

Question ID 27f64098

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Form, Structure, and Sense	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: 27f64098

Tracy Fullerton’s *Walden, a game*, an unlikely fusion of the writings of nineteenth-century transcendentalist Henry David Thoreau with today’s open-world video games, _____ players to explore a digital version of Walden Pond, the idyllic natural setting featured in Thoreau’s book *Walden*.

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

- A. invites
- B. invite
- C. are inviting
- D. have invited

ID: 27f64098 Answer

Correct Answer: A

Rationale

Choice A is the best answer. The convention being tested is subject-verb agreement. The singular verb “invites” agrees in number with the singular subject “Tracy Fullerton’s *Walden, a game*.”

Choice B is incorrect because the plural verb “invite” doesn’t agree in number with the singular subject “Tracy Fullerton’s *Walden, a game*.” Choice C is incorrect because the plural verb “are inviting” doesn’t agree in number with the singular subject “Tracy Fullerton’s *Walden, a game*.” Choice D is incorrect because the plural verb “have invited” doesn’t agree in number with the singular subject “Tracy Fullerton’s *Walden, a game*.”

Question Difficulty: Medium

Question ID b2b6b49e

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Form, Structure, and Sense	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: b2b6b49e

A worker cooperative is a business that is owned and operated by its workers. This model stands in contrast to traditional models in which a smaller group of owners controls a company. Because the profits made by a cooperative are shared by all workers—who are also owners—the workers _____ directly from its success.

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

- A. benefit
- B. benefited
- C. were benefiting
- D. had benefited

ID: b2b6b49e Answer

Correct Answer: A

Rationale

Choice A is the best answer. The convention being tested is the use of verbs to express tense. In this choice, the present tense verb “benefit” is consistent with the other present tense verbs (“is,” “stands,” and “are shared”) used to describe worker cooperatives and how they function.

Choice B is incorrect because the past tense verb “benefited” isn’t consistent with the other present tense verbs used to describe worker cooperatives and how they function. Choice C is incorrect because the past progressive tense verb “were benefiting” isn’t consistent with the other present tense verbs used to describe worker cooperatives and how they function. Choice D is incorrect because the past perfect tense verb “had benefited” isn’t consistent with the other present tense verbs used to describe worker cooperatives and how they function.

Question Difficulty: Medium

Question ID d22d5764

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Form, Structure, and Sense	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: d22d5764

The classic children’s board game Chutes and Ladders is a version of an ancient Nepalese game, Paramapada Sopanapata. In both games, players encounter “good” or “bad” spaces while traveling along a path; landing on one of the good spaces _____ a player to skip ahead and arrive closer to the end goal.

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

- A. allows
- B. are allowing
- C. have allowed
- D. allow

ID: d22d5764 Answer

Correct Answer: A

Rationale

Choice A is the best answer. The convention being tested is subject–verb agreement. The singular verb “allows” agrees in number with the singular subject “landing.”

Choice B is incorrect because the plural verb “are allowing” doesn’t agree in number with the singular subject “landing.” Choice C is incorrect because the plural verb “have allowed” doesn’t agree in number with the singular subject “landing.” Choice D is incorrect because the plural verb “allow” doesn’t agree in number with the singular subject “landing.”

Question Difficulty: Medium

Question ID a670e959

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Form, Structure, and Sense	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: a670e959

If simple sugars such as ribose and glycolaldehyde _____ Earth from elsewhere and survived impact—a possibility astrophysicist Nicolle Zellner outlined in a 2020 study—the sugars could have reacted with other molecules that were already present on the planet to form the nucleotides that are the structural components of RNA and DNA.

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

- A. reach
- B. had reached
- C. will reach
- D. are reaching

ID: a670e959 Answer

Correct Answer: B

Rationale

Choice B is the best answer. The convention being tested is the use of verbs to express tense. In this choice, the past perfect verb “had reached” is used correctly to describe a past action that was completed before another action in the past. Specifically, in this hypothetical scenario about the origins of RNA and DNA on Earth, the simple sugars had to have reached Earth before they could react with other molecules on the planet.

Choice A is incorrect because the present tense verb “reach” doesn’t indicate that the simple sugars reached Earth before reacting with other molecules on the planet. Choice C is incorrect because the future tense verb “will reach” doesn’t indicate that the simple sugars reached Earth before reacting with other molecules on the planet. Choice D is incorrect because the present progressive verb “are reaching” doesn’t indicate that the simple sugars reached Earth before reacting with other molecules on the planet.

Question Difficulty: Medium

Question ID e365916a

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Form, Structure, and Sense	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: e365916a

According to linguist Martin Joos, speakers of the English language _____ five main registers—frozen, formal, consultative, casual, and intimate—which they rotate between depending on the situation.

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

- A. use
- B. is using
- C. uses
- D. has used

ID: e365916a Answer

Correct Answer: A

Rationale

Choice A is the best answer. The convention being tested is subject-verb agreement. The plural verb "use" agrees in number with the plural subject "speakers."

Choice B is incorrect because the singular verb "is using" doesn't agree in number with the plural subject "speakers." Choice C is incorrect because the singular verb "uses" doesn't agree in number with the plural subject "speakers." Choice D is incorrect because the singular verb "has used" doesn't agree in number with the plural subject "speakers."

Question Difficulty: Medium

Question ID 19da7704

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Form, Structure, and Sense	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: 19da7704

An online content creator who uses copyrighted songs without permission risks being demonetized (prohibited from including paid advertisements in content). The best way to avoid demonetization is to choose music from the public domain. Using one of these noncopyrighted songs _____ a creator won’t lose advertising revenue.

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

- A. are ensuring
- B. have ensured
- C. ensure
- D. ensures

ID: 19da7704 Answer

Correct Answer: D

Rationale

Choice D is the best answer. The convention being tested is subject-verb agreement. The singular verb "ensures" agrees in number with the singular subject "using."

Choice A is incorrect because the plural verb "are ensuring" doesn’t agree in number with the singular subject "using." Choice B is incorrect because the plural verb "have ensured" doesn’t agree in number with the singular subject "using." Choice C is incorrect because the plural verb "ensure" doesn’t agree in number with the singular subject "using."

