather, by indicating that Sir Winston's "features seemed moulded to adorn a bust, or possibly a stamp," the text suggests that Sir Winston's appearance communicated importance, not modesty. The text further indicates that his "actual achievements" during his long public service constitute an enigma, or mystery, suggesting that he may have done very little, not that he was particularly capable.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID f55b236f

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	

ID: f55b236f

In a study of perceptions of listening ability, participants explained their position on a sociopolitical issue and then received a listener's written summary that expressed agreement or disagreement. Within selected summaries, researchers embedded markers of attentive listening (e.g., references to specific details), hypothesizing that such indications would positively influence perceptions of listening skill even in the context of disagreement. Instead, participants consistently rated listeners who expressed disagreement as less skilled, regardless of the other traits of the listeners' summaries.

What does the text most strongly imply about how participants responded to expressions of disagreement?

A. When participants felt personally invested in the topics they discussed, they were less likely to perceive listeners who expressed disagreement as attentive, regardless of evidence to the contrary in these listeners' summaries.

B. When participants encountered summaries from listeners who expressed disagreement with their views, participants tended to disregard evidence that the listeners had in fact been attentive.

C. Although participants maintained their positions regardless of a summary's level of detail, they tended to regard listeners who expressed disagreement as more attentive when these listeners provided more detailed summaries.

D. Although participants were critical of expressions of disagreement, they gave higher ratings to listeners whose summaries included markers of attentiveness than to listeners whose summaries did not include these markers.

ID: f55b236f Answer

Correct Answer: B

Rationale

Choice B is the best answer because it most accurately describes what the text implies about participants' responses to disagreement. The text describes a study in which participants were asked to explain their position on an issue to a listener, who then provided a written summary of that position that also expressed their level of agreement. The participants were then asked, based on these summaries, to rate listeners' listening skill. The text indicates that researchers embedded markers of attentive listening, such as references to details, in some of the summaries, expecting that these markers would improve the participants' perceptions of listening skill even when the listeners disagreed. Instead, participants rated disagreeing listeners as less skilled, or attentive, "regardless of the other traits of the listeners' summaries." This means that even when summaries contained evidence of attentive listening, participants still judged disagreeing listeners as less skilled—in effect, disregarding evidence that those listeners had been attentive.

Choice A is incorrect. Although the text does suggest that participants tended to disregard evidence of attentiveness when listeners disagreed with their position on the topic they discussed, it doesn't address participants' level of personal investment in these topics; therefore, the text can't support any conclusions about how personal investment in a topic affected participants' perceptions of the listening skill of disagreeing listeners. Choice C is incorrect because it directly contradicts the text. The text states that participants rated disagreeing listeners as less skilled regardless of the other traits of the listeners' summaries, which means markers of attentiveness (specific details) didn't lead participants to regard disagreeing listeners as more attentive.

Instead, disagreement alone determined the participants' lower ratings. Moreover, the text doesn't address whether participants maintained their positions based on the listeners' summaries. The text focuses on factors affecting participants' perceptions of listeners' attentiveness, not on how features of listeners' summaries influenced the participants' views of the sociopolitical issue they discussed. Choice D is incorrect because the text indicates the opposite: participants didn't give higher ratings to disagreeing listeners whose summaries included markers of attentiveness than to disagreeing listeners whose summaries didn't include these markers. Rather, the text states that participants rated disagreeing listeners as less skilled than agreeing listeners regardless of the other traits of the summaries, meaning attentiveness markers had no positive effect when listeners' summaries expressed disagreement.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID f8d0dc9c

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	

ID: f8d0dc9c

In their meta-analysis of research on advergames (video games developed to promote products or services), Zeph M.C. van Berlo et al. confirm that such games, though they can elicit player interest, may not facilitate subsequent recall of product and brand information. This phenomenon can be explained by the finite nature of cognitive capacity as it is articulated in Annie Lang's limited capacity model of motivated mediated message processing. In this case, players' cognitive resources are directed foremost toward the advergame's mechanics, leaving little or no capacity for encoding and storing the information the advertiser intends to be salient.

Which choice best states the main idea of the text?

A. The limited capacity model of motivated mediated message processing developed by Lang provides a means of explaining the finding by van Berlo et al. that players may not readily recollect the brand and product information embedded in advergames.

B. Research by van Berlo et al. corroborates Lang's conclusion that because people predominantly focus on game mechanics when playing video games, it is difficult for advergames to communicate brand and product information in ways that are highly memorable.

C. The meta-analysis by van Berlo et al. reveals that higher engagement in advergame mechanics is linked to lower effectiveness in persuading players to purchase particular brands and products.

D. Although the limited capacity model of motivated mediated message processing developed by Lang suggests otherwise, advergames can succeed as marketing tools, provided that they achieve a balance between game mechanics and the promotion of a brand or product.

ID: f8d0dc9c Answer

Correct Answer: A

Rationale

Choice A is the best answer because it most accurately states the main idea of the text. The text begins by presenting van Berlo et al.'s finding that advergames—video games intended to promote a specific product or service—can be engaging to players but "may not facilitate subsequent recall of product and brand information," ultimately limiting their effectiveness as advertisements. The text then suggests that Lang's limited capacity model of motivated mediated message processing, which characterizes cognitive capacity as finite, can explain or account for van Berlo et al.'s finding: specifically, players' attention is "directed foremost toward the advergame's mechanics" instead of toward the advertising information. The main idea of the text is therefore that Lang's model provides a means of explaining van Berlo et al.'s finding.

Choice B is incorrect because it mischaracterizes the relationship between Lang's model and van Berlo et al.'s finding. The text presents Lang's model as a broad theoretical framework about cognitive capacity that can explain van Berlo et al.'s finding. The text doesn't indicate that Lang drew conclusions specific to video games that van Berlo et al. then corroborated. Choice C is incorrect because it mischaracterizes the findings of the meta-analysis by van Berlo et al. Although Lang's model suggests that

engagement in advergame mechanics occurs at the expense of recalling advertising information, the text doesn't indicate that van Berlo et al. offered this explanation for their finding. The text merely states that van Berlo et al. found that advergames "can elicit player interest" but "may not facilitate subsequent recall of product and brand information." In addition, the text doesn't discuss whether players' ability to recall advertising content ultimately affects their purchasing behavior. Choice D is incorrect. Although the text presents Lang's model as an explanation of why advergames may not succeed in promoting recall of advertising information, the text doesn't suggest that advergames can succeed as marketing tools if they balance mechanics and promotion. The text doesn't propose a design solution to the limitations of advergames or suggest that these limitations can be overcome.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID 8ea2d570

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	

ID: 8ea2d570

The fynbos shrubland is a diverse habitat found only in South Africa. It is adjacent to the Afro-temperate forest, with almost no transition space between the two distinct habitats. Plants in the fynbos have uniquely thin and long root systems that spread out over large distances to absorb nutrients from the soil. Ecologists transplanted tree seedlings from the forest into plots in the fynbos. Seedlings in plots isolated from the roots of fynbos plants exhibited a growth rate five times greater than that of the seedlings in plots in close proximity to the roots of fynbos plants.

Based on the text, what role do fynbos roots most likely have in maintaining the border between the fynbos shrubland and the Afro-temperate forest habitats?

A. Fynbos roots damage the root systems of forest plants, leaving those plants unable to acquire sufficient nutrients.

B. Fynbos roots extend close enough to the forest plants' roots that they constitute a physical barrier that forest plants' roots cannot pass.

C. The root systems of fynbos plants allow the plants to take in so many soil nutrients that forest plants are prevented from flourishing in the fynbos.

D. The root systems of fynbos plants enhance the soil immediately surrounding the plants, allowing them to thrive in an otherwise harsh habitat.

ID: 8ea2d570 Answer

Correct Answer: C

Rationale

Choice C is the best answer because it presents a conclusion about the role of fynbos roots in maintaining the border with the Afro-temperate forest that can be reasonably inferred from the text. The text states that plants in the fynbos have "uniquely thin and long root systems that spread out over large distances to absorb nutrients from the soil." The text then describes an experiment where forest tree seedlings grown in plots isolated from fynbos roots grew at a rate five times greater than seedlings in areas near fynbos roots. This strongly suggests that fynbos roots are depleting soil nutrients to such an extent that forest plants can't get enough nutrients from that soil to flourish, thereby hindering the formation of any significant "transition space" between the habitats and helping keep the border between them sharp.

Choice A is incorrect because there is no evidence in the text that fynbos roots physically damage the root systems of forest plants. Instead, the text explicitly describes fynbos plants as having "uniquely thin and long root systems that spread out over large distances to absorb nutrients from the soil." This description establishes that fynbos roots are specialized for efficient nutrient absorption. The experiment then confirms this function of the roots by showing that forest seedlings "isolated from the roots of fynbos plants exhibited a growth rate five times greater" than those near fynbos roots. This result demonstrates that when forest seedlings don't have to compete with the nutrient-absorbing fynbos roots, they grow much better. Choice B is incorrect. Although the text does indicate that the fynbos and the Afro-temperate forest are distinct from, and adjacent to, each other and that there is "almost no transition space" (area of mixed fynbos and forest plants), the experiment shows that forest

plants can grow in soil occupied by fynbos roots, just not very well. So, the idea that the fynbos roots physically obstruct forest plants is unsupported by the text. Choice D is incorrect because it directly contradicts the text's claim that fynbos roots absorb nutrients from, and therefore deplete, the soil they're in, and furthermore, nothing in the text suggests that the habitat of the fynbos is harsh in general.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID a2d63490

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	

ID: a2d63490

In her 1998 book *Blues Legacies and Black Feminism*, Angela Y. Davis bases her analysis in part on recordings of songs sung in the 1920s by Gertrude “Ma” Rainey and Bessie Smith. Davis focuses on how Rainey and Smith improvised the lyrics—replacing the original lines with mischievous jokes and wordplay. Davis’s work was particularly labor intensive because in order to transcribe, or write down, the lyrics as Rainey and Smith sang them, Davis had to listen repeatedly to the vinyl recordings, which weren’t very clear.

What does the text most strongly suggest about the songs sung by Rainey and Smith?

A. The songs have grown in popularity since Rainey and Smith first sang them.

B. There were more recordings made of Rainey’s songs than there were of Smith’s.

C. There were few, if any, reliable transcriptions of Smith’s and Rainey’s improvised lyrics when Davis began her research.

D. According to Davis, the songs sung by Rainey were more musically innovative than those sung by Smith typically were.

ID: a2d63490 Answer

Correct Answer: C

Rationale

Choice C is the best answer because it describes the songs sung by Gertrude "Ma" Rainey and Bessie Smith in a way the text implies is accurate. The text describes Angela Y. Davis’s research on Rainey and Smith for her book *Blues Legacies and Black Feminism*, focusing on her efforts to transcribe the improvised lyrics in Rainey’s and Smith’s songs. The text calls Davis’s transcription process "labor intensive" since the lack of clarity in the recordings required her to listen to each repeatedly to verify the accuracy of her transcripts. The fact that Davis undertook a painstaking transcription process using only fairly low-fidelity recordings suggests that reliable transcriptions were otherwise unavailable to her.

Choice A is incorrect. The text doesn’t discuss the popularity of Rainey’s and Smith’s songs either in the 1920s or after. Although it is plausible that the music of Rainey and Smith is more widely enjoyed than it was in the 1920s, this isn’t supported by the text. Choice B is incorrect. The text doesn’t discuss which of Rainey and Smith was the more prolific recording artist and so provides no support for such a claim. Choice D is incorrect. The text discusses the creativity of both Rainey and Smith, but it does so only to note similarities between them in terms of improvisation and wit, not to emphasize differences between them or Davis’s relative views of the artists’ inventiveness.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID 70617b47

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	

ID: 70617b47

The following text is from Ahmet Hamdi Tanpinar's 1961 novel *The Time Regulation Institute* (translated from the Turkish in 2014 by Maureen Freely and Alexander Dawe). The narrator was once involved with the Time Regulation Institute, a fictional bureaucracy that regulates the time of Turkey's clocks.

> I may be the most humble and absurd man in the world and, as my wife says, the most slovenly creature you may ever meet—that is, before the founding of our institute—but I did come to know a truly great man who possessed a natural genius for invention. I spent years at his side. I watched the way he worked. I witnessed how an idea would suddenly catch fire in his mind and take shape, like a tree sprouting shoots and branches, before coming into being.

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Which choice best states the main idea of the text?

A. A person was fortunate enough to have found love despite his obvious shortcomings.

B. An exceptionally talented person professes humility to avoid intimidating others.

C. A person appreciates the extensive time he passed in the company of someone he deeply admired.

D. A truly brilliant person lets ideas mature in his mind before expressing them aloud.

ID: 70617b47 Answer

Correct Answer: C

Rationale

Choice C is the best answer because it most accurately describes the main idea of the text: a person appreciates the extensive time he passed in the company of a man he deeply admired. The speaker says that he spent "years" (a long period of time) in the company of a "truly great man" with "a natural genius for invention." These phrases indicate the speaker's feelings of admiration.

Choice A is incorrect because though the text indicates that the speaker feels professional admiration for the "truly great man," the text does not indicate that the speaker feels love for him; nor does the text indicate that the speaker's humility, absurdity, and slovenly nature proved to be an obstacle to this professional relationship. Choice B is incorrect because though the speaker describes himself as humble, the text does not indicate that he is exceptionally talented; nor does the text indicate that the "truly great man" professes humility or is concerned with whether he intimidates others. Choice D is incorrect because the text does not indicate how either the speaker or the "truly great man" express their ideas.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID f250ff13

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	

ID: f250ff13

Readers sometimes divide the works of twentieth-century English author Evelyn Waugh into two periods: one consisting of his early satirical novels and the other consisting of his later, more serious—even ponderous—books. Critic Seamus Perry, however, challenges that strict division. Perry argues that Waugh's writing didn't change over time as much as some readers have suggested. For instance, Perry contends that some of Waugh's earliest works, notably his biography of artist Dante Gabriel Rossetti, exhibit the earnest romanticism that would characterize Waugh's later fiction.

Based on the text, which statement about Waugh's works would Perry most likely agree with?

A. Waugh's works can appropriately be separated into two periods by their subject matter and tone.

B. Regardless of when they were written, Waugh's works have important similarities that transcend their differences.

C. The earliest of Waugh's works exhibit a satirical tone, even if that tone is more apparent in Waugh's later works.

D. Over time, Waugh's works became less humorous and more focused on weightier topics.

ID: f250ff13 Answer

Correct Answer: B

Rationale

Choice B is the best answer because it presents a statement that is consistent with Perry's position as described in the text. The text explains that although Waugh's works are sometimes divided into an early period typified by satirical novels and a later period consisting of "more serious" works, Perry "challenges that strict division" and argues that Waugh's writing "didn't change over time as much as some readers have suggested." As evidence, Perry notes that Waugh's biography of Dante Gabriel Rossetti and other early works show the "earnest romanticism" associated with Waugh's later fiction, suggesting continuity across the two periods and also across genres. It is therefore likely that Perry would agree that Waugh's works have important similarities that transcend their differences, regardless of when they were written.

Choice A is incorrect because the text states that Perry challenges the "strict division" of Waugh's works into two periods typified by their subject matter and tone. Perry therefore would likely disagree that such separation is appropriate; instead, he argues that Waugh's writing shows more continuity across time than this division suggests. Choice C is incorrect because it mischaracterizes the similarity that Perry notes in Waugh's earlier and later works. Perry contends that Waugh's early works exhibit the "earnest romanticism" of his later fiction, not that the early works' satirical tone appears more prominently later. Although the text mentions that Waugh's earlier works are often satirical, Perry's argument doesn't emphasize this trait or trace its development over time. Choice D is incorrect because it reflects the periodization of Waugh's works that Perry is challenging. The text indicates that Perry argues against the idea that Waugh's writing changed dramatically over the course of his career, and Perry specifically emphasizes a point of similarity between Waugh's earlier and later works. Given this stance, it's unlikely that Perry would agree that Waugh's works became less humorous and more serious over time.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID c72e5f1e

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	

ID: c72e5f1e

The following text is from Mark Haber's 2022 novel *Saint Sebastian's Abyss*. The narrator and Schmidt are both art critics.

> When my first wife admitted to Schmidt over dinner that she didn't find art, painting in particular, especially compelling, Schmidt winced, set down his fork, and sighed dramatically; he then excused himself, explaining an appointment he'd forgotten about had suddenly and inexplicably been remembered, while making it abundantly clear there was no appointment at all.

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Based on the text, what is notable about Schmidt's behavior?

A. Schmidt is only given to theatrical behavior when in the company of the narrator and his first wife.

B. Schmidt's absentmindedness regarding his schedule is uncharacteristic of him.

C. Schmidt's departure is occasioned by the resumption of a previous disagreement with the narrator's first wife about a particular painting.

D. Schmidt conveys his feelings about one of his dining companions without explicitly stating them.

ID: c72e5f1e Answer

Correct Answer: D

Rationale

Choice D is the best answer because it most accurately describes what is notable about Schmidt's behavior. According to the text, when the narrator's first wife admits she doesn't find art particularly compelling, Schmidt responds by wincing, sighing dramatically, and abruptly leaving dinner with an obviously false excuse about a remembered appointment. The narrator makes it clear that there is no actual appointment and that the excuse is merely a pretense. Through these actions—the physical reactions of wincing and sighing, followed by the transparent excuse to leave—Schmidt clearly communicates his disapproval of the wife without directly stating his feelings about her.

Choice A is incorrect because the text provides no evidence that Schmidt's theatrical behavior—wincing, sighing dramatically, and abruptly leaving dinner—is unique to situations involving the narrator and his first wife. The text describes only one interaction involving Schmidt, so there's no basis for determining whether his dramatic reactions are typical of him in all situations or limited to this particular social context. Choice B is incorrect because nothing in the text suggests that Schmidt is typically mindful of his schedule or that forgetting appointments would be uncharacteristic of him. Rather, the text makes it clear that Schmidt hasn't actually forgotten an appointment at all—the narrator indicates that Schmidt's reason for leaving is an obvious fabrication, not a genuine instance of absentmindedness. Choice C is incorrect because the text doesn't mention any previous disagreement between Schmidt and the narrator's first wife about a particular painting or any other topic. The text presents what appears to be a spontaneous reaction by Schmidt to the wife's statement about not finding art compelling, not the continuation of an earlier conversation or dispute.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID 9dfa59ac

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	

ID: 9dfa59ac

The following text is from Milan Kundera's 1984 novel *The Unbearable Lightness of Being* (translated by Michael Henry Heim in 1984). Karenin is a dog that belongs to Tomas and Tereza.

> Karenin was not overjoyed by the move to Switzerland [from Prague]. Karenin hated change. Dog time cannot be plotted along a straight line; it does not move on and on, from one thing to the next. It moves in a circle like the hands of a clock, which—they, too, unwilling to dash madly ahead—turn round and round the face, day in and day out following the same path. In Prague, when Tomas and Tereza bought a new chair or moved a flower pot, Karenin would look on in displeasure. It disturbed his sense of time. It was as though they were trying to dupe the hands of the clock by changing the numbers on its face.

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Which choice best states the main idea of the text?

A. As a dog, Karenin possesses a sense of time that involves a strong preference for predictability and an aversion to disruption.

B. After he's moved to a new home, Karenin's negative response to changes has become more pronounced.

C. Similar to Tomas and Tereza, Karenin comprehends time as circular rather than as a straightforward progression.

D. As is the case for other dogs, Karenin's sense of time seems to accelerate depending on the objects and places that surround him.

ID: 9dfa59ac Answer

Correct Answer: A

Rationale

Choice A is the best answer because it most accurately states the main idea of the text. The text begins by stating that Tomas and Tereza's dog Karenin felt disrupted by a recent move because of his dislike of change. The text then goes on to suggest that this is because the way a dog experiences time differs from the way humans experience time: time for a dog doesn't move linearly, going "on and on, from one thing to the next," but instead moves circularly, "like the hands of a clock." That is, time for a dog is experienced as a cyclical pattern characterized by routine and predictability, with each day "following the same path." The text then concludes by providing examples of seemingly insignificant changes in routine that profoundly "disturbed [Karenin's] sense of time," causing him to feel displeasure. Thus, the main idea of the text is that Karenin's sense of time as a dog involves a strong preference for predictability and an aversion to disruption.

Choice B is incorrect. Although the text emphasizes Karenin's displeasure with the recent move to a new home, it doesn't suggest that the move has made his negative responses more pronounced than they once were. Rather, in accounting for Karenin's displeasure with the move to Switzerland, the text explains that Karenin generally has a negative response to any kind of change. Choice C is incorrect because the text doesn't suggest that Karenin comprehends time similarly to how Tomas and Tereza comprehend it. On the contrary, the text strongly implies a contrast between dogs' circular experience of time with the way humans experience time as a straightforward progression that can be "plotted on a straight line." Choice D is incorrect because

the text provides no indication that a change in the places and objects surrounding Karenin causes him to feel as though time is accelerating. Although the text does use the language of "dash[ing] madly ahead" in relation to time, the phrase appears in the context of a comparison illustrating how dogs experience time: time for a dog moves just as the hands of a clock do, in a circle and "unwilling to dash madly ahead"—that is, always in a regular and predictable way.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID 5827cc83

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	

ID: 5827cc83

NASA's Aspera mission, led by Carlos Vargas, will investigate the circumgalactic medium (CGM), the huge swaths of low-density gas that fill and surround galaxies. Specifically, the team will focus on portions of the gas that exist in a "warm-hot" phase: these portions haven't previously been observable but are thought to fuel new star formation and hold most of the mass that makes up a galaxy. Using a telescope capable of revealing these parts of the CGM, the Aspera mission should help answer long-standing questions about how galaxies emerge, change, and even interact.

Which choice best states the main idea of the text?

A. As the leader of NASA's Aspera mission, Vargas will be the first person to investigate the makeup of the CGM.

B. Although galaxies that are surrounded by the CGM have been studied, researchers have been unable to directly observe low-density gas in the CGM in the "warm-hot" phase.

C. Researchers don't yet have a complete understanding of the process of galaxy evolution but have raised the possibility that galaxies interact with each other at times.

D. The Aspera mission is expected to produce the first direct observations of CGM gas in the "warm-hot" phase, which likely has an important role in the evolution of galaxies.

ID: 5827cc83 Answer

Correct Answer: D

Rationale

Choice D is the best answer because it most accurately states the main idea of the text. The text begins by mentioning NASA's Aspera mission, which will investigate the low-density gas that makes up the circumgalactic medium (CGM). According to the text, this mission will focus on a portion of the CGM's gas that exists in a "warm-hot" phase; this "warm-hot" gas has not been previously observed, but it is thought to make up most of the mass of galaxies and play a part in star formation. Finally, the text mentions a telescope capable of examining this previously unobservable "warm-hot" gas: the Aspera mission will use this telescope in the hope of answering questions about galaxy formation and change. Therefore, the main idea of the text is that the Aspera mission is likely to produce the first direct observations of CGM gas in the "warm-hot" phase, which likely has an important role in the evolution of galaxies.

Choice A is incorrect. Although this choice mentions the Aspera mission, names its leader, and generally states the mission's purpose, it does not reference the "warm-hot" gas or fully convey the reason why the Aspera mission is significant. Choice B is incorrect. Although this choice mentions the "warm-hot" gas that makes up a portion of the CGM, it does not reference the Aspera mission or describe its importance. The text also does not mention that galaxies surrounded by the CGM have been studied. Choice C is incorrect. Although this choice describes a problem related to the CGM that researchers have been attempting to solve and presents the speculation of those researchers, it does not mention the Aspera mission or describe its purpose.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID 756aad6b

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	

ID: 756aad6b

To understand how Paleolithic artists navigated dark caves, archaeologist Mª Ángeles Medina-Alcaide and her team tested different lighting methods in a cave in Spain using replicas of artifacts found in European caves with art. They used three different Paleolithic light sources—torches, animal-fat lamps, and fireplaces—determining that each likely had a specific purpose. For instance, the team learned that the animal-fat lamps were less useful than torches while walking because the lamps didn't illuminate the cave floor.

Which choice best states the main idea of the text?

A. Medina-Alcaide and her team's study demonstrated that fireplaces were essential to the creators of Paleolithic cave art.

B. Medina-Alcaide and her team discovered that Paleolithic cave artists in Spain used animal-fat lamps more often than they used torches.

C. Medina-Alcaide and her team were reluctant to draw many conclusions from their study because of the difficulty they had replicating light sources based on known artifacts.

D. Medina-Alcaide and her team tested Paleolithic light sources and learned some details about how Paleolithic artists traveled within dark caves.

ID: 756aad6b Answer

Correct Answer: D

Rationale

Choice D is the best answer because it most accurately states the main idea of the text. The text indicates that archaeologist Mª Ángeles Medina-Alcaide and her team used replicas of Paleolithic light sources to understand how Paleolithic artists moved through dark caves. The researchers learned, for example, that torches were more helpful for moving through caves than animal-fat lamps were. Thus, the main idea of the text is that Medina-Alcaide and her team tested Paleolithic light sources and learned some details about how Paleolithic artists traveled within dark caves.

Choice A is incorrect because the text doesn't address the usefulness of fireplaces for Paleolithic cave artists; it only mentions fireplaces briefly as one of the three lighting methods the researchers tested. Choice B is incorrect because the text doesn't discuss how often Paleolithic cave artists used each kind of light source tested. Although the text does compare animal-fat lamps with another lighting method, the point of that comparison is that animal-fat lamps were less useful than torches when walking, not that one method was used more often than another. Choice C is incorrect because the text doesn't discuss either how difficult it was for Medina-Alcaide and her team to replicate light sources or how the team felt about drawing conclusions from their study. Instead, the text reveals that the team was able to conclude that each light source likely had a distinct purpose.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID adff3419

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	

ID: adff3419

Artificial leaves are a developing renewable energy technology that mimics the process of photosynthesis in plants. These devices are silicon-based solar cells coated in chemical catalysts that activate reactions that split water molecules into hydrogen and oxygen gas. The technology, while generating lots of interest, is not yet commercially viable as a large-scale energy source. To meet this challenge, scientists from many fields are researching ways to store, transport, and distribute the energy the devices produce while other scientists are working to improve the cost and efficiency of the devices.

Which choice best states the main idea of the text?

A. Continued research and development in artificial-leaf technology is needed before the devices can be widely used as an energy source.

B. The recent increase in the commercial use of artificial leaves as an energy source has encouraged many scientists to research ways to improve the technology.

C. Artificial leaves split water molecules into oxygen and hydrogen gas using catalysts more efficiently than plants do using the process of photosynthesis.

D. Artificial leaves were developed to mimic the natural process of photosynthesis in plants in order to store energy for long-term commercial use.

ID: adff3419 Answer

Correct Answer: A

Rationale

Choice A is the best answer because it most accurately states the main idea of the text. According to the text, artificial leaves are a renewable energy technology that's in development and generating interest. The text goes on to state that artificial-leaf technology "is not yet commercially viable as a large-scale energy source" and that scientists from several fields are doing additional research to refine the technology. Thus, the main idea is that continued research and development in artificial-leaf technology is needed before the devices can be widely used as an energy source.

Choice B is incorrect. While the text does state that scientists from many fields are researching artificial leaves, they're doing so to address the fact that the leaves are not yet commercially viable, rather than in response to an increase in commercial use. Choice C is incorrect. Although the text does explain that artificial leaves help split water molecules into oxygen and hydrogen gas using catalysts, it doesn't argue that this process is more efficient than photosynthesis. This is merely a detail of the text and not the main idea, which is about the additional research needed to improve the cost and efficiency of these artificial leaves. Choice D is incorrect. Although the text indicates that artificial leaves mimic photosynthesis in plants, this is an incidental detail in support of the main idea that additional research is needed to make artificial leaves commercially viable.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID 07302985

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	

ID: 07302985

Jürgen Kocka and other historians of capitalism rarely discuss domestic capitalism in Africa before the period of European colonization, implicitly presenting capitalism as external to and imposed on Africa. Crislayne Alfagali and other Africanist scholars have shown, however, that in parts of Africa, returns-focused investment, the establishment of open markets for wage labor, and other features of capitalism predated colonization. One reason for this discrepancy is that historians of capitalism tend to focus on longitudinal economic data drawn from archival records, which do not exist for much of precolonial Africa.