Question Difficulty: Medium

Question ID 5dd60526

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Form, Structure, and Sense	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: 5dd60526

Photographer Ansel Adams’s landscape portraits are iconic pieces of American art. However, many of the _____ of landscapes were intended not as art but as marketing; a concessions company at Yosemite National Park had hired Adams to take pictures of the park for restaurant menus and brochures.

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

- A. photographer’s early photo’s
- B. photographers early photo’s
- C. photographer’s early photos
- D. photographers early photos

ID: 5dd60526 Answer

Correct Answer: C

Rationale

Choice C is the best answer. There’s only one photographer (Adams), and the photos are his, so the singular possessive "photographer’s" is correct. There’s more than one photo, and nothing belongs to the photos, so the simple plural "photos" is correct.

Choice A is incorrect. This choice uses the singular possessive "photo’s," which isn’t correct. There’s more than one photo, and they don’t possess anything, so the noun should be the simple plural "photos." Choice B is incorrect. This choice uses the simple plural "photographers" and the singular possessive "photo’s," which aren’t correct. There’s only one photographer (Adams) and there’s more than one photo. Choice D is incorrect. This choice uses the simple plural "photographers," which isn’t correct. There’s only one photographer (Adams).

Question Difficulty: Medium

Question ID f3571529

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Form, Structure, and Sense	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: f3571529

A second-generation Japanese American, Wataru Misaka _____ in World War II (1941-45) and won two amateur national basketball championships at the University of Utah when he joined the New York Knicks for the 1947-48 season, becoming the first non-white basketball player in the US’s top professional league.

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

- A. already served
- B. was already serving
- C. already serves
- D. had already served

ID: f3571529 Answer

Correct Answer: D

Rationale

Choice D is the best answer. Misaka served in World War II before he joined the New York Knicks in 1947. To show that a past occurrence took place before another past occurrence, we need to use “had” + the past tense form of the verb. This is called the past perfect tense.

Choice A is incorrect. Misaka served in World War II before he joined the Knicks. Both events are in the past, but his service in World War II happened earlier, so we need a verb that makes it clear that his service (and the two national championships) had ended by the time he joined the Knicks. Choice B is incorrect. “Was already serving” forms the continuous past tense, which we use when we’re showing a past action that was ongoing. Misaka served in World War II before he joined the Knicks. Both events are in the past, but they’re not happening at the same time, so we shouldn’t use the continuous past tense here. Choice C is incorrect. Misaka served in World War II in the past, so we shouldn’t use the present tense “serves.”

Question Difficulty: Medium

Question ID aff2cf3e

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Form, Structure, and Sense	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: aff2cf3e

To illustrate Albert Einstein’s special theory of relativity, picture two jugglers: one juggling on a steadily moving parade float, the other juggling while standing still on a sidewalk. The laws of physics are identical for both _____ motion relative to each other. But what, Einstein wondered, about the speed of light?

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

- A. jugglers’, regardless of they’re
- B. jugglers, regardless of there
- C. juggler’s, regardless of their
- D. jugglers, regardless of their

ID: aff2cf3e Answer

Correct Answer: D

Rationale

Choice D is the best answer. The convention being tested is the use of plural nouns and possessive determiners. The plural noun "jugglers" and the plural possessive determiner "their" correctly indicate that there are multiple jugglers whose motion is being discussed.

Choice A is incorrect because the context requires the plural noun "jugglers" and the plural possessive determiner "their," not the plural possessive noun "jugglers'" and the contraction "they're." Choice B is incorrect because the context requires the plural possessive determiner "their," not the word "there," which means "in that place." Choice C is incorrect because the context requires the plural noun "jugglers," not the singular possessive noun "juggler's."

Question Difficulty: Medium

Question ID 5efc8e2d

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Form, Structure, and Sense	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: 5efc8e2d

Novelist Jane Austen greatly admired the work of Fanny Burney, a popular English author. In fact, scholars believe that a passage from the last chapter of *Cecilia*, a 1782 novel by Burney, likely inspired the title of one of _____ *Pride and Prejudice*.

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

- A. Austen’s most famous novels,
- B. Austens’ most famous novels’,
- C. Austens most famous novels,
- D. Austen’s most famous novel’s,

ID: 5efc8e2d Answer

Correct Answer: A

Rationale

Choice A is the best answer. The convention being tested is the use of plural and possessive nouns. The singular possessive proper noun "Austen’s" and the plural noun "novels" correctly indicates that Austen wrote multiple novels that were famous.

Choice B is incorrect because the context requires the singular possessive proper noun "Austen’s" and the plural noun "novels," not the plural possessive nouns "Austens'" and "novels'." Choice C is incorrect because the context requires the singular possessive proper noun "Austen’s," not the plural proper noun "Austens." Choice D is incorrect because the context requires the plural noun "novels," not the singular possessive noun "novel’s."

Question Difficulty: Medium

Question ID 2b06d04b

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Form, Structure, and Sense	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: 2b06d04b

In a rural area along the border between Oklahoma and Texas, amateur astronomers gather each year to observe the night sky at the Okie-Tex Star Party. Like most star parties, Okie-Tex takes place in an area with low light pollution, _____ dark skies and ideal stargazing conditions.

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

- A. ensuring
- B. this will ensure
- C. ensures
- D. it ensures

ID: 2b06d04b Answer

Correct Answer: A

Rationale

Choice A is the best answer. The convention being tested is the use of verb forms within a sentence. The nonfinite present participle "ensuring" is correctly used to form a supplementary element that modifies the main clause "Okie-Tex takes place in an area with low light pollution," describing the viewing conditions of the star party.

Choice B is incorrect because it results in a comma splice. The pronoun "this" and the finite future tense verb "will ensure" would add an additional main clause to this sentence, and the comma after "pollution" can't be used in this way to join two main clauses. Choice C is incorrect because it results in an ungrammatical sentence. The finite present tense verb "ensures" can't be used in this way to form a supplementary element to modify the main clause. Choice D is incorrect because it results in a comma splice. The pronoun "it" and the finite present tense verb "ensures" would add an additional main clause to this sentence, and the comma after "pollution" can't be used in this way to join two main clauses.