Which statement about Alfagali and other Africanist scholars is best supported by information in the text?

A. They likely make use of different types of evidence than historians of capitalism typically rely on.

B. They likely differ from historians of capitalism in the methods they use to derive longitudinal economic data from archival records.

C. They likely have a different view about which activities should be considered capitalist in nature than historians of capitalism do.

D. They likely view capitalism as having been more beneficial for Africa than historians of capitalism do.

ID: 07302985 Answer

Correct Answer: A

Rationale

Choice A is the best answer because it presents a statement about Alfagali and other Africanist scholars that is supported by the text. The last sentence of the text explains that historians of capitalism generally rely on a type of data that requires "archival records, which do not exist for much of precolonial Africa." Nevertheless, Alfagali and other Africanist scholars have demonstrated that features of capitalism including "returns-focused investment,...open markets for wage labor, and other features of capitalism" existed in parts of Africa before colonization. Because archival records typically used by historians of capitalism aren't available for precolonial Africa, Alfagali and other Africanist scholars of precolonial capitalism in Africa likely used atypical sources for their studies.

Choice B is incorrect because the text states that archival records containing longitudinal economic data "do not exist for much of precolonial Africa." If these records don't exist for precolonial Africa, then Alfagali and other Africanist scholars couldn't derive data from them by any method. Choice C is incorrect because the text doesn't suggest that Alfagali and other Africanist scholars define capitalism differently than other historians of capitalism do. On the contrary, the text simply asserts that specific features they found, such as "returns-focused investment [and] open markets for wage labor," are "features of capitalism," which implies scholarly agreement that these activities are capitalist in nature. Choice D is incorrect because the text doesn't indicate any effects of capitalism in Africa, positive or negative. Rather, the text explains why precolonial Africa has been omitted from mainstream histories of capitalism and presents work by Alfagali and other Africanist scholars that challenges and corrects the historical record of precolonial capitalism.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID 622c99ae

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	

ID: 622c99ae

Poetry in Classical Nahuatl, the language of the Aztec Empire, relies on *difrasismo*, or a parallel noun construction that conventionally operates as a single metaphor. For example, the common difrasismo *in cuauhtli in ocelotl* (literally, "the eagle, the jaguar") signifies "warrior." The device's function is both formal—providing structure to lines of verse—and ritual: semantic relations among the two nouns and the concept they signify can be tenuous, as in the previous example, such that difrasismos are often only intelligible according to the conceptual associations observed in Aztec ceremonial culture.

Which statement about the difrasismo *in cuauhtli in ocelotl* is most strongly supported by the text?

A. Its metaphorical significance derives from the semantic equivalence of the two nouns constituting the difrasismo.

B. Its unintelligibility may cause its formal function within a line of verse to go unnoticed by present-day readers.

C. Its apparent obscurity can be resolved when considered in the proper cultural context.

D. Its frequency in Classical Nahuatl poetry confirms its intelligibility to the Aztec audience.

ID: 622c99ae Answer

Correct Answer: C

Rationale

Choice C is the best answer because it presents a statement about the difrasismo *in cuauhtli in ocelotl* that is directly supported by the text. The text begins by describing difrasismo, a device used in Classical Nahuatl poetry. The text then mentions the device's two functions: a formal one (giving structure to lines of verse) and a ritualistic one. The text indicates that the relation between the words in a difrasismo may appear tenuous without the additional information supplied by Aztec ceremonial culture but that the meaning becomes intelligible in the context of that information. Therefore, the difrasismo's apparent obscurity can be resolved when considered in the proper cultural context.

Choice A is incorrect because the text doesn't indicate that the two nouns used in a difrasismo are semantically equivalent; instead, the text indicates that the two nouns used in a difrasismo make up a single metaphor whose meaning is often intelligible only in the context of information supplied by Aztec ceremonial culture. Choice B is incorrect because the text doesn't indicate that there's a relationship between the formal function of the difrasismo and the difrasismo's intelligibility. Additionally, the text suggests that present-day readers who are familiar with Aztec ceremonial culture wouldn't find the difrasismo to be unintelligible. Choice D is incorrect because the text doesn't indicate that the frequency of difrasismo's use in Classical Nahuatl is a necessary feature of intelligibility: the text indicates that an infrequently used difrasismo would presumably also be intelligible to members of an Aztec audience who are sufficiently familiar with Aztec ceremonial culture.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID f27e490b

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	

ID: f27e490b

Optical tweezers are specialized scientific tools—particularly useful in biology and medicine—that use high-powered beams of light to trap and manipulate minuscule particles for study. Use of the tool has led to several scientific and medical breakthroughs over the last few decades, but the particles are often under prolonged exposure to the intense heat of the light beams. To overcome the risk of overheating, and thereby damage, researchers sometimes attach nano-sized glass beads to particles, allowing the light to focus on the beads instead of the particles.

Based on the text, what is one advantage of attaching glass beads to particles when using optical tweezers?

A. It decreases the time it takes for the optical tweezers to locate and capture the particles.

B. It facilitates the maneuvering of particles without directly heating the particles themselves.

C. It allows researchers to use weaker light beams to manipulate particles.

D. It adds a material to which particles can transfer any heat absorbed from the optical tweezers' light beam.

ID: f27e490b Answer

Correct Answer: B

Rationale

Choice B is the best answer. The text says that the glass beads get the "focus" of the light beams so that the particles don't overheat. From this, we can infer that the beads allow the particles to be manipulated without being directly heated by the light beams.

Choice A is incorrect. The text never says that attaching the glass beads saves time in any way. Choice C is incorrect. The text never says that attaching the glass beads allows researchers to use weaker light beams. Choice D is incorrect. The text doesn't say that the particles can transfer heat to the glass beads—rather, it says the heat from the light focuses on the glass beads instead of the particles.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID d878f4e2

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	

ID: d878f4e2

Disco remains one of the most ridiculed popular music genres of the late twentieth century. But as scholars have argued, the genre is far less superficial than many people believe. Take the case of disco icon Donna Summer: she may have been associated with popular songs about love and heartbreak (subjects hardly unique to disco, by the way), but like many Black women singers before her, much of her music also reflects concerns about community and identity. These concerns are present in many of the genre's greatest songs, and they generally don't require much digging to reveal.

What does the text most strongly suggest about the disco genre?

A. It has been unjustly ignored by most scholars despite the importance of the themes addressed by many of the genre's songs.

B. It evolved over time from a superficial genre focused on romance to a genre focused on more serious concerns.

C. It has been unfairly dismissed for the inclusion of subject matter that is also found in other musical genres.

D. It gave rise to a Black women's musical tradition that has endured even though the genre itself faded in the late twentieth century.

ID: d878f4e2 Answer

Correct Answer: C

Rationale

Choice C is the best answer. The text argues that disco is "far less superficial" than its popular perception might indicate, and that love and heartbreak are "subjects hardly unique to disco."

Choice A is incorrect. This choice conflicts with the text, which says that scholars argue that disco "is far less superficial than many people believe." Choice B is incorrect. This choice says the opposite of what the text suggests. The writer argues that the genre is not as superficial as commonly believed, but that it always reflected "concerns about community and identity." Choice D is incorrect. The text doesn't support this choice. There's nothing in the text about disco giving rise to an enduring Black women's musical tradition.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID 663bef8a

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	

ID: 663bef8a

Many literary theorists distinguish between *fabula*, a narrative's content, and *syuzhet*, a narrative's arrangement and presentation of events. In the film *The Godfather Part II*, the *fabula* is the story of the Corleone family, and the *syuzhet* is the presentation of the story as it alternates between two timelines in 1901 and 1958. But literary theorist Mikhail Bakhtin maintained that *fabula* and *syuzhet* are insufficient to completely describe a narrative—he held that systematic categorizations of artistic phenomena discount the subtle way in which meaning is created by interactions between the artist, the work, and the audience.

Which choice best states the main idea of the text?

A. Literary theorist Mikhail Bakhtin argued that there are important characteristics of narratives that are not fully encompassed by two concepts that other theorists have used to analyze narratives.

B. Literary theorist Mikhail Bakhtin claimed that meaning is not inherent in a narrative but is created when an audience encounters a narrative so that narratives are interpreted differently by different people.

C. The storytelling methods used in *The Godfather Part II* may seem unusually complicated, but they can be easily understood when two concepts from literary theory are utilized.

D. Narratives that are told out of chronological order are more difficult for audiences to understand than are narratives presented chronologically.

ID: 663bef8a Answer

Correct Answer: A

Rationale

Choice A is the best answer because it most accurately states the main idea of the text. The text begins by explaining that many literary theorists rely on the concepts of *fabula* (a narrative's content) and *syuzhet* (a narrative's arrangement and presentation of events) and illustrates these concepts by explaining how they can be applied to the film *The Godfather Part II*. The text then discusses how Mikhail Bakhtin, a literary theorist, argued that *fabula* and *syuzhet* can't fully describe a narrative, since systematic categorizations such as these fail to account for all the ways in which interactions between the artist, the work, and the audience produce meaning. Thus, the main idea is that Bakhtin argued that there are important characteristics of narratives that are not fully encompassed by two concepts that other theorists have used to analyze narratives.

Choice B is incorrect because according to the text, Mikhail Bakhtin believed that meaning was created through the interactions of the artist, narrative, and audience, not simply through the interaction between the audience and narrative; moreover, the text doesn't address whether Bakhtin focused on the ways in which different people interpret narratives differently. Choice C is incorrect. Although the text implies that the storytelling methods used in *The Godfather Part II* are complicated, it discusses the film only to illustrate how the concepts of *fabula* and *syuzhet* may be applied to a narrative. The film's storytelling methods aren't the primary focus of the text. Choice D is incorrect. The text discusses *The Godfather Part II*, whose narrative doesn't adhere to a single chronological order, only to illustrate the concepts of *fabula* (a narrative's content) and *syuzhet* (a narrative's arrangement and presentation of events). The primary focus of this text isn't the structure of this film or of other narratives that are told out of

chronological order; moreover, the text doesn't consider whether such structures make it harder for audiences to understand narratives.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID af9c8dc1

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	

ID: af9c8dc1

Some astronomers searching for extraterrestrial life have proposed that atmospheric NH_3 (ammonia) can serve as a biosignature gas—an indication that a planet harbors life. Jingcheng Huang, Sara Seager, and colleagues evaluated this possibility, finding that on rocky planets, atmospheric NH_3 likely couldn't reach detectably high levels in the absence of biological activity. But the team also found that on so-called mini-Neptunes—gas planets smaller than Neptune but with atmospheres similar to Neptune's—atmospheric pressure and temperature can be high enough to produce atmospheric NH_3.

Based on the text, Huang, Seager, and colleagues would most likely agree with which statement about atmospheric NH_3?

A. Its presence is more likely to indicate that a planet is a mini-Neptune than that the planet is a rocky planet that could support life.

B. Its absence from a planet that's not a mini-Neptune indicates that the planet probably doesn't have life.

C. It should be treated as a biosignature gas if detected in the atmosphere of a rocky planet but not if detected in the atmosphere of a mini-Neptune.

D. It doesn't reliably reach high enough concentrations in the atmospheres of rocky planets or mini-Neptunes to be treated as a biosignature gas.

ID: af9c8dc1 Answer

Correct Answer: C

Rationale

Choice C is the best answer because it states a conclusion the researchers likely agree with, given the details in the text. The text explains that a biosignature gas is a gas that can be used as an indicator that a planet harbors some form of life and some astronomers have proposed that NH_3 could serve as a biosignature gas. The researchers evaluating this claim found that the atmosphere of rocky planets would be unlikely to reach "detectably high levels" of NH_3 without biological activity, which would support the proposal of NH_3 serving as a biosignature gas. However, the text also states that mini-Neptune planets can produce NH_3 in the absence of biological activity. Thus, the text is structured to lead to the conclusion that detectable levels of NH_3 in the atmospheres of rocky planets could constitute a biosignature, but that is not the case for detectable levels of the gas in the atmospheres of mini-Neptune planets.

Choice A is incorrect because the text indicates that biological activity likely accounts for detectable levels of NH_3 in the atmospheres of rocky planets but mini-Neptune planets can have detectable levels of NH_3 in their atmospheres in the absence of biological activity. Therefore, both rocky planets and mini-Neptune planets can have detectable levels of atmospheric NH_3. Choice B is incorrect because the text states that for NH_3 to reach detectable levels in the atmospheres of rocky planets likely means they harbor biological activity, meaning that rocky planets with detectable NH_3 usually harbor biological activity. However, that does not entail that every rocky planet with biological activity will have detectable levels of NH_3 in their atmospheres. Choice D is incorrect because the text claims only that some astronomers have proposed using NH_3 as a biosignature gas without mentioning a minimum concentration of atmospheric NH_3 that must be met for it to function as a biosignature gas.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID 720fc59a

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	

ID: 720fc59a

In a paper about p-i-n planar perovskite solar cells (one of several perovskite cell architectures designed to collect and store solar power), Lyndsey McMillon-Brown et al. describe a method for fabricating the cell's electronic transport layer (ETL) using a spray coating. Conventional ETL fabrication is accomplished using a solution of nanoparticles. The process can result in a loss of up to 80% of the solution, increasing the cost of manufacturing at scale—an issue that may be obviated by spray coating fabrication, which the researchers describe as "highly reproducible, concise, and practical."

What does the text most strongly suggest about conventional ETL fabrication?

A. It is less suitable for manufacturing large volumes of planar p-i-n perovskite solar cells than an alternative fabrication method may be.

B. It is more expensive when manufacturing at scale than are processes for fabricating ETLs used in other perovskite solar cell architectures.