Question Difficulty: Medium

Question ID 43c90c89

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Form, Structure, and Sense	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: 43c90c89

Mathematician and meteorologist Edward Lorenz used the metaphor of the “butterfly effect” to explain how seemingly minor events can have major impacts on future weather. According to Lorenz’s metaphor, the wind from a butterfly flapping _____ in Brazil might eventually grow into a storm elsewhere across the globe.

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

- A. its wings
- B. its wings’
- C. it’s wing’s
- D. it’s wings’

ID: 43c90c89 Answer

Correct Answer: A

Rationale

Choice A is the best answer. The conventions being tested are the use of possessive determiners and plural nouns. The singular possessive determiner "its" and the plural noun "wings" correctly indicate that the butterfly has multiple wings.

Choice B is incorrect because the context requires the plural noun "wings," not the plural possessive noun "wings'." Choice C is incorrect because the context requires the singular possessive determiner "its" and the plural noun "wings," not the contraction "it's" and the singular possessive noun "wing's." Choice D is incorrect because the context requires the singular possessive determiner "its" and the plural noun "wings," not the contraction "it's" and the plural possessive noun "wings'."

Question Difficulty: Medium

Question ID 6a49c527

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Form, Structure, and Sense	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: 6a49c527

Planetary scientist Briony Horgan and her colleagues have determined that as much as 25 percent of the sand on Mars is composed of impact spherules. These spherical bits of glass form when asteroids collide with the planet, ejecting bits of molten rock into the atmosphere that, after cooling and solidifying into glass, _____ back onto Mars’s surface.

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

- A. to rain
- B. raining
- C. having rained
- D. rain

ID: 6a49c527 Answer

Correct Answer: D

Rationale

Choice D is the best answer. "That...[rain] back onto Mars’s surface" is a relative clause that describes the "bits of molten rock." Forming the clause requires a conjugated, finite verb, and this is the only choice that provides that.

Choice A is incorrect. "To rain" is an infinitive and can’t serve as the main verb of a clause. A conjugated verb is needed here to form the main verb of the relative clause "that...[rain] back onto Mars’s surface," which describes the "bits of molten rock." Choice B is incorrect. "Raining" is a present participle and, on its own, can’t serve as the main verb of a clause. A conjugated verb is needed here to form the main verb of the relative clause "that...[rain] back onto Mars’s surface," which describes the "bits of molten rock." Choice C is incorrect. "Having rained" is a perfect participle and can’t serve as the main verb of a clause. A conjugated verb is needed here to form the main verb of the relative clause "that...[rain] back onto Mars’s surface," which describes the "bits of molten rock."

Question Difficulty: Medium

Question ID 86547f23

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Form, Structure, and Sense	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: 86547f23

In his 1963 exhibition *Exposition of Music—Electronic Television*, Korean American artist Nam June Paik showed how television images could be manipulated to express an artist’s perspective. Today, Paik _____ considered the first video artist.

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

- A. will be
- B. had been
- C. was
- D. is

ID: 86547f23 Answer

Correct Answer: D

Rationale

Choice D is the best answer. The convention being tested is the use of verbs to express tense. In this choice, the present tense verb "is," used in conjunction with the word "today," correctly indicates that Paik is currently considered the first video artist.

Choice A is incorrect because the future tense verb "will be" doesn’t indicate that Paik is currently considered the first video artist. Choice B is incorrect because the past perfect tense verb "had been" doesn’t indicate that Paik is currently considered the first video artist. Choice C is incorrect because the past tense verb "was" doesn’t indicate that Paik is currently considered the first video artist.

Question Difficulty: Medium

Question ID a3d34e65

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Form, Structure, and Sense	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: a3d34e65

In winter, the diets of Japanese macaques, also known as snow monkeys, are influenced more by food availability than by food preference. Although the monkeys prefer to eat vegetation and land-dwelling invertebrates, those food sources may become unavailable because of extensive snow and ice cover, _____ the monkeys to hunt for marine animals in any streams that have not frozen over.

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

- A. forces
- B. to force
- C. forcing
- D. forced

ID: a3d34e65 Answer

Correct Answer: C

Rationale

Choice C is the best answer. The convention being tested is the use of finite and nonfinite verb forms within a sentence. The nonfinite present participle “forcing” is correctly used to form a participial phrase that supplements the main clause “those...cover,” describing the effects on monkeys of the lack of food sources.

Choice A is incorrect because the finite present tense verb “forces” can’t be used in this way to supplement the main clause (“those...cover”). Choice B is incorrect. While the nonfinite to-infinitive “to force” could be used to form a subordinate clause that supplements the main clause (“those...cover”), to-infinitives conventionally express purpose, and nothing in the sentence suggests that the food sources become unavailable for the purpose of forcing monkeys to hunt marine animals. Choice D is incorrect because the finite past tense verb “forced” can’t be used in this way to supplement the main clause (“those...cover”).

Question Difficulty: Medium

Question ID 1c489b3d

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Form, Structure, and Sense	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: 1c489b3d

While exploring Nevada’s Gypsum Cave in 1930, Seneca and Abenaki archaeologist Bertha Parker made her most famous discovery: the skull of a now-extinct ground sloth (*Nothrotheriops shastensis*) alongside human-made tools. Parker’s crucial finding was the first _____ humans in North America as far back as 10,000 years ago.

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

- A. places
- B. placed
- C. place
- D. to place

ID: 1c489b3d Answer

Correct Answer: D

Rationale

Choice D is the best answer. The object for the verb "was" is "first," and "to place" is acting as a modifier for "first." What was the finding? It was "the first." The first to do what? The first "to place humans in North America" 10,000 years ago. When a verb serves as a modifier within a noun phrase, it must be nonfinite (i.e., not conjugated to a specific subject). The infinitive form "to place" is the only nonfinite option among the choices that makes sense in context.