C. It typically entails a greater loss of nanoparticle solution than do other established approaches for ETL fabrication.

D. It is somewhat imprecise and therefore limits the potential effectiveness of p-i-n planar perovskite solar cells at capturing and storing solar power.

ID: 720fc59a Answer

Correct Answer: A

Rationale

Choice A is the best answer. Conventional solar cell fabrication increases "the cost of manufacturing at scale," but spray coating might get rid of that problem.

Choice B is incorrect. This is not completely supported by the text. While it's true that conventional ETL fabrication is expensive at scale, there's nothing in the text that mentions other perovskite solar cell architectures. Choice C is incorrect. This choice does not match the text. Only one conventional method of ETL fabrication is described, so we can't compare the solution loss in this method to that of other conventional methods. Choice D is incorrect. This choice isn't supported by the text. The text never suggests that the effectiveness of solar cells changes based on their method of fabrication.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID b8f64864

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	

ID: b8f64864

Conservationists worldwide are working to protect ecosystems from habitat destruction and biodiversity loss, and in many cases, initiatives that rely on natural features or processes can help address such challenges. In response to a rapidly dwindling population of blueback salmon, the Quinault Indian Nation (a tribe in Washington State) partnered with the conservation organization Wild Salmon Center to restore naturally occurring logjams in the Quinault River. The logjams create shady pools where the blueback salmon can rest and spawn, thus promoting blueback population recovery.

Which choice best states the main idea of the text?

A. A partnership between the Quinault Indian Nation and Wild Salmon Center shows the importance of collaborative approaches to preserving biodiversity.

B. Nature-based approaches can be effective ways to achieve conservation goals.

C. As indicated by a recent project, logjams help the blueback salmon thrive and reproduce.

D. Scientists now realize that nature-based conservation methods offer better long-term solutions to environmental issues than methods that are not nature-based do.

ID: b8f64864 Answer

Correct Answer: B

Rationale

Choice B is the best answer because it best states the main idea of the text: that nature-based approaches can be effective for achieving conservation goals. The text indicates that in many cases where conservationists are trying to protect ecosystems, their methods depend on natural processes or features. The text then gives an example of this phenomenon, a project with the Quinault Indian Nation that allowed logjams to form naturally in a river, creating spawning habitats for blueback salmon.

Choice A is incorrect. Although the text does suggest that the partnership with the Quinault Indian Nation was beneficial, this is not the central aim of the text; the text primarily argues that nature-based approaches to conservation can be effective. Choice C is incorrect. Although the text indicates that logjams are helpful to blueback salmon, the example of the blueback salmon project is included to illustrate the larger point made earlier in the text: that nature-based approaches to conservation are often effective. Choice D is incorrect. There is no evidence in the text to support a direct comparison of the efficacy of nature-based conservation approaches to other types of approaches. The text merely indicates that nature-based approaches can often be effective.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID d97e5076

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	

ID: d97e5076

The following text is adapted from Fanny Burney's 1778 novel *Evelina*. The text is an excerpt from a letter by Lady Howard to Evelina's guardian, Reverend Villars, in which Lady Howard discusses an upcoming trip to London planned by her daughter Mrs. Mirvan's family.

> It is very earnestly [the Mirvans'] wish to enlarge and enliven their party by the addition of your amiable ward, who would share, equally with her own daughter, the care and attention of Mrs. Mirvan. Do not start at this proposal; it is time that [Evelina] should see something of the world. When young people are too rigidly sequestered from it, their lively and romantic imaginations paint it to them as a paradise of which they have been beguiled; but when they are shown it properly, and in due time, they see it such as it really is, equally shared by pain and pleasure, hope and disappointment.

Based on the text, Lady Howard would most likely agree with which statement about Reverend Villars?

A. Although the manner in which he has raised Evelina is in many ways exemplary, he has been misguided in shielding her from the influence of other young people.

B. He has imparted to Evelina his own idealistic view of the world, which results in her being unprepared to face inevitable disappointments.

C. Although his desire to guard Evelina from unscrupulous people is commendable, his general mistrust has led him to be unduly wary of the Mirvans.

D. He is overly protective of Evelina, who would likely benefit from a greater variety of experiences than she has had thus far.

ID: d97e5076 Answer

Correct Answer: D

Rationale

Choice D is the best answer because it presents a statement about Reverend Villars that Lady Howard would most likely agree with based on the text. In the text, Lady Howard urges Reverend Villars to allow his ward, Evelina, to join the Mirvans on a trip to London. Her first words after describing the Mirvans' wish—"Do not start at this proposal"—suggest that she believes Villars will be alarmed by the idea, and she goes on to assure him that this alarm is unwarranted because Evelina will benefit from visiting London. Lady Howard supports her claim by arguing that excessive isolation from the world leads young people to entertain unrealistic, idealized views of it. On the other hand, she suggests, giving young people appropriate access to the world when they, like Evelina, are ready can help them develop a more balanced view of the world and its moral complexities. These words indicate that Lady Howard believes Evelina risks becoming too sheltered because of her guardian's protectiveness and that she would benefit from exposure to a wider range of experiences than she has had thus far.

Choice A is incorrect because while the text does suggest that Lady Howard believes Reverend Villars has sheltered Evelina too much, it doesn't specifically mention shielding her from the influence of other young people. Lady Howard refers more broadly to getting more exposure to the world and doesn't focus on peer relationships. Additionally, the text doesn't indicate whether Lady Howard finds other aspects of how Villars has raised Evelina to be exemplary. Choice B is incorrect because the text doesn't

suggest that Lady Howard believes Reverend Villars's view of the world is idealistic or that he has imparted an idealistic view of the world to Evelina. While Lady Howard does warn that young people who are too sheltered may develop romantic, idealized views of the world, she presents this as a general principle about sheltered youth, not as a specific criticism of Villars for having transmitted a naïve outlook to Evelina. Choice C is incorrect because the text doesn't mention Reverend Villars being specifically concerned about protecting Evelina from unscrupulous people or suggest that he is exceptionally wary of the Mirvans. While Lady Howard's words certainly anticipate some resistance from Villars, the text doesn't specify the nature of his concerns beyond the general desire to protect Evelina from the world.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID da61337c

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	

ID: da61337c

In present-day Chiapas, Mexico, archaeologist Robert Rosenswig, remote-sensing specialist Ricardo López-Torrijos, and colleagues have located 41 smaller settlements surrounding the ancient Mesoamerican city of Izapa. The researchers have concluded that these settlements were culturally linked to Izapa because each of the settlements is the same age and configured in the same manner as Izapa, with a pyramid to the north and a plaza to the south. Their shared structural orientation suggests that residents of the settlements likely performed some of the same cultural ceremonies as residents in Izapa did.

Which choice best states the main idea of the text?

A. Researchers have determined that the arrangement of Izapa's structures was based on those of other nearby settlements.

B. Cultural ceremonies in Izapa seem to have played a more important role for its residents than those in smaller, surrounding settlements did.

C. Although archaeologists have learned much about Izapa over years of research, they have only recently found the smaller settlements that surrounded it.

D. Researchers have inferred that Izapa was related to the smaller settlements that surrounded it based in part on the similarity of their construction.

ID: da61337c Answer

Correct Answer: D

Rationale

Choice D is the best answer because it most accurately states the main idea of the text. The text indicates that Rosenswig, López-Torrijos, and colleagues concluded that there is a cultural link between the city of Izapa and the 41 smaller settlements they located around the city. According to the text, the researchers reached this conclusion because Izapa and the settlements are of the same age and configuration in that all have a pyramid to the north and a plaza to the south. Thus, the main idea of the text is that researchers have inferred that Izapa was related to the smaller settlements that surrounded it based in part on the similarity of their construction.

Choice A is incorrect. Although the text discusses a similarity between how structures in Izapa and nearby settlements are arranged, the text doesn't indicate that the arrangement in Izapa is based on those of the nearby settlements. Choice B is incorrect. Although the text mentions that residents of Izapa and its surrounding settlements may have performed the same cultural ceremonies, the text doesn't discuss the ceremonies' importance for the residents. Choice C is incorrect. Although the text describes findings about Izapa, it doesn't specify how much archaeologists have learned about Izapa over the years. Additionally, while the text indicates that the discovery of the 41 smaller settlements surrounding Izapa was made in present-day Chiapas and thus may be of recent date, this is a detail in the text, not its main idea.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID e87e8cd0

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	

ID: e87e8cd0

The most recent iteration of the immersive theater experience *Sleep No More*, which premiered in New York City in 2011, transforms its performance space—a five-story warehouse—into a 1930s-era hotel. Audience members, who wander through the labyrinthine venue at their own pace and follow the actors as they play out simultaneous, interweaving narrative loops, confront the impossibility of experiencing the production in its entirety. The play's refusal of narrative coherence thus hinges on the sense of spatial fragmentation that the venue's immense and intricate layout generates.

What does the text most strongly suggest about *Sleep No More*'s use of its performance space?

A. The choice of a New York City venue likely enabled the play's creators to experiment with the use of theatrical space in a way that venues from earlier productions could not.

B. Audience members likely find the experience of the play disappointing because they generally cannot make their way through the entire venue.

C. The production's dependence on a particular performance environment would likely make it difficult to reproduce exactly in a different theatrical space.

D. Audience members who navigate the space according to a recommended itinerary will likely have a better grasp of the play's narrative than audience members who depart from that itinerary.

ID: e87e8cd0 Answer

Correct Answer: C

Rationale

Choice C is the best answer. The text says that the production's use of its large, winding space has a very specific effect on the audience. Given that the space itself is so important to creating this effect, it would be difficult to reproduce the production in a different space.

Choice A is incorrect. The fact that the venue is in New York City isn't connected to the experimental nature of the performance. It's the size of the venue, not its location in New York, that affects the theatrical experience. Choice B is incorrect. The text never suggests that audience members are disappointed because they can't see the entire production. In fact, it suggests that that's an important part of the experience. Choice D is incorrect. The text doesn't mention a recommended itinerary for audience members.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID d492247c

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	

ID: d492247c

The following text is adapted from Lewis Carroll's 1889 satirical novel *Sylvie and Bruno*. A crowd has gathered outside a room belonging to the Warden, an official who reports to the Lord Chancellor.

> One man, who was more excited than the rest, flung his hat high into the air, and shouted (as well as I could make out) "Who roar for the Sub-Warden?" Everybody roared, but whether it was for the Sub-Warden, or not, did not clearly appear: some were shouting "Bread!" and some "Taxes!", but no one seemed to know what it was they really wanted.
>
> All this I saw from the open window of the Warden's breakfast-saloon, looking across the shoulder of the Lord Chancellor. "What can it all mean?" he kept repeating to himself. "I never heard such shouting before—and at this time of the morning, too! And with such unanimity!"

Based on the text, how does the Lord Chancellor respond to the crowd?

A. He asks about the meaning of the crowd's shouting, even though he claims to know what the crowd wants.

B. He indicates a desire to speak to the crowd, even though the crowd has asked to speak to the Sub-Warden.

C. He expresses sympathy for the crowd's demands, even though the crowd's shouting annoys him.

D. He describes the crowd as being united, even though the crowd clearly appears otherwise.

ID: d492247c Answer

Correct Answer: D

Rationale

Choice D is the best answer because it presents a statement about how the Lord Chancellor responds to the crowd that is supported by the text. The text indicates that the people in the crowd are roaring and shouting "Bread!" or "Taxes!" and presents them as not knowing what they really want. The Lord Chancellor's response is to ask what their shouting means but also to observe that they're shouting with "unanimity," or total agreement. Clearly, this isn't the case, which supports the statement that the Lord Chancellor describes the crowd as being united even though it's not.

Choice A is incorrect because it isn't supported by the text. Although the text indicates that the Lord Chancellor asks about the meaning of the crowd's shouting, it doesn't suggest that he knows what the crowd really wants. Choice B is incorrect because the text doesn't suggest that the Lord Chancellor wants to speak to the crowd. Furthermore, the text doesn't indicate that the crowd wants to hear from the Sub-Warden. Although the crowd roars when asked "Who roar for the Sub-Warden?" it's unclear what the roaring means. Choice C is incorrect because the text doesn't suggest that the Lord Chancellor knows of or sympathizes with the crowd's demands. In addition, the text doesn't indicate that the crowd's shouting annoys the Lord Chancellor, just that it causes him to keep repeating "What can it all mean?"

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID 78dc1dbe

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	

ID: 78dc1dbe

To understand how temperature change affects microorganism-mediated cycling of soil nutrients in alpine ecosystems, Eva Kaštovská et al. collected plant-soil cores in the Tatra Mountains at elevations around 2,100 meters and transplanted them to elevations of 1,700–1,800 meters, where the mean air temperature was warmer by 2°C. Microorganism-mediated nutrient cycling was accelerated in the transplanted cores; crucially, microorganism community composition was unchanged, allowing Kaštovská et al. to attribute the acceleration to temperature-induced increases in microorganism activity.

It can most reasonably be inferred from the text that the finding about the microorganism community composition was important for which reason?

A. It provided preliminary evidence that microorganism-mediated nutrient cycling was accelerated in the transplanted cores.

B. It suggested that temperature-induced changes in microorganism activity may be occurring at increasingly high elevations.

C. It ruled out a potential alternative explanation for the acceleration in microorganism-mediated nutrient cycling.

D. It clarified that microorganism activity levels in the plant-soil cores varied depending on which microorganisms comprised the community.

ID: 78dc1dbe Answer

Correct Answer: C

Rationale

Choice C is the best answer because it accurately describes why the finding about the microorganism community composition was important. The text describes an experiment by Eva Kaštovská and her team in which they collected plant-soil cores at one elevation and transplanted them to sites at a lower elevation, where the mean air temperature was warmer. Kaštovská and her team observed that microorganism-mediated nutrient cycling was accelerated in the transplanted cores and that "crucially, microorganism community composition was unchanged," which allowed the team to attribute the acceleration to changes in microorganism activity brought about by the difference in temperature. This strongly implies that the team wouldn't have been able to make that attribution otherwise, meaning that a change in microorganism composition represented another possible explanation for the acceleration that had to be ruled out.