Choice A is incorrect. The object for the verb "was" is "first," and "places" is acting as a modifier for "first." What was the thing that Parker’s finding did? What was it the first to do? Place humans in North America 10,000 years ago. When a verb acts as a modifier, it must be nonfinite (i.e., not conjugated to a specific subject), but "places" is a finite form of the verb. Choice B is incorrect. The object for the verb "was" is "first," and "placed" is acting to modify "first." What was it that Parker’s finding was the first to do? Place humans in North America 10,000 years ago. When a verb acts as a modifier, it must be nonfinite (i.e., not conjugated to a specific subject), but "placed" is a finite form. "Placed" can also be a past participle, but that wouldn’t make sense here because the meaning of "the first placed humans" would be unclear. Choice C is incorrect. The object for the verb "was" is "first," and "place" is modifying "first." What was the thing that Parker’s finding did? What was it the first to do? Place humans in North America. When a verb acts as a modifier, it must be nonfinite (i.e., not conjugated to a specific subject), but "place" is a finite form of the verb. Additionally, "place" can’t serve as a noun here, because it results in an illogical sentence (the "finding" wasn’t "the first place").

Question Difficulty: Medium

Question ID 44f1483a

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Form, Structure, and Sense	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: 44f1483a

In the historical novel *The Surrender Tree*, Cuban American author Margarita Engle uses poetry rather than prose _____ the true story of Cuban folk hero Rosa La Bayamesa.

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

- A. tells
- B. told
- C. is telling
- D. to tell

ID: 44f1483a Answer

Correct Answer: D

Rationale

Choice D is the best answer. The convention being tested is the use of finite and nonfinite verb forms within a sentence. The nonfinite to-infinitive “to tell” is correctly used to form a nonfinite (infinitive) clause that explains the reason Engle uses poetry in her novel.

Choice A is incorrect because the finite present tense verb “tells” can’t be used in this way to explain the reason that Engle uses poetry in her novel. Choice B is incorrect because the finite past tense verb “told” can’t be used in this way to explain the reason that Engle uses poetry in her novel. Choice C is incorrect because the finite present progressive tense verb “is telling” can’t be used in this way to explain the reason that Engle uses poetry in her novel.

Question Difficulty: Medium

Question ID 03ec8d6d

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Form, Structure, and Sense	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: 03ec8d6d

Inventor John Friedman created a prototype of the first flexible straw by inserting a screw into a paper straw and, using dental floss, binding the straw tightly around the _____. When the floss and screw were removed, the resulting corrugations in the paper allowed the straw to bend easily over the edge of a glass.

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

- A. screw’s thread’s.
- B. screws’ threads.
- C. screw’s threads.
- D. screws threads’.

ID: 03ec8d6d Answer

Correct Answer: C

Rationale

Choice C is the best answer. The convention being tested is the use of plural and possessive nouns. The singular possessive noun “screw’s” and the plural noun “threads” correctly indicate that there is only one screw and it has multiple threads.

Choice A is incorrect because the context requires the plural noun “threads,” not the singular possessive noun “thread’s.” Choice B is incorrect because the context requires the singular possessive noun “screw’s,” not the plural possessive noun “screws’.” Choice D is incorrect because the context requires the singular possessive noun “screw’s” and the plural noun “threads,” not the plural noun “screws” or the plural possessive noun “threads.”

Question Difficulty: Medium

Question ID d95f29d7

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Form, Structure, and Sense	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: d95f29d7

Cheng Dang and her colleagues at the University of Washington recently ran simulations to determine the extent to which individual snow _____ affect the amount of light reflecting off a snowy surface.

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

- A. grain’s physical properties’
- B. grains’ physical properties
- C. grains’ physical property’s
- D. grains physical properties

ID: d95f29d7 Answer

Correct Answer: B

Rationale

Choice B is the best answer. The convention being tested is the use of plural and possessive nouns. The plural possessive noun “grains” and the plural noun “properties” correctly indicate that the simulations involved multiple snow grains and that those snow grains had several properties.

Choice A is incorrect because the context requires the plural possessive noun “grains” and the plural noun “properties,” not the singular possessive noun “grain’s” and the plural possessive noun “properties’.” Choice C is incorrect because the context requires the plural noun “properties,” not the singular possessive noun “property’s.” Choice D is incorrect because the context requires the plural possessive noun “grains’,” not the plural noun “grains.”

Question Difficulty: Medium

Question ID d259d872

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Form, Structure, and Sense	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: d259d872

It can take time for proposed amendments to the US Constitution to become law. For example, the Twenty-Second Amendment, which limits the number of _____ can serve, was first proposed in 1947 but wasn't approved by the required three-fourths majority of state legislatures until 1951.

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

- A. terms presidents
- B. term's presidents
- C. term's president's
- D. terms president's

ID: d259d872 Answer

Correct Answer: A

Rationale

Choice A is the best answer. The convention being tested is the use of plural nouns. The plural nouns "terms" and "presidents" correctly indicate that the amendment involves multiple terms and applies to presidents in general.

Choice B is incorrect because the context requires the plural noun "terms," not the singular possessive noun "term's." Choice C is incorrect because the context requires the plural nouns "terms" and "presidents," not the singular possessive nouns "term's" and "president's." Choice D is incorrect because the context requires the plural noun "presidents," not the singular possessive noun "president's."

Question Difficulty: Medium

Question ID 6754a967

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Form, Structure, and Sense	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: 6754a967

In the early twentieth century, Joseph Kekuku and other Hawaiian _____ in the mainland United States to the bright and lilting sound of the *kīkī kila*, or Hawaiian steel guitar. The instrument soon became a fixture in American blues and country music.

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

- A. musicians introduced audiences
- B. musicians’ introduced audiences’
- C. musician’s introduced audience’s
- D. musicians’ introduced audiences

ID: 6754a967 Answer

Correct Answer: A

Rationale

Choice A is the best answer. The convention being tested is the use of plural nouns. The plural nouns "musicians" and "audiences" correctly indicate that there were multiple musicians introducing the music to multiple audiences.

Choice B is incorrect because the context requires the plural nouns "musicians" and "audiences," not the plural possessive nouns "musicians'" and "audiences'." Choice C is incorrect because the context requires the plural nouns "musicians" and "audiences," not the singular possessive nouns "musician's" and "audience's." Choice D is incorrect because the context requires the plural noun "musicians," not the plural possessive noun "musicians'."