Choice A is incorrect. Although the text says microorganism-mediated cycling of soil nutrients increased in the transplanted cores, this is unrelated to what's important about the finding that the microorganism composition didn't change—that it allowed the team to attribute the change in activity solely to the change in temperature. Choice B is incorrect. Although the text compares activity in one core at two different elevations, the text doesn't address changes in activity at various elevations over time. Choice D is incorrect. Although different microorganisms likely exhibit different levels of activity, the text indicates that there was no change in microorganism composition, and there is nothing in the text about different microorganisms having different activity levels.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID ded4d803

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	

ID: ded4d803

In their 2022 paper, Christos Dimopoulos et al., having granted that the existence of antigravity—in which antimatter and matter repel rather than attract each other—lacked affirmative experimental support, rightly argued that such antigravity was worth considering on theoretical grounds given that evidence against it was similarly lacking. But a 2023 report by an international team of researchers details the first direct ballistic observations of antihydrogen atoms under gravity inside a CERN particle accelerator. Corresponding most closely to predictions under gravitational attraction, these observations were thoroughly inconsistent with antigravity.

Which choice best states the main idea of the text?

A. Antihydrogen ballistics observations were conducted at CERN to test specific conclusions about antigravity presented in the 2022 paper by Dimopoulos et al.

B. Although theoreticians were justified in studying antigravity before the release of the 2023 report, the report's findings suggest that the rationale for theoretical consideration offered in the 2022 paper by Dimopoulos et al. is no longer applicable.

C. The theoretical approach represented in the 2022 paper by Dimopoulos et al. assumed that unambiguous proof of antigravity would not be achievable, but the results in the 2023 report undermine that assumption.

D. Before 2023, researchers' inordinate focus on theoretical considerations hindered the development of the experimental regimen for direct antihydrogen ballistics observations.

ID: ded4d803 Answer

Correct Answer: B

Rationale

Choice B is the best answer because it most accurately states the main idea of the text. The text begins by acknowledging that in 2022, Dimopoulos et al. were justified in arguing for antigravity on theoretical grounds because although there was no experimental evidence supporting its existence at that time, there was no evidence contradicting its existence either. The text then introduces the 2023 report describing an experiment that produced observations "thoroughly inconsistent with antigravity." Thus, the main idea is that while the study of antigravity was theoretically justified before the 2023 report (due to lack of evidence against it), the report's findings undermine the rationale for such theoretical consideration since there is now evidence against this hypothetical phenomenon.

Choice A is incorrect. Although antihydrogen ballistics observations were conducted at CERN, the text provides no evidence that they were conducted to test conclusions in Dimopoulos et al.'s 2022 paper. Rather, the text presents the 2023 report as new evidence that contradicts the existence of the hypothetical phenomenon that Dimopoulos et al. had considered. Choice C is incorrect because the text doesn't suggest that Dimopoulos et al. assumed that unambiguous proof of antigravity would be unattainable. Rather, the text states that they argued antigravity was worth considering theoretically because evidence against it was lacking at that time. At the same time, the results in the 2023 report do not undermine but strengthen the idea that the proof of antigravity might not be achievable. Choice D is incorrect because the text doesn't suggest that there was an "inordinate focus

on theoretical considerations" before 2023 or that such a focus hindered the development of experimental methods. In fact, the text describes Dimopoulos et al.'s position regarding the theoretical consideration of antigravity as "rightly argued," indicating approval of their approach given the absence of experimental evidence at that time.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID 2d4e411c

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	

ID: 2d4e411c

Many intellectual histories of the Black Power movement of the 1960s and 1970s rely heavily on essays and other explicitly ideological works as primary sources, a tendency that can overrepresent the perspectives of a small number of thinkers, most of whom were male. Historian Ashley D. Farmer has shown that expanding the array of primary sources to encompass more types of print material—including political cartoons, advertisements, and artwork—leads to a much better understanding of the movement and the crucial and diverse roles that Black women played in shaping it.

Which choice best describes the main idea of the text?

A. Farmer's methods and research have enriched the historical understanding of the Black Power movement and Black women's contributions to it.

B. Before Farmer's research, historians had largely ignored the intellectual dimensions of the Black Power movement.

C. Other historians of the Black Power movement have criticized Farmer's use of unconventional primary sources.

D. The figures in the Black Power movement whom historians tend to cite would have agreed with Farmer's conclusions about women's roles in the movement.

ID: 2d4e411c Answer

Correct Answer: A

Rationale

Choice A is the best answer. It best describes the main idea of the text. The text starts by saying that historians of the Black Power movement are too reliant on openly ideological works, which were written mostly by men, as sources. The text then describes Farmer's research: she has shown that including other kinds of sources leads to a better understanding of the Black Power movement and the role Black women played in it.

Choice B is incorrect. This doesn't describe the main idea of the text. In fact, it conflicts with the text. The text says that historians have relied on "essays and other explicitly ideological works," which suggests that they *have* studied at least some of the intellectual dimensions of the Black Power movement. Choice C is incorrect. This doesn't describe the main idea of the text. The text never mentions how other historians of the Black Power movement view Farmer's use of unconventional sources. In fact, the text itself argues in favor of Farmer's research, claiming that it has led to a "much better understanding of the movement." Choice D is incorrect. This doesn't describe the main idea of the text. The text never mentions what any figures in the Black Power movement thought about women's roles in the movement.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID 5d2397c6

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	

ID: 5d2397c6

The following text is from Maggie Pogue Johnson's 1910 poem "Poet of Our Race." In this poem, the speaker is addressing Paul Laurence Dunbar, a Black author.

Thou, with stroke of mighty pen,
Hast told of joy and mirth,
And read the hearts and souls of men
As cradled from their birth.
The language of the flowers,
Thou hast read them all,
And e'en the little brook
Responded to thy call.

Which choice best states the main purpose of the text?

A. To praise a certain writer for being especially perceptive regarding people and nature

B. To establish that a certain writer has read extensively about a variety of topics

C. To call attention to a certain writer's careful and elaborately detailed writing process

D. To recount fond memories of an afternoon spent in nature with a certain writer

ID: 5d2397c6 Answer

Correct Answer: A

Rationale

Choice A is the best answer because it most accurately states the main purpose of the text. In the first part of the text, the speaker addresses Paul Laurence Dunbar's ability to understand people (he has "read the hearts and souls of men" and written of their "joy and mirth"). In the second part of the text, the speaker describes Dunbar's thorough understanding of the natural world (he has read "the language of the flowers" and engaged with "the little brook"). Thus, the text mainly praises Dunbar for being especially perceptive about people and nature.

Choice B is incorrect because the speaker describes Dunbar as having read the "hearts and souls of men" and the "language of flowers" to convey Dunbar's ability to comprehend people and nature, not to suggest that Dunbar has literally read any of these things or has read a great deal about them. Choice C is incorrect because the text notes how well Dunbar has made sense of the topics he's written about but doesn't address any specific parts of Dunbar's writing process beyond the suggestion that he used a pen. Choice D is incorrect because the text focuses on Dunbar's understanding of people and nature as expressed in his writing. Nothing in the text suggests that the speaker is recalling a particular afternoon actually spent in nature with Dunbar; even if there had been a shared experience, the text isn't focused on reminiscing.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID 8f133ad7

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	

ID: 8f133ad7

Several scholars have argued that conditions in England in the late ninth through early eleventh centuries—namely, burgeoning literacy amid running conflicts between England's Anglo-Saxon kingdoms and Danish invaders—were especially conducive to the production of the Old English epic poem *Beowulf*, and they have dated the poem's composition accordingly. It is not inconceivable that *Beowulf* emerged from such a context, but privileging contextual fit over the linguistic evidence of an eighth- or even seventh-century composition requires a level of justification that thus far has not been presented.

Which choice best states the main idea of the text?

A. Although there are some grounds for believing that *Beowulf* was composed between the late ninth and early eleventh centuries, advocates for that view tend to rely on evidence that has been called into question by advocates for an earlier date.

B. Although several scholars have dated *Beowulf* to the late ninth through early eleventh centuries, others have argued that doing so privileges a controversial interpretation of the social conditions of the period.

C. Although *Beowulf* fits well with the historical context of England in the late ninth through early eleventh centuries, it fits equally well with the historical context of England in the seventh and eighth centuries.

D. Although the claim of a late ninth- through early eleventh-century composition date for *Beowulf* has some plausibility, advocates for the claim have not compellingly addressed evidence suggesting an earlier date.

ID: 8f133ad7 Answer

Correct Answer: D

Rationale

Choice D is the best answer because it most accurately states the main idea of the text. The text states that some scholars have dated the composition of *Beowulf* to the late ninth through early eleventh centuries due to the poem's fit with that period's historical context. The text goes on to say that while it is "not inconceivable that *Beowulf* emerged from such a context"—that is, it is possible that *Beowulf* was composed during the late ninth through eleventh centuries—there is linguistic evidence that the poem was composed earlier, in the seventh or eighth century. According to the text, favoring the historical context over the linguistic evidence requires justification that scholars have not yet supplied. In other words, the text suggests that scholars who favor the later composition date need to explain why the poem's fit with historical context should take precedence over the linguistic evidence, but they have not yet done so. Thus, the main idea of the text is that while there is some plausibility to the later composition date, advocates for the later date have not compellingly addressed evidence suggestive of an earlier date.

Choice A is incorrect because the text says that scholars who date the poem to the late ninth through early eleventh centuries have failed to account for the linguistic evidence that the poem may have been composed earlier, not that the evidence those scholars cite in favor of their view is unreliable or that anyone has cast doubt on that evidence. In other words, the text does not suggest that there are problems with the evidence cited by advocates of the later composition date, only that there is other evidence of an earlier composition date that those advocates need to consider. Choice B is incorrect because nothing in the text suggests that those scholars who date the poem to the late ninth through early eleventh centuries are giving priority to a

controversial view of the social conditions at that time. The text makes no reference to any controversy about how scholars interpret that historical period. Instead, the text suggests that scholars who date the poem on the basis of its fit with the historical context of England in the late ninth through early eleventh centuries have failed to account for linguistic evidence that the poem may have been composed earlier. Choice C is incorrect because the text says nothing about how well the poem fits the historical context of England in the seventh and eighth centuries, let alone that it fits that historical context as well as it fits the historical context of the late ninth through early eleventh centuries. Rather, the text says that there is linguistic evidence that the poem may have been composed in the seventh or eighth century.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID 959d74f9

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	

ID: 959d74f9

The following text is adapted from Jack London's 1903 novel *The Call of the Wild*. Buck is a sled dog living with John Thornton in Yukon, Canada.

> Thornton alone held [Buck]. The rest of mankind was as nothing. Chance travellers might praise or pet him; but he was cold under it all, and from a too demonstrative man he would get up and walk away. When Thornton's partners, Hans and Pete, arrived on the long-expected raft, Buck refused to notice them till he learned they were close to Thornton; after that he tolerated them in a passive sort of way, accepting favors from them as though he favored them by accepting.

Which choice best states the main idea of the text?

A. Buck has become less social since he began living with Thornton.

B. Buck mistrusts humans and does his best to avoid them.

C. Buck has been especially well liked by most of Thornton's friends.

D. Buck holds Thornton in higher regard than any other person.

ID: 959d74f9 Answer

Correct Answer: D

Rationale

Choice D is the best answer because it most accurately states the main idea of the text. After establishing that Buck views most people "as nothing," the text explains that Buck won't acknowledge people other than Thornton unless they appear friendly toward Thornton, and even then he's only reluctantly accepting. Thus, the text focuses on the idea that Thornton has a special status in Buck's mind, with Buck holding him in higher regard than other people.

Choice A is incorrect because the text conveys that Buck isn't social with people other than Thornton but doesn't address Buck's life or temperament before he lived with Thornton. Choice B is incorrect because the text conveys that Buck doesn't really care about people other than Thornton and is aloof toward them. However, there's no indication that Buck mistrusts and avoids people generally; indeed, he accepts Thornton, who is a human. Choice C is incorrect because the text refers to random travelers praising and petting Buck and Thornton's partners giving Buck favors, but there's no indication that any of these people are Thornton's friends or that they have a particular fondness for Buck.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID 3b979539

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	

ID: 3b979539

Archaeologists have observed similarities in the tools, such as bidirectional blades, uncovered at the Neolithic-period Mesopotamian settlement of Çayönü Tepesi and those uncovered at roughly contemporaneous settlements elsewhere in Southwest Asia, including those in the South Levant, Central Anatolia, and Central Zagros. Although similarities in tools could be attributed to imitative behavior or trade, Nefize Ezgi Altınışık et al. found evidence of genetic affinity among the populations of Çayönü Tepesi, Central Anatolia, the South Levant, and—to a lesser extent—Central Zagros.

Information in the text best supports which statement about the finding made by Altınışık et al.?

A. It implies that people and tools likely arrived in Çayönü Tepesi from settlements in Central Anatolia and the South Levant at an earlier time than they did from settlements in Central Zagros.

B. It raises the possibility that similarities in the design of tools found at Neolithic settlements in Southwest Asia emerged due to population blending between those settlements.

C. It suggests that in the Neolithic period, people in the South Levant and Central Anatolia imitated tool designs originating in Çayönü Tepesi more frequently than people in Central Zagros did.

D. It helps explain why contemporaneous Neolithic peoples in Southwest Asia had similar tools but lacked other obvious cultural similarities.

ID: 3b979539 Answer

Correct Answer: B

Rationale

Choice B is the best answer because it presents a statement about Altınışık et al.'s finding that is supported by the text. The text notes that tool similarities across Neolithic settlements could be attributed to imitative behavior or trade. However, Altınışık et al. found evidence of genetic affinity (that is, genetic relatedness) among the populations of these settlements. Genetic relatedness among populations with similar tools raises an alternative possibility: the tool similarities may have emerged through population blending rather than through imitation or trade alone. Thus, the finding raises the possibility that tool design similarities resulted from population blending.

Choice A is incorrect because the text doesn't address the timing or direction of migration between settlements. Although lesser genetic affinity with Central Zagros could reflect various historical patterns, the text presents genetic relatedness as evidence of population intermixing, not as evidence about when people or tools arrived at particular locations. Choice C is incorrect because the text doesn't indicate that tools originated specifically at Çayönü Tepesi or that other settlements imitated its designs. Although the text notes that genetic affinity with Central Zagros was found "to a lesser extent," this describes degrees of genetic relatedness, not the frequency of tool imitation. Instead, the text presents tool similarities as a shared phenomenon across settlements. Choice D is incorrect because the text doesn't discuss a lack of cultural similarities among Neolithic peoples in Southwest Asia. Rather, the text focuses solely on tool similarities and genetic affinity without addressing other cultural parallels or differences.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID 5de85c2b

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	

ID: 5de85c2b

The following text is from William Shakespeare's play *The Tempest*, first performed in 1611. Miranda has lived on an island with her father, Prospero, since she was three years old. Prospero has stated that Miranda likely does not remember anything other than her life on the island.

> MIRANDA: 'Tis far off,
> And rather like a dream than an assurance
> That my remembrance warrants. Had I not
> Four or five women once that tended me?
>
> PROSPERO: Thou hadst, and more, Miranda. But how is it
> That this lives in thy mind? What seest thou else
> In the dark backward and abysm of time?
> If thou remember'st ought ere thou camest here,
> How thou camest here thou mayst.

In the text, which point does Prospero most directly make about Miranda and her memories?

A. Miranda's reminiscences about her early childhood have a melancholy quality that betrays her discontented view of her current circumstances.

B. Miranda's doubts about the accuracy of one recollection of a place other than the island are clouding her judgment and seem to be making her reluctant to explore her recollection of traveling to the island.

C. Miranda's ability to summon details of an experience she had before arriving on the island suggests that she may also be able to summon details of her arrival on the island.

D. Miranda's impression of a scene is vague because she is remembering a scenario she had daydreamed about as a child rather than a scenario that had occurred in reality.

ID: 5de85c2b Answer

Correct Answer: C

Rationale

Choice C is the best answer because it presents a point that Prospero makes about Miranda. The text begins with Miranda responding to Prospero's claim that she probably doesn't remember her life before the island. She describes a distant memory, asking if she had "four or five women" caring for her. Prospero confirms this ("thou hadst") and then asks what else she can recall, stating that because she remembers one thing from the time before she lived on the island ("ought ere thou camest here"), she might also remember arriving on the island ("how thou camest here"). That is, Prospero indicates that Miranda's ability to summon details of an experience from before her arrival on the island suggests that she may also be able to summon details of her arrival.

Choice A is incorrect because Prospero doesn't say anything about how Miranda presents her early childhood memory of having several people care for her—he indicates only his surprise that she remembers something from so long ago ("the dark backward and abysm of time") and his thought that she may also be able to recall another childhood event: her arrival on the island. Further, Prospero doesn't suggest that he believes Miranda is discontent in her current circumstances. Choice B is incorrect. Although Miranda suggests some doubt about her recollection of a place other than the island, in that she describes it as "like a dream" she can't be certain of, Prospero doesn't mention her uncertainty—though he himself wonders how it is possible that she correctly recalls something from so long ago ("abysm of time"). Rather than indicating that doubt is making Miranda reluctant, Prospero simply states that Miranda may have the ability to remember traveling to the island. Choice D is incorrect. Although Miranda describes a vague impression of several people who cared for her as a young child and states that it is "rather like a dream" instead of something she is certain is real, Prospero doesn't indicate that Miranda is remembering a childhood daydream. Instead, he confirms that what Miranda remembers actually happened, answering her question about having had caregivers with "thou hadst," and asks her what else she can remember from long ago.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID 8f3e127d

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	

ID: 8f3e127d

In 1934 physicist Eugene Wigner posited the existence of a crystal consisting entirely of electrons in a honeycomb-like structure. The so-called Wigner crystal remained largely conjecture, however, until Feng Wang and colleagues announced in 2021 that they had captured an image of one. The researchers trapped electrons between two semiconductors and then cooled the apparatus, causing the electrons to settle into a crystalline structure. By inserting an ultrathin sheet of graphene above the crystal, the researchers obtained an impression—the first visual confirmation of the Wigner crystal.

Which choice best states the main idea of the text?

A. Researchers have obtained the most definitive evidence to date of the existence of the Wigner crystal.

B. Researchers have identified an innovative new method for working with unusual crystalline structures.

C. Graphene is the most important of the components required to capture an image of a Wigner crystal.

D. It's difficult to acquire an image of a Wigner crystal because of the crystal's honeycomb structure.

ID: 8f3e127d Answer

Correct Answer: A

Rationale

Choice A is the best answer because it most accurately states the main idea of the text. According to the text, Eugene Wigner hypothesized that a crystal could exist that would be composed of electrons and have a honeycomb-like shape. The text goes on to say that the existence of the Wigner crystal remained unconfirmed until Feng Wang and colleagues were able to make an impression of one using two semiconductors and an ultrathin sheet of graphene. Thus, the main idea is that researchers have obtained the most definitive evidence to date of the existence of the Wigner crystal.

Choice B is incorrect because the text focuses on one kind of crystal—the Wigner crystal— and doesn't discuss crystalline structures in general. And although the text conveys that Wang and colleagues figured out a way to capture an image of a Wigner crystal, it doesn't address the idea of applying this approach to other types of crystals. Choice C is incorrect because the text describes in general the process Wang and colleagues followed to obtain an impression of the Wigner crystal; it doesn't address the relative importance of each component in that process. Choice D is incorrect because the text doesn't state that researchers had a hard time getting an impression of the Wigner crystal because of its honeycomb structure. Nothing in the text indicates why it took so long to prove the existence of this crystal or take an impression of it.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID 59c2832b

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	

ID: 59c2832b

The following text is adapted from María Cristina Mena's 1914 short story "The Vine-Leaf."

> It is a saying in the capital of Mexico that Dr. Malsufrido carries more family secrets under his hat than any archbishop. The doctor's hat is, appropriately enough, uncommonly capacious, rising very high, and sinking so low that it seems to be supported by his ears and eyebrows, and it has a furry look, as if it had been brushed the wrong way, which is perhaps what happens to it if it is ever brushed at all. When the doctor takes it off, the family secrets do not fly out like a flock of parrots, but remain nicely bottled up beneath a dome of old and highly polished ivory.

Based on the text, how do people in the capital of Mexico most likely regard Dr. Malsufrido?

A. Many have come to tolerate him despite his disheveled appearance.

B. Few feel concerned that he will divulge their confidences.

C. Some dislike how freely he discusses his own family.

D. Most would be unimpressed by him were it not for his professional expertise.

ID: 59c2832b Answer

Correct Answer: B

Rationale

Choice B is the best answer. The text describes a saying in the capital that Malsufrido keeps more secrets than an archbishop. It also says that when he takes off his hat, "the family secrets do not fly out… but remain nicely bottled up," suggesting that he will not betray his confidences.

Choice A is incorrect. This choice doesn't reflect the text. While his hat is large and appears to have been brushed in the wrong direction, Dr. Malsufrido does not seem to be regarded as ill-dressed or disheveled. Choice C is incorrect. This choice is the opposite of what the text says. The secrets of families (his and others') remain "bottled up" in his head. Choice D is incorrect. This choice isn't supported by the text. His professional expertise is not discussed in the passage.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID 3e2ad5fc

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	

ID: 3e2ad5fc

For centuries, the widespread acknowledgment of the involvement of the cerebellum—a dense brain structure in vertebrates—in coordinating motor control in humans has hindered recognition of other possible functions of the structure. Neuroscience research from the last two decades now suggests that the cerebellum regulates emotion and social behavior, and recent research by Ilaria Carta and colleagues has identified a pathway connecting the cerebellum to a center for motivation and reward processing known as the ventral tegmental area (VTA).

Which choice best states the main idea of the text?

A. The recent verification of a pathway between the VTA and the cerebellum confirms the cerebellum's long-suspected role in motor coordination.

B. Recent advances in the field of neuroscience have challenged widely accepted claims about the function of a pathway connecting the VTA and the cerebellum.

C. The cerebellum has primarily been thought to regulate motor functioning, but in recent years neuroscience researchers have been uncovering additional functions.

D. Technological limitations have historically hindered the study of the cerebellum, but the recent development of new technologies has led to greater insights into its functions.

ID: 3e2ad5fc Answer

Correct Answer: C

Rationale

Choice C is the best answer. The text says that the cerebellum has long been thought to regulate motor functioning, but new research shows that it may also have other functions—including regulating emotion and social behavior and some connection to motivation and rewards processing.

Choice A is incorrect. The VTA is described as "a center for motivation and reward processing," and the discovery of the pathway between the VTA and the cerebellum supports the theory that the cerebellum is involved in functions other than motor coordination. Choice B is incorrect. The text says that recent research has identified this pathway, but it doesn't discuss any previous "widely accepted claims" about the pathway's function. The "widespread acknowledgement" mentioned early in the passage is about the cerebellum alone, not its connection to the VTA. Choice D is incorrect. The text never discusses any technological limitations or any new technologies.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID 03daf71e

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	

ID: 03daf71e

The following text is adapted from Guy de Maupassant's nineteenth-century short story "The Trip of Le Horla" (translated by Albert M. C. McMaster, A. E. Henderson, Mme. Quesada, et al.). The narrator is part of a group traveling in a hot-air balloon at night.

> The earth no longer seems to exist, it is buried in milky vapors that resemble a sea. We are now alone in space with the moon, which looks like another balloon travelling opposite us; and our balloon, which shines in the air, appears like another, larger moon, a world wandering in the sky amid the stars, through infinity. We no longer speak, think nor live; we float along through space in delicious inertia. The air which is bearing us up has made of us all beings which resemble itself, silent, joyous, irresponsible beings, peculiarly alert, although motionless.

Which choice best states the main idea of the text?

A. The narrator feels a growing sense of isolation even though his companions are nearby during the balloon ride.

B. The narrator and his companions are completely absorbed in the change in perspective they gain while riding in the balloon.

C. The narrator and his companions are troubled by the disorienting effects of the altitude while riding in the balloon.

D. The narrator is pleasantly surprised by his companions' unrestrained enthusiasm about the sensation of riding in the balloon.

ID: 03daf71e Answer

Correct Answer: B

Rationale

Choice B is the best answer because it most accurately states the main idea of the text. The narrator describes the view he and his companions have from the balloon: the earth lies beneath "milky vapors," and the balloon itself looks like another moon. The narrator goes on to explain how the people riding in the balloon are affected by the ride, explaining that they are immersed in the experience: floating along in "delicious inertia," or inactivity, like "silent, joyous, irresponsible beings." Thus, the main idea is that the narrator and his companions are completely absorbed in the change in perspective they gain while riding in the balloon.

Choice A is incorrect because the narrator never describes himself as feeling isolated from his companions; instead, he characterizes riding in the balloon as an experience he is sharing with them. And although he does imply a sense of isolation, it is isolation from those on the ground, as when he says of himself and his companions, "We are now alone." Choice C is incorrect because the narrator doesn't suggest that he or his companions are troubled by the effects of the balloon ride. Instead, he describes himself and his companions as "joyous" and the experience of floating in the balloon as "delicious." Choice D is incorrect because nothing in the text suggests that the narrator is surprised by his companions' response to the balloon ride. In fact, the text indicates that the narrator and his companions are having the same experience: they're described as "silent" and "motionless," rather than as having unrestrained enthusiasm.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID 2a815356

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	

ID: 2a815356

Modern dog breeds are largely the result of 160 years of owners crossbreeding certain dogs in order to select for particular physical appearances. Owners often say that some breeds are also more likely than others to have particular personality traits—basset hounds are affectionate; boxers are easy to train—but Kathleen Morrill and colleagues found through a combination of owner surveys and DNA sequencing of 2,000 dogs that while physical traits are predictably heritable among purebred dogs, behavior varies widely among dogs of the same breed.

Which choice best states the main idea of the text?

A. Dog breeds would not exist without many years of human intervention in dogs' reproduction.

B. Research fails to confirm a commonly held belief about dog breeds and behavior.

C. The dog breeds most popular among owners have often changed over the past 160 years.

D. A study of dog breeds is notable for its usage of both opinion surveys and DNA sequencing.

ID: 2a815356 Answer

Correct Answer: B

Rationale

Choice B is the best answer because it most accurately states the main idea of the text. The text indicates that dog owners typically claim that some dog breeds are "more likely than others to have particular personality traits." In other words, the text points out that a commonly held belief about dog breeds is that their personality traits are heritable. The text then states that Kathleen Morrill and colleagues undertook research about dog trait heritability and found that "behavior varies widely among dogs of the same breed." Because Morrill and colleagues found evidence for variability rather than consistency in the behavior of dogs of the same breed, the statement that research fails to uphold a commonly held belief about dog breeds and behavior accurately reflects the main idea of the text.

Choice A is incorrect. Although the text mentions that humans have long intervened in dogs' reproduction by intentionally crossbreeding certain dogs, it doesn't argue that such intervention is essential to the existence of dog breeds. Choice C is incorrect because the text doesn't discuss the popularity of any dog breeds; breeds are mentioned as having certain traits, but the text says nothing about the popularity of these breeds or traits. Choice D is incorrect. Although the text briefly mentions that Morrill and colleagues conducted a study about dog traits using both surveys and DNA sequencing, this is not the main focus of the text. The text concerns the study's results about the heritability of dog traits, not the particular methodology used by Morrill and colleagues.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID fd102528

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	

ID: fd102528

Paleontologist Lucas E. Fiorelli and colleagues have reported the discovery at a mine in Brazil of several egg clutches, partially preserved single eggs, and egg shells from the Late Cretaceous period. The researchers have concluded that the area was once a nesting and breeding site for titanosaurs, a group of sauropod dinosaurs. The finding is significant given the previous lack of known nesting sites in northern regions of South America, which led many paleontologists to assume that titanosaurs migrated south to lay eggs.

What does the text most strongly suggest about the site discovered by the researchers?