Question Difficulty: Medium

Question ID b8499f2e

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Form, Structure, and Sense	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: b8499f2e

Earth is not a perfect sphere. Due to the _____ gravitational pull, Earth bulges out on the sides closest to and farthest from the Moon. This distorting pull is known as a tidal force, and it is responsible for the changes in water levels that are called high and low tides.

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

- A. Moon’s
- B. Moons
- C. Moons’
- D. Moon

ID: b8499f2e Answer

Correct Answer: A

Rationale

Choice A is the best answer. The convention being tested is the use of possessive nouns. The singular possessive noun "Moon’s" correctly indicates that there is only one Moon, and it has a gravitational pull.

Choice B is incorrect because the context requires the singular possessive noun "Moon’s," not the plural noun "Moons." Choice C is incorrect because the context requires the singular possessive noun "Moon’s," not the plural possessive noun "Moons’." Choice D is incorrect because the context requires the singular possessive noun "Moon’s," not the singular noun "Moon."

Question Difficulty: Medium

Question ID 6733308e

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Form, Structure, and Sense	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: 6733308e

In 1899, Swedish chemist Svante Arrhenius developed an equation to answer a long-standing question: why do chemical reactions speed up at higher temperatures? The Arrhenius equation, named for its creator, _____ an important concept in modern chemistry.

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

- A. have remained
- B. remain
- C. remains
- D. are remaining

ID: 6733308e Answer

Correct Answer: C

Rationale

Choice C is the best answer. This choice uses the singular verb "remains" to match the singular subject "equation."

Choice A is incorrect. The singular noun "equation" doesn't match with the plural verb conjugation "have remained." Choice B is incorrect. The singular noun "equation" doesn't match with the plural verb conjugation "remain." Choice D is incorrect. The singular noun "equation" doesn't match with the plural verb conjugation "are remaining."

Question Difficulty: Medium

Question ID 7d391535

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Form, Structure, and Sense	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: 7d391535

Botanists recognize over fifty different species of sunflower. One species, the silverleaf sunflower, _____ both an early-flowering ecotype that tends to grow in coastal areas and a late-flowering ecotype that grows inland.

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

- A. having included
- B. including
- C. to include
- D. includes

ID: 7d391535 Answer

Correct Answer: D

Rationale

Choice D is the best answer. This verb needs to function as the main verb in the sentence, with the subject “one species,” so it needs to be conjugated. This choice gives us the singular present tense “includes,” which is the only conjugated form of the verb among the choices.

Choice A is incorrect. This doesn’t complete the text in a way that conforms to the conventions of Standard English. This verb needs to function as the main verb in the sentence, with the subject “one species,” so it needs to be conjugated. “Having included” is a participle form of the verb: it’s not conjugated and doesn’t function like a normal verb. Choice B is incorrect. This doesn’t complete the text in a way that conforms to the conventions of Standard English. This verb needs to function as the main verb in the sentence, with the subject “one species,” so it needs to be conjugated. “Including” is the gerund form of the verb: it’s not conjugated and doesn’t function like a normal verb. Choice C is incorrect. This doesn’t complete the text in a way that conforms to the conventions of Standard English. This verb needs to function as the main verb in the sentence, with the subject “one species,” so it needs to be conjugated. “To include” is the infinitive form of the verb: it’s not conjugated.

Question Difficulty: Medium

Question ID 5130efd9

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Form, Structure, and Sense	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: 5130efd9

Formed in 1967 to foster political and economic stability within the Asia-Pacific region, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations was originally made up of five members: Thailand, the Philippines, Singapore, Malaysia, and Indonesia. By the end of the 1990s, the organization _____ its initial membership.

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

- A. has doubled
- B. had doubled
- C. doubles
- D. will double

ID: 5130efd9 Answer

Correct Answer: B

Rationale

Choice B is the best answer. The convention being tested is the use of verbs to express tense. In this choice, the past perfect verb “had doubled” properly indicates that the doubling of the organization’s initial membership occurred during a specific period before the present (between the organization’s founding in 1967 and the end of the 1990s).

Choice A is incorrect because the present perfect verb “has doubled” doesn’t indicate that the organization’s doubling of its initial membership occurred during a specific period in the past. Choice C is incorrect because the present tense verb “doubles” doesn’t indicate that the organization’s doubling of its initial membership occurred during a specific period in the past. Choice D is incorrect because the future tense verb “will double” doesn’t indicate that the organization’s doubling of its initial membership occurred during a specific period in the past.

Question Difficulty: Medium

Question ID d0a1d0fe

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Form, Structure, and Sense	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: d0a1d0fe

In his groundbreaking book *Bengali Harlem and the Lost Histories of South Asian America*, Vivek Bald uses newspaper articles, census records, ships’ logs, and memoirs to tell the _____ who made New York City their home in the early twentieth century.

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

- A. story’s of the South Asian immigrants
- B. story’s of the South Asian immigrants’
- C. stories of the South Asian immigrants
- D. stories’ of the South Asian immigrant’s

ID: d0a1d0fe Answer

Correct Answer: C

Rationale

Choice C is the best answer. The convention being tested is the use of plural and possessive nouns. The plural nouns “stories” and “immigrants” correctly indicate that the memoir tells multiple stories of multiple immigrants.

Choice A is incorrect because the context requires the plural noun “stories,” not the singular possessive noun “story’s.” Choice B is incorrect because the context requires the plural nouns “stories” and “immigrants,” not the singular possessive noun “story’s” and the plural possessive noun “immigrants’.” Choice D is incorrect because the context requires the plural nouns “stories” and “immigrants,” not the plural possessive noun “stories” and the singular possessive noun “immigrant’s.”

Question Difficulty: Medium

Question ID 7b8d6782

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Form, Structure, and Sense	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: 7b8d6782

Featuring jagged peaks of black ink surrounded by hazy swirls of blue and green paint, Zhang Daqian’s 1983 painting *Panorama of Mount Lu* is inspired by the tradition of *qinglǔ shanshui*, a type of Chinese landscape painting _____ by the use of blue and green hues to depict ethereal, otherworldly landscapes.