A. It is the earliest known example of a titanosaur nesting and breeding site.

B. It was very difficult to excavate given that it was discovered in a mine.

C. It may have been occupied by other sauropods in addition to titanosaurs.

D. It is farther north than any other nesting site discovered in South America.

ID: fd102528 Answer

Correct Answer: D

Rationale

Choice D is the best answer because it presents a statement about the site discovered by the researchers that is supported by the text. The text discusses Fiorelli and colleagues' discovery of egg clutches, single eggs, and eggshells in a Brazilian mine. According to the text, the presence of these eggs, which are from the Late Cretaceous period, led the researchers to conclude that the location was once a nesting and breeding site for titanosaurs. The text then explains that the finding is important because of the "previous lack of known nesting sites in northern regions of South America." If there haven't been any other discoveries of a nesting site in South America's northern regions and the site in the Brazilian mine is the first, then the text strongly suggests that the site is farther north than other nesting sites that have been discovered in South America.

Choice A is incorrect because the text doesn't suggest that the site discovered by Fiorelli and colleagues is the earliest titanosaur nesting and breeding site known to paleontologists but rather that it's the first nesting site found in northern regions of South America. Moreover, the text doesn't suggest how the timeline of the newly discovered site compares with that of other titanosaur nesting and breeding sites. Choice B is incorrect because there is no mention in the text about any difficulties that Fiorelli and colleagues faced when they were excavating the nesting and breeding site in the Brazilian mine. Choice C is incorrect because the text doesn't support the idea that the nesting and breeding site in the Brazilian mine was occupied by sauropods other than titanosaurs. The text simply mentions that titanosaurs are sauropod dinosaurs and presents the researchers' conclusion that the site they discovered was for titanosaurs.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID faea1302

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	

ID: faea1302

Elizabeth Asiedu has identified a negative correlation between the share of developing countries' economies derived from natural-resource extraction and those countries' receipts of foreign investment. This may appear counterintuitive—resource extraction requires initial investments (in extractive technology, for instance) at scales best met by multinational corporations—but Asiedu notes that natural-resource industries' boom-bust cycle can destabilize local currencies and increase developing countries' vulnerability to external shocks, creating levels of uncertainty to which foreign investors are typically averse.

Which choice best states the main idea of the text?

A. Although it may seem surprising that foreign investment declines in developing countries as natural-resource extraction makes up a larger share of those countries' economies, that decline happens because resource extraction requires initial investments too large for foreign investors to supply.

B. Although developing countries tend to become less dependent on foreign investment as natural-resource industries make up a larger share of their economies, this change may not occur if the boom-bust cycle of those industries destabilizes local currencies or increases countries' vulnerability to external shocks.

C. Although one might expect that foreign investment would increase as natural-resource extraction makes up a larger share of developing countries' economies, the opposite happens because heavy reliance on natural resources can lead to unattractive conditions for investors.

D. Although foreign investors tend to avoid initial investments in natural-resource industries in developing countries, foreign investment may increase significantly as those industries stabilize and the risks associated with them decline.

ID: faea1302 Answer

Correct Answer: C

Rationale

Choice C is the best answer because it accurately states the main idea of the text. According to the text, contrary to what some might expect, foreign investment is typically lower in developing countries whose economies are more dependent on natural-resource extraction. The text explains that high reliance on natural-resource extraction can subject a developing country to economic shocks that can destabilize the local currency and introduce economic uncertainty that tends to keep investors away. In other words, although we may think otherwise, foreign investors are less willing to invest in projects in developing countries whose economies are heavily dependent on natural-resource extraction because those economies tend to exhibit instability that investors want to avoid.

Choice A is incorrect. The text does indicate that foreign investment is typically lower in developing countries whose economies are more dependent on natural-resource extraction; the text further indicates that natural-resource extraction requires substantial initial investments (to acquire things like required technologies) for which there are fewer investors willing to participate at this stage than one might think. But the text does not implicate the cost of these initial investments as a reason why foreign investment is less widely available than some might think. Choice B is incorrect. The text indicates that greater dependence on

natural-resource extraction makes a developing country less appealing to foreign investors because of associated economic instability. Rather than arguing that the goal of developing countries is to become less dependent on foreign investment, as the phrasing of choice B suggests, the text focuses only on why foreign investors become less involved with such countries, which suggests that more investment would be preferable. Choice D is incorrect. Although the text indicates that natural-resource extraction requires substantial initial investments (to acquire things like required technologies) and that there are fewer likely investors willing to participate at this stage than one might think, the text does not address what investors are likely to do over time as the industry stabilizes itself.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID 3d1d4c89

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	

ID: 3d1d4c89

Eighteenth-century economist Adam Smith is famed for his metaphor of the invisible hand, which he putatively used to illustrate a robust model of how individuals produce aggregate benefits by pursuing their own economic interests. Note “putatively”: as Gavin Kennedy has shown, Smith deploys this metaphor only once in his economic writings—to make a narrow point about the then-dominant economic theory of mercantilism—and it was largely ignored until some twentieth-century economists eager to secure an intellectual pedigree for their views elevated it to a fully-fledged paradigm.

Which choice best states the main idea of the text?

A. Although Smith is famed for his metaphor of the invisible hand, the metaphor was largely ignored until economists in the twentieth century came to realize that the metaphor was a robust model that anticipated their own views.

B. Some twentieth-century economists gave Smith’s metaphor of the invisible hand a significance it does not have in Smith’s work, but it is nevertheless a useful model of how individuals produce aggregate benefits by pursuing their own economic interests.

C. Smith’s metaphor of the invisible hand has been interpreted as a model of how individuals acting in their own interest produce aggregate benefits, but it was intended as a subtle critique of the economic theory of mercantilism.

D. The reputation of Smith’s metaphor of the invisible hand is not due to the importance of the metaphor in Smith’s work but rather to the promotion of the metaphor by some later economists for their own ends.

ID: 3d1d4c89 Answer

Correct Answer: D

Rationale

Choice D is the best answer because it most accurately states the main idea of the text. The text explains that economist Adam Smith’s famous metaphor of the invisible hand was putatively (that is, widely assumed but not proven) intended to illustrate a robust model (a consistently accurate generalization) of how individuals pursuing their own economic interests can create broader benefits for the population. The text then emphasizes the lack of affirmative evidence for this idea by calling out the term "putatively," and explaining that, according to Gavin Kennedy, Smith used the metaphor only once in his works, in reference to specific circumstances related to the now-outdated economic view known as mercantilism, and that the metaphor didn’t garner much attention until economists in the twentieth century held it up as a paradigm (a theoretical framework in the field) and thereby implied that Smith shared some of their views on economics. By emphasizing "putatively," the text implies that there is no independent reason to believe that Smith would agree with the metaphor’s use outside of the specific context for which he wrote it and that, therefore, the twentieth-century economists who used it did so to support their own views without regard for the metaphor’s importance to Smith’s work.

Choice A is incorrect. Although the text indicates that Smith’s metaphor was largely ignored until some twentieth-century economists revived it and bolstered its status, the text suggests that the later economists used Smith’s metaphor to self-servingly boost their own work while ignoring the original context in which Smith wrote it. Moreover, the statement in this choice fails to

reflect the text's emphasis on Smith's limited use of the metaphor in his work. Choice B is incorrect. Although the text indicates that some twentieth-century economists altered the significance of Smith's metaphor, the text doesn't suggest that the metaphor is a "useful model" of how aggregate benefits arise from individuals' selfish actions, let alone that this usefulness is unaffected by taking the metaphor out of its original context. Choice C is incorrect. Although the text indicates that Smith's metaphor was intended as a model of how individuals acting in their own interest produce aggregate benefits and it was written within the context of the now-outdated economic theory of mercantilism, these points are subordinate to the primary idea in the text, which is that Smith's use of the metaphor was tightly constrained but twentieth-century economists ignored the original context so that they could use the metaphor to suggest, without support, that Smith would agree with their economic views.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID de307886

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	

ID: de307886

Choctaw/Cherokee artist Jeffrey Gibson turns punching bags used by boxers into art by decorating them with beadwork and elements of Native dressmaking. These elements include leather fringe and jingles, the metal cones that cover the dresses worn in the jingle dance, a women's dance of the Ojibwe people. Thus, Gibson combines an object commonly associated with masculinity (a punching bag) with art forms traditionally practiced by women in most Native communities (beadwork and dressmaking). In this way, he rejects the division of male and female gender roles.

Which choice best describes Gibson's approach to art, as presented in the text?

A. He draws from traditional Native art forms to create his original works.

B. He has been influenced by Native and non-Native artists equally.

C. He finds inspiration from boxing in designing the dresses he makes.

D. He rejects expectations about color and pattern when incorporating beadwork.

ID: de307886 Answer

Correct Answer: A

Rationale

Choice A is the best answer because it most accurately describes Gibson's approach to art. As the text explains, Gibson, who is Cherokee and Choctaw, transforms punching bags into art pieces by applying (or attaching) to them beadwork and elements of Native dressmaking, including leather fringe and the jingles of the jingle dress. The text goes on to say that in most Native communities, the art forms of beadwork and dressmaking are traditionally practiced by women. Therefore, Gibson's approach to art consists of creating original works by drawing from traditional Native art forms.

Choice B is incorrect. Because Gibson incorporates Native art forms into his own original artwork, it can be inferred that he has been influenced by other Native artists, but the text never suggests that non-Native artists have influenced him. Choice C is incorrect because the text doesn't indicate that Gibson designs dresses influenced by boxing but instead that he turns punching bags, which are used in boxing, into works of art by applying elements of Native dressmaking to them. Choice D is incorrect. Although Gibson does incorporate beadwork into his art, the text never mentions the colors or patterns that he uses or suggests that his art defies the expectations that people might have about color and pattern in beadwork.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID ab8da62b

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	

ID: ab8da62b

In a study of new technology adoption, Davit Marikyan et al. examined negative disconfirmation (which occurs when experiences fall short of one's expectations) to determine whether it could lead to positive outcomes for users. The team focused on established users of "smart home" technology, which presents inherent utilization challenges but tends to attract users with high expectations, often leading to feelings of dissonance. The researchers found that many users employed cognitive mechanisms to mitigate those feelings, ultimately reversing their initial sense of disappointment.

Which choice best states the main idea of the text?

A. Research suggests that most users of smart home technology will not achieve a feeling of satisfaction given the utilization challenges of such technology.

B. Although most smart home technology is aimed at meeting or exceeding users' high expectations, those expectations in general remain poorly understood.

C. Research suggests that users with high expectations for a new technology can feel content with that technology even after experiencing negative disconfirmation.

D. Although negative disconfirmation has often been studied, little is known about the cognitive mechanisms shaping users' reactions to it in the context of new technology adoption.

ID: ab8da62b Answer

Correct Answer: C

Rationale

Choice C is the best answer. The passage begins by describing the study, and concludes with its results: "many users employed cognitive mechanisms to mitigate those feelings [of negative disconfirmation]."

Choice A is incorrect. This is the opposite of what the text claims. Rather, the researchers found that "many users" reversed "their initial sense of disappointment." Choice B is incorrect. This choice doesn't reflect the text. What the expectations of smart home tech users are is not discussed. Choice D is incorrect. This choice doesn't reflect the text. How often these topics have been studied is not mentioned.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID ffc5e579

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	

ID: ffc5e579

In episodes of high heat, corals expel symbiotic zooxanthellae from their tissues, leading to coral bleaching and heightened coral mortality. Some researchers have proposed a mitigation strategy of identifying, rearing, and disseminating corals that have evolved strong resistance to heat, but as Nia S. Walker et al. note, if genes conferring such resistance were exclusively advantageous, they should have already propagated through coral populations. Indeed, Walker et al. show that strongly heat-resistant corals display much less growth after heat stress than do moderately heat-resistant corals.

Based on the text, Walker et al. would most likely agree with which statement about the strategy some researchers have proposed?

A. It would involve promoting a trait that protects corals against high heat but that is associated with reduced thriving after episodes of high heat.

B. It would favor a trait that is advantageous now but would be disadvantageous if episodes of high heat become as infrequent as has been predicted.

C. It would benefit corals that are frequently exposed to episodes of high heat but would harm corals that are frequently exposed to episodes of moderate heat.

D. It would require manipulating a trait that is poorly understood and that may be linked to increased coral mortality during episodes of high heat.

ID: ffc5e579 Answer

Correct Answer: A

Rationale

Choice A is the best answer because it presents a statement about the proposed strategy that is consistent with Walker et al.'s position. The strategy involves identifying and disseminating corals with strong heat resistance as a means of mitigating coral mortality during episodes of high heat. According to the text, Walker et al. note that if this trait were "exclusively advantageous," it would have already spread throughout coral populations—implying that the trait carries some evolutionary cost. The text then provides evidence of this cost: Walker et al. have found that strongly heat-resistant corals display much less growth after heat stress (indicative of reduced thriving) than do moderately heat-resistant corals. Given the apparent trade-off between strong heat resistance and growth after heat stress, Walker et al. would be likely to agree that the strategy entails promoting a trait that protects against high heat but is associated with reduced thriving afterward.

Choice B is incorrect because the text doesn't suggest that episodes of high heat are predicted to become infrequent. Also, the text establishes that Walker et al. found that the trait of high heat tolerance is associated with a significant trade-off—reduced growth after heat stress. Given the cost that accompanies strong heat resistance, Walker et al. wouldn't be likely to agree that the trait is advantageous now. Choice C is incorrect because the text doesn't discuss the effects of moderate heat on corals or distinguish between corals that are exposed to different levels of heat. The text also doesn't address the frequency of corals' exposure to heat. Therefore, there is no basis for concluding that Walker et al. would agree that the strategy benefits corals that

are frequently exposed to high heat but harms those that are frequently exposed to moderate heat. Choice D is incorrect because the text doesn't indicate that heat resistance in corals is poorly understood. On the contrary, Walker et al. present a specific finding about this trait, linking reduced growth after heat stress to strong heat resistance. In addition, the text indicates that strong heat resistance protects corals during episodes of high heat; while their research shows that heat resistance is linked to reduced growth after such episodes, Walker et al. likely wouldn't agree that it is linked to increased coral mortality during such episodes.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID ea9da3ef

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	

ID: ea9da3ef

Historians point to the rule of the Piast dynasty as crucial to the formation of the Polish state. However, some differentiate between members of the dynasty like Mieszko II Lambert, who ruled as king from 1025 to 1031 CE, and less well-documented figures like Siemomysł, who is said to have ruled in the 10th century but whose historical actuality is disputed. Siemomysł appears in the *Gesta principum Polonorum*, a chronicle of medieval Polish history written between 1112 and 1118. However, the chronicle's documentation of Siemomysł relies on oral tradition, unlike its records of later rulers.