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

- A. has been characterized
- B. will be characterized
- C. characterized
- D. is characterized

ID: 7b8d6782 Answer

Correct Answer: C

Rationale

Choice C is the best answer. The convention being tested is the use of verb forms within a sentence. The nonfinite past participle "characterized" is correctly used within a supplementary element that modifies the main clause "Zhang...*shanshui*," defining *qinglǔ shanshui* and explaining some of its identifying traits.

Choice A is incorrect because it results in a comma splice. Using the finite present perfect tense verb "has been characterized" creates a second main clause in the sentence, and the two main clauses can’t be joined in this way by only the comma before "a type." Choice B is incorrect because it results in a comma splice. Using the finite future tense verb "will be characterized" creates a second main clause in the sentence, and the two main clauses can’t be joined in this way by only the comma before "a type." Choice D is incorrect because it results in a comma splice. Using the finite present tense verb "is characterized" creates a second main clause in the sentence, and the two main clauses can’t be joined in this way by only the comma before "a type."

Question Difficulty: Medium

Question ID 2b6a7fa0

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Form, Structure, and Sense	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: 2b6a7fa0

After winning the 1860 presidential election, Abraham Lincoln appointed Edward Bates, Salmon P. Chase, and William H. Seward to his cabinet. Lincoln’s decision was surprising, since each of these men had run against him, but historians have praised it, noting that Lincoln _____ his rivals’ diverse talents to strengthen his administration.

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

- A. has leveraged
- B. is leveraging
- C. will leverage
- D. leveraged

ID: 2b6a7fa0 Answer

Correct Answer: D

Rationale

Choice D is the best answer. The subject of the verb is “Lincoln,” and the first sentence tells us that we’re talking about something that Abraham Lincoln did in 1860. So the simple past tense “leveraged” fits the logic of the text.

Choice A is incorrect. This choice creates a tense issue. “Has leveraged” is the present perfect tense, which is used for an action that began in the past and continues into the present. Lincoln started leveraging his rivals’ talents in 1860—it’s definitely not still happening today. So the present perfect tense isn’t appropriate. Choice B is incorrect. This choice creates a tense issue. “Is leveraging” is the present tense, but Lincoln leveraged his rivals’ talents in 1860, so the present tense isn’t appropriate. Choice C is incorrect. This choice creates a tense issue. “Will leverage” is the future tense, but Lincoln leveraged his rivals’ talents in 1860, so the future tense isn’t appropriate.

Question Difficulty: Medium

Question ID efba6bd1

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Form, Structure, and Sense	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: efba6bd1

Like other amphibians, the wood frog (*Rana sylvatica*) is unable to generate its own heat, so during periods of subfreezing temperatures, it _____ by producing large amounts of glucose, a sugar that helps prevent damaging ice from forming inside its cells.

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

- A. had survived
- B. survived
- C. would survive
- D. survives

ID: efba6bd1 Answer

Correct Answer: D

Rationale

Choice D is the best answer. The convention being tested is the use of verbs to express tense. In this choice, the present tense verb “survives” correctly indicates that the wood frog regularly survives subfreezing temperatures by producing large amounts of glucose.

Choice A is incorrect because the past perfect verb “had survived” doesn’t indicate that the wood frog regularly survives subfreezing temperatures by producing large amounts of glucose. Choice B is incorrect because the past tense verb “survived” doesn’t indicate that the wood frog regularly survives subfreezing temperatures by producing large amounts of glucose. Choice C is incorrect because the conditional verb “would survive” doesn’t indicate that the wood frog regularly survives subfreezing temperatures by producing large amounts of glucose.

Question Difficulty: Medium

Question ID c627a892

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Form, Structure, and Sense	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: c627a892

Each night in Gijón, Spain, a section of the city’s marina is bathed in a soft green glow. The source of the glow is the Árbol de la Sidra, a large sculpture made up of 3,200 recycled glass bottles. A lamp inside the tree-shaped structure _____ the green glass.

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

- A. will be illuminating
- B. illuminates
- C. would illuminate
- D. illuminated

ID: c627a892 Answer

Correct Answer: B

Rationale

Choice B is the best answer. The convention being tested is the use of verbs to express tense. In this choice, the present tense verb "illuminates" is consistent with the other present tense verb ("is") used to describe the sculpture, correctly indicating that the sculpture habitually glows ("each night") and that the lamp inside is the source of its illumination.

Choice A is incorrect because the future progressive tense verb "will be illuminating" isn’t consistent with the other present tense verb used to describe the sculpture and the source of its glow. Choice C is incorrect because the modal "would," which is used to indicate a typical behavior in the past, isn’t consistent with the other present tense verb used to describe the sculpture and the source of its glow. Choice D is incorrect because the past tense verb "illuminated" isn’t consistent with the other present tense verb used to describe the sculpture and the source of its glow.

Question Difficulty: Medium

Question ID f0827f1e

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Form, Structure, and Sense	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: f0827f1e

In the 1950s, a man named Joseph McVicker was struggling to keep his business afloat when his sister-in-law Kay Zufall advised him to repurpose the company’s product, a nontoxic, clay-like substance for removing soot from wallpaper, as a modeling putty for kids. In addition, Zufall _____ selling the product under a child-friendly name: Play-Doh.

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

- A. suggested
- B. suggests
- C. had suggested
- D. was suggesting

ID: f0827f1e Answer

Correct Answer: A

Rationale

Choice A is the best answer. The convention being tested is the use of verbs to express tense. In this choice, the simple past tense verb “suggested” properly indicates that Zufall offered her suggestion for the product’s name in the past. This verb tense is consistent with the previous sentence’s use of a simple past tense verb (“advised”) to describe Zufall’s advice to McVicker in the 1950s.

Choice B is incorrect because the present tense verb “suggests” doesn’t indicate that Zufall offered her suggestion in the past. Choice C is incorrect because the past perfect verb “had suggested” isn’t consistent with the previous sentence’s use of the simple past tense verb “advised” to describe Zufall’s advice to McVicker. Choice D is incorrect because the past progressive verb “was suggesting” isn’t consistent with the previous sentence’s use of the simple past tense verb “advised” to describe Zufall’s advice to McVicker.

Question Difficulty: Medium

Question ID 34863d09

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Form, Structure, and Sense	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: 34863d09

“What stories like this do for us is make the world just a smidge bigger,” writes Stephen Graham Jones in the foreword to *Never Whistle at Night: An Indigenous Dark Fiction Anthology*. For Jones, dark fiction does more than entertain readers: _____ horror tropes to challenge familiar ways of knowing, blurring the “borders of the real.”

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

- A. one uses
- B. we use
- C. they use
- D. it uses

ID: 34863d09 Answer

Correct Answer: D

Rationale

Choice D is the best answer. The convention being tested is pronoun-antecedent agreement. The singular pronoun “it” agrees in number with the singular antecedent “dark fiction” and clearly indicates that dark fiction uses horror tropes to challenge familiar ways of knowing.

Choice A is incorrect because the singular pronoun “one” is ambiguous in this context; the resulting sentence leaves unclear who or what uses horror tropes to challenge familiar ways of knowing. Choice B is incorrect because the first person plural pronoun “we” isn’t conventional as a substitute for “dark fiction.” It suggests that the readers, rather than dark fiction, use horror tropes to challenge familiar ways of knowing. Choice C is incorrect because the plural pronoun “they” doesn’t agree in number with the singular antecedent “dark fiction.”

Question Difficulty: Medium

Question ID cd0fcde1

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Form, Structure, and Sense	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: cd0fcde1

The human brain is primed to recognize faces—so much so that, due to a perceptual tendency called pareidolia, _____ will even find faces in clouds, wooden doors, pieces of fruit, and other faceless inanimate objects. Researcher Susan Magsamen has focused her work on better understanding this everyday phenomenon.

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

- A. she
- B. they
- C. it
- D. those

ID: cd0fcde1 Answer

Correct Answer: C

Rationale

Choice C is the best answer. "It" is a singular pronoun used to stand in for objects. Since the antecedent in this case is the singular noun phrase "the human brain," "it" is a perfect pronoun to use here.

Choice A is incorrect. Although "she" is a singular pronoun, it is reserved for people and animals, not objects like "the human brain." Choice B is incorrect. "They" is a plural pronoun, but we need a singular pronoun to represent the antecedent "the human brain." Choice D is incorrect. "Those" is a plural pronoun, but we need a singular pronoun to represent the antecedent "the human brain."

Question Difficulty: Medium

Question ID 3d2a5c4d

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Form, Structure, and Sense	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: 3d2a5c4d

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

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

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

ID: 3d2a5c4d Answer

Correct Answer: D

Rationale

Choice D is the best answer. The convention being tested is subject-verb agreement. The plural verb "come" agrees in number with the plural subject "nematodes."

Choice A is incorrect because the singular verb "has come" doesn't agree in number with the plural subject "nematodes." Choice B is incorrect because the singular verb "comes" doesn't agree in number with the plural subject "nematodes." Choice C is incorrect because the singular verb "is coming" doesn't agree in number with the plural subject "nematodes."

Question Difficulty: Medium

Question ID f6bc1e31

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Form, Structure, and Sense	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: f6bc1e31

A popular suite of mapping and spatial analysis software, ArcGIS enables cartographers like Karachi Cartography founder Namra Khalid _____ maps by analyzing and arranging raw geospatial data.

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

- A. create
- B. to create
- C. creating
- D. created

ID: f6bc1e31 Answer

Correct Answer: B

Rationale

Choice B is the best answer. The convention being tested is the use of verb forms within a sentence. The nonfinite to-infinitive verb “to create” is correctly used to form a subordinate clause that expresses how ArcGIS facilitates the creation of maps (by analyzing and arranging certain data).

Choice A is incorrect because it results in an ungrammatical sentence. The finite verb “create” can’t be used in this way to form a subordinate clause that expresses how ArcGIS facilitates the creation of maps. Choice C is incorrect because it results in an ungrammatical sentence. The nonfinite participle “creating” can’t be used in this way to form a subordinate clause that expresses how ArcGIS facilitates the creation of maps. Choice D is incorrect because it results in an ungrammatical sentence. The finite verb “created” can’t be used in this way to form a subordinate clause that expresses how ArcGIS facilitates the creation of maps.

Question Difficulty: Medium

Question ID c4466562

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Form, Structure, and Sense	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: c4466562

The soundtrack to Mira Nair’s 1991 film *Mississippi Masala* expressively captures the clashing of cultures that happens when _____ (a young Indian woman from Uganda and a young African American man from Mississippi) meet. Featured throughout the film are songs from Uganda’s Afrigo Band, the Indian composer L. Subramaniam, and the Mississippi blues musician Sam Chatmon.

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

- A. it’s two protagonists
- B. its two protagonist’s
- C. it’s two protagonist’s
- D. its two protagonists

ID: c4466562 Answer

Correct Answer: D

Rationale

Choice D is the best answer. The conventions being tested are the use of possessive determiners and the use of plural nouns. The singular possessive determiner "its"—which agrees in number with the singular noun phrase "Mira Nair’s 1991 film *Mississippi Masala*"—and the plural noun "protagonists" correctly indicate that Nair’s film has multiple protagonists.

Choice A is incorrect because "it’s" is the contraction for "it is," not a possessive determiner. Choice B is incorrect because the context requires the plural noun "protagonists," not the singular possessive noun "protagonist’s." Choice C is incorrect because the context requires the possessive determiner "its" and the plural noun "protagonists," not the contraction "it’s" or the singular possessive noun "protagonist’s."

Question Difficulty: Medium

Question ID 124463dc

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Form, Structure, and Sense	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: 124463dc

Objects ranging from the Kikkoman soy sauce bottle to the Yamaha VMAX motorcycle to the Komachi bullet train _____ designed by twentieth-century industrial designer Kenji Ekuan.

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

- A. was
- B. is
- C. has been
- D. were

ID: 124463dc Answer

Correct Answer: D

Rationale

Choice D is the best answer. The convention being tested is subject-verb agreement. The plural verb "were" agrees in number with the plural subject "objects."

Choice A is incorrect because the singular verb "was" doesn't agree in number with the plural subject "objects." Choice B is incorrect because the singular verb "is" doesn't agree in number with the plural subject "objects." Choice C is incorrect because the singular verb "has been" doesn't agree in number with the plural subject "objects."