According to the text, what is a difference between how historians view Siemomysł and how they view Mieszko II Lambert?

A. Historians agree that Mieszko II Lambert existed, but disagree about whether Siemomysł existed.

B. Historians believe that the *Gesta principum Polonorum* provides more evidence for Siemomysł's existence than it does for Mieszko II Lambert's existence.

C. Historians agree that Siemomysł ruled Poland much later than Mieszko II Lambert.

D. Historians find the orally transmitted stories affirming the existence of Mieszko II Lambert to be more convincing than similar stories about Siemomysł.

ID: ea9da3ef Answer

Correct Answer: A

Rationale

Choice A is the best answer because it presents a statement about how historians view Siemomysł and Mieszko II Lambert that is supported by the text. The text states that the Piast dynasty had a number of different members. The text refers to two of the rulers in the Piast dynasty by name: Mieszko II Lambert, whose rule was known to have occurred from 1025 to 1031 CE, and Siemomysł ("whose historical actuality is disputed"), for whom less is known and who therefore is the subject of debate among historians. The text further casts doubt about Siemomysł by stating that he is "said to have ruled" during the 10th century, or the 900s, which suggests the possibility that he didn't rule. The text also mentions that the chronicle's documentation of Siemomysł relies on oral tradition, unlike its records of later rulers, including Mieszko II Lambert. This indicates that historians agree that Mieszko II Lambert was an actual historical figure, but they disagree about whether Siemomysł existed.

Choice B is incorrect because the text states that the *Gesta principum Polonorum*'s documentation of Siemomysł comes from oral tradition—spoken rather than written documentation—unlike its records of rulers who came after Siemomysł. This suggests that the chronicle provides less reliable evidence rather than more evidence for Siemomysł's existence in the 900s (or the 10th century) than it does for later rulers like Mieszko II Lambert, who ruled from 1025 to 1031 CE. Choice C is incorrect because the text indicates the opposite: Siemomysł supposedly ruled earlier in the 10th century, while Mieszko II Lambert ruled from 1025 to 1031 CE. The 10th century spans the years from 901 to 1000 CE, so Siemomysł is believed to have ruled earlier than Mieszko II Lambert did, not later as this choice states. Choice D is incorrect. Although the text mentions that information in the written chronicle *Gesta principum Polonorum* draws its information about Siemomysł from the oral tradition, it doesn't mention orally transmitted stories about Mieszko II Lambert. Instead, it states that the chronicle's documentation of Siemomysł relies on oral

tradition unlike the records of later rulers do, which suggests that the documentation of later rulers such as Mieszko II Lambert did not rely on oral tradition. Thus, no comparison can be made about how convincing the orally transmitted stories of each ruler are to historians.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID 73db5660

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	

ID: 73db5660

In many of his sculptures, artist Richard Hunt uses broad forms rather than extreme accuracy to hint at specific people or ideas. In his first major work, *Arachne* (1956), Hunt constructed the mythical character Arachne, a weaver who was changed into a spider, by welding bits of steel together into something that, although vaguely human, is strange and machine-like. And his large bronze sculpture *The Light of Truth* (2021) commemorates activist and journalist Ida B. Wells using mainly flowing, curved pieces of metal that create stylized flame.

Which choice best states the text's main idea about Hunt?

A. He often depicts the subjects of his sculptures using an unrealistic style.

B. He uses different kinds of materials depending on what kind of sculpture he plans to create.

C. He tends to base his art on important historical figures rather than on fictional characters.

D. He has altered his approach to sculpture over time, and his works have become increasingly abstract.

ID: 73db5660 Answer

Correct Answer: A

Rationale

Choice A is the best answer because it most accurately states the main idea of the text. According to the text, many of Richard Hunt's sculptures "use broad forms rather than extreme accuracy"—in other words, they are more abstract than realistic. To illustrate Hunt's abstract approach, the text characterizes his sculpture of Arachne as "vaguely human" and his work in honor of Ida B. Wells as "using mainly flowing, curved pieces of metal that create stylized flame." Thus, the main idea is that Hunt often depicts the subjects of his sculptures using an unrealistic style.

Choice B is incorrect. Although the text indicates that one of Hunt's sculptures is made of steel and another of bronze, there is no mention of why he chose these materials. Choice C is incorrect because the text says nothing about how Hunt chose the subjects for his sculptures. Furthermore, of the two examples provided in the text, only Ida B. Wells is an important historical figure; Arachne is a "mythical character." Choice D is incorrect because the text says nothing about how Hunt's style changed over time. In fact, although the two examples of Hunt's work discussed in the text were created 65 years apart, they are both described as heavily stylized rather than realistic, which may suggest that some aspects of Hunt's style haven't changed over that time.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID 6e2c1b7b

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	

ID: 6e2c1b7b

The following text is Vita Sackville-West's circa 1920 poem "Evening." Spars are ships' masts, moorings are ropes that hold docked ships in place, and a riding-light is a light that a ship shines when it is anchored.

> When little lights in little ports come out,
> Quivering down through water with the stars,
> And all the fishing fleet of slender spars
> Range at their moorings, veer with tide about;
>
> When race of wind is stilled and sails are furled,
> And underneath our single riding-light
> The curve of black-ribbed deck gleams palely white,
> And slumbrous waters pool a slumbrous world;
>
> —Then, and then only, have I thought how sweet
> Old age might sink upon a windy youth,
> Quiet beneath the riding-light of truth,
> Weathered through storms, and gracious in retreat.

Which choice best states the main idea of the text?

A. The tranquility of a port in the evening can incline a person to appreciate the stillness of old age.

B. The difficulty of bringing a ship into port is apt training for dealing with the types of struggles encountered in old age.

C. A person who leads a long life that is varied and active may find it difficult to stay in a calm place.

D. The contrast between the peacefulness of a port at night and its activity during the day reflects the contrast between the calm of old age and the vibrancy of youth.

ID: 6e2c1b7b Answer

Correct Answer: A

Rationale

Choice A is the best answer because it best states the main idea of the text. The speaker describes an evening scene observed from a boat: "little lights in little ports come out" and are reflected in the water's surface "with the stars," fishing boats are moored, "sails are furled" (rolled up), and the riding-light is shining. The speaker emphasizes the calmness of the scene, noting that the "race of wind is stilled" and the atmosphere is sleepy ("slumbrous waters pool a slumbrous world"), and then indicates that the calmness prompts thoughts of how old age might be "sweet" and "quiet" and "gracious in retreat" after "a windy youth" with "storms." Thus, the main idea is that the tranquility of a port in the evening can lead a person to appreciate the potential stillness of old age.

Choice B is incorrect because the speaker isn't discussing the difficulty of bringing a ship into port but describing the calmness of the port at night. And rather than suggesting that old age involves struggles, the speaker suggests that after "a windy youth" with "storms" to be weathered, old age will be "sweet," "quiet," and "gracious"—that is, old age will be tranquil like a port at night. Choice C is incorrect because the speaker isn't suggesting that a person who has lived a varied and active life might find it difficult to stay in a calm place in old age. On the contrary, the speaker suggests that after a "windy youth" with "storms," old age can be welcomed as something "sweet," "quiet," and "gracious," just like a calm port at night. Choice D is incorrect. Although the speaker does touch on the idea of a "windy youth" followed by "sweet old age," the speaker doesn't tie that idea to a contrast between daytime activity and nighttime peacefulness at a port. The speaker doesn't address any activity during the day at a port, only briefly mentioning that the "race of wind is stilled" at the end of the day, and instead focuses on the tranquility of the port at night and how it prompts thoughts of "quiet" and "gracious" old age.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID 5cb4bac4

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	

ID: 5cb4bac4

The following text is from Thomas Mann's 1924 novel *The Magic Mountain*, translated by John E. Woods in 1995.

> The story of Hans Castorp that we intend to tell here—not for his sake (for the reader will come to know him as a perfectly ordinary, if engaging young man), but for the sake of the story itself, which seems to us to be very much worth telling (although in Hans Castorp's favor it should be noted that it is *his* story, and that not every story happens to everybody)—is a story that took place long ago, and is, so to speak, covered with the patina of history and must necessarily be told with verbs whose tense is that of the deepest past.

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What does the text most strongly suggest about the story of Hans Castorp?

A. Though it is true that stories of even the most uninteresting people are themselves interesting because all people are unique, the reason this story is interesting is nonetheless difficult to understand because of the passage of time.

B. Even though it is a story of a person of no particular importance, its age and the manner in which it therefore must be told are both indicators that the story itself is important.

C. Like all stories about the lives of inconsequential people, this story must necessarily be related in a particular way if the reason the story is consequential is to be made evident to the audience.

D. It is a remarkable story that happened to an unremarkable person, though one could plausibly argue that because the story is valuable, some of its value accrues to the person at its center.

ID: 5cb4bac4 Answer

Correct Answer: D

Rationale

Choice D is the best answer because it presents a statement about Hans Castorp's story that is suggested by the text. The narrator of the text indicates that the story about Hans Castorp will be told not because there is something particularly notable about him, since he is pleasant but "perfectly ordinary," but because the story itself is remarkable ("very much worth telling"). The narrator then notes that there is a benefit in being at the heart of the story—that it is "in Hans Castorp's favor" that the story is his, and maybe uniquely so ("not every story happens to everybody"). Thus, the text suggests both that the story that will be told is a remarkable one that happened to an unremarkable person and that it is reasonable to argue that the person at the center of a valuable story takes on some of the story's value.

Choice A is incorrect. Although the narrator of the text makes the point that "not every story happens to everybody," the narrator doesn't state that stories are interesting simply because the people they are about are unique. Rather, the narrator suggests that one particular story is "very much worth telling" on its own and that Hans Castorp benefits from the fact that the story is remarkable and may be unique to him. Further, the narrator never suggests that the story will be hard to understand even though it is old. Choice B is incorrect. Although the narrator of the text suggests that Hans Castorp is of no particular importance, since he is a "perfectly ordinary" person, the narrator never reveals what makes the story of Castorp important, just that "the story itself" is

"very much worth telling." The narrator states that the story "took place long ago," is "covered with the patina of history," and can be told only "with verbs whose tense is that of the deepest past," but the story's age and the way it must be told aren't presented as reasons the story is important; the narrator is simply providing details about how the story will be told. Choice C is incorrect because the narrator of the text doesn't suggest that all stories about people who are "perfectly ordinary" (like Hans Castorp) must be told in particular ways to make it clear why those stories are consequential. Further, the narrator suggests that Hans Castorp's story must be told "with verbs whose tense is that of the deepest past" because it took place so long ago, not because telling it that way will convey the story's importance.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID 3f990549

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	

ID: 3f990549

The following text is adapted from William Shakespeare's 1598 play *Henry IV, Part 1*. King Henry is addressing several noblemen who are rumored to have been disloyal to him.

> KING HENRY: My blood hath been too cold and temperate,
> Unapt to stir at these indignities,
> And you have found me, for accordingly
> You tread upon my patience; but be sure
> I will from henceforth rather be myself,
> Mighty and to be fear'd, than my [disposition],
> Which hath been smooth as oil, soft as young down,
> And therefore lost that title of respect
> Which the proud soul ne'er pays but to the proud.

Which statement best describes how King Henry presents himself in the text?

A. He declares that he has judged the noblemen's conduct in an impartial manner, and that despite their attempts to regain his trust through professions of submissiveness, they have irrevocably lost his respect.

B. He acknowledges to the noblemen that his tolerance of their conduct has undermined their respect for him, and he resolves to display his genuine nature, which is more forceful and compels deference.

C. He defends his calm disposition, which he sees as fundamental to his personality, and vows to maintain his tranquil demeanor even if it causes him to lose the respect of overly proud noblemen.

D. He concedes that he has treated the noblemen with indifference, which in part explains why they have defied him, but he asserts that their disrespectful behavior is primarily driven by their excessive pride.

ID: 3f990549 Answer

Correct Answer: B

Rationale

Choice B is the best answer because it most accurately describes King Henry's self-presentation in the text. Henry states that his temperament has been "too cold and temperate, / Unapt to stir at these indignities" (that is, too calm and slow to react to insults), and he asserts that the noblemen have taken advantage of this: "accordingly / You tread upon my patience." He then resolves to change, declaring he will "from henceforth rather be myself, / Mighty and to be fear'd," since being lenient ("smooth as oil, soft as young down") has caused him to lose "that title of respect / Which the proud soul ne'er pays but to the proud." In other words, Henry recognizes that proud people like the noblemen respect only strength and resolves to show his more forceful, true nature.

Choice A is incorrect because the text doesn't describe Henry as having judged the noblemen impartially, nor does it mention any attempts by the noblemen to regain his trust through submissiveness. Rather, Henry describes the noblemen as taking advantage of his patience and declares he will adopt a more commanding demeanor in the future. Choice C is incorrect. Although Henry

concedes that he has perhaps been too calm and mild, Henry does not defend or vow to maintain his calm disposition. On the contrary, he explicitly states he will "from henceforth rather be myself, / Mighty and to be fear'd," resolving to abandon the mild manner that has cost him the respect of the noblemen. Choice D is incorrect because Henry characterizes his manner as patient and mild—"smooth as oil, soft as young down"—not indifferent. Indifference implies a lack of concern, whereas Henry describes himself as being overly lenient. Additionally, although the final lines mention "the proud soul," the focus is not on the noblemen's excessive pride but rather on how Henry's apparent *lack* of pride has caused him to lose the noblemen's respect.

Question Difficulty: Hard