Question Difficulty: Medium

Question ID 0ad8e1b6

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Form, Structure, and Sense	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: 0ad8e1b6

“Praise Song for the Day,” Elizabeth Alexander’s 2009 inaugural poem, asserts that “We cross dirt roads and highways...to see what’s on the other side.” Alexander’s use of “we” _____ Americans’ collective efforts and shared desire to seek new opportunity.

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

- A. evokes
- B. are evoking
- C. have evoked
- D. evoke

ID: 0ad8e1b6 Answer

Correct Answer: A

Rationale

Choice A is the best answer. The convention being tested is subject-verb agreement. The singular verb "evokes" agrees in number with the singular subject "Alexander’s use."

- Choice B is incorrect because the plural verb "are evoking" doesn’t agree in number with the singular subject "Alexander’s use."
- Choice C is incorrect because the plural verb "have evoked" doesn’t agree in number with the singular subject "Alexander’s use."
- Choice D is incorrect because the plural verb "evoke" doesn’t agree in number with the singular subject "Alexander’s use."

Question Difficulty: Medium

Question ID 7fb212c4

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Form, Structure, and Sense	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: 7fb212c4

Former First Lady of the United States Eleanor Roosevelt and Indian activist and educator Hansa Mehta were instrumental in drafting the United Nations’ Universal Declaration of Human Rights, a document that _____ the basic freedoms to which all people are entitled.

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

- A. have outlined
- B. were outlining
- C. outlines
- D. outline

ID: 7fb212c4 Answer

Correct Answer: C

Rationale

Choice C is the best answer. The convention being tested is subject-verb agreement. The singular verb “outlines” agrees in number with the singular subject “document.”

Choice A is incorrect because the plural verb “have outlined” doesn’t agree in number with the singular subject “document.”
Choice B is incorrect because the plural verb “were outlining” doesn’t agree in number with the singular subject “document.”
Choice D is incorrect because the plural verb “outline” doesn’t agree in number with the singular subject “document.”

Question Difficulty: Medium

Question ID 8f3fad9b

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Form, Structure, and Sense	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: 8f3fad9b

Many folktales that originate in the Czech language start with a phrase that roughly translates to “there was, there was not.” Many tales that originate in English use “once upon a time.” Such phrases, known as story starters, _____ from language to language.

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

- A. vary
- B. has varied
- C. varies
- D. is varying

ID: 8f3fad9b Answer

Correct Answer: A

Rationale

Choice A is the best answer. The convention being tested is subject-verb agreement. The plural verb “vary” agrees in number with the plural subject “such phrases.” The supplementary phrase “known as story starters,” set off by commas, doesn’t change the subject’s number.

Choice B is incorrect. The singular verb phrase “has varied” doesn’t agree in number with the plural subject “such phrases.” Choice C is incorrect. The singular verb “varies” doesn’t agree in number with the plural subject “such phrases.” Choice D is incorrect. The singular verb phrase “is varying” doesn’t agree in number with the plural subject “such phrases.”

Question Difficulty: Medium

Question ID d0001e1c

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Form, Structure, and Sense	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: d0001e1c

Slam poet Elizabeth Acevedo’s debut novel *The Poet X*, winner of the 2018 National Book Award for Young People’s Literature, is composed of _____ protagonist, fifteen-year-old Xiomara Batista.

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

- A. poems putatively written by the novel’s
- B. poem’s putatively written by the novel’s
- C. poem’s putatively written by the novels’
- D. poems putatively written by the novels’

ID: d0001e1c Answer

Correct Answer: A

Rationale

Choice A is the best answer. Nothing belongs to the “poems” in the sentence, so it should not be possessive—just a simple plural noun. The protagonist does belong to the novel—it’s the protagonist of the novel—so “novel” needs to be a singular possessive noun.

Choice B is incorrect. This doesn’t complete the text in a way that conforms to the conventions of Standard English. This choice uses the singular possessive “poem’s,” but the text indicates that it should be the simple plural “poems”: there is more than one poem, and nothing belongs to the poems. Choice C is incorrect. This doesn’t complete the text in a way that conforms to the conventions of Standard English. This choice uses the singular possessive “poem’s,” but the text indicates that it should be the simple plural “poems”: there is more than one poem, and nothing belongs to the poems. This choice also uses the plural possessive “novels’,” which is incorrect because there is only one novel. Choice D is incorrect. This doesn’t complete the text in a way that conforms to the conventions of Standard English. This choice uses the plural possessive “novels’,” which is incorrect because there is only one novel, so it should be the singular possessive “novel’s.” .

Question Difficulty: Medium

Question ID eb151623

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Form, Structure, and Sense	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: eb151623

In order to prevent nonnative fish species from moving freely between the Mediterranean and Red Seas, marine biologist Bella Galil has proposed that a saline lock system be installed along the Suez Canal in Egypt’s Great Bitter Lakes. The lock would increase the salinity of the lakes and _____ a natural barrier of water most marine creatures would be unable to cross.

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

- A. creates
- B. create
- C. creating
- D. created

ID: eb151623 Answer

Correct Answer: B

Rationale

Choice B is the best answer. The convention being tested is the use of non-finite (untensed) verb forms in a sentence. The modal “would,” which indicates the future from a perspective in the past, should be accompanied by a non-finite plain form verb. In this choice, the non-finite plain form verb “create” is used correctly in conjunction with the non-finite plain form verb “increase” to describe what the lock would do.

Choice A is incorrect because the finite present tense verb “creates” can’t be used in this way with the modal “would” to describe what the lock would do. Choice C is incorrect because the present participle “creating” can’t be used in this way with the modal “would” to describe what the lock would do. Choice D is incorrect because the finite past tense verb “created” can’t be used in this way with the modal “would” to describe what the lock would do.

Question Difficulty: Medium

Question ID 3095b16c

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Form, Structure, and Sense	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: 3095b16c

What makes the theremin a unique musical instrument? You play it without touching it. When you place your _____ the pitch will shift as your hands move through the air.

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

- A. hand’s between the two antenna’s,
- B. hands between the two antennas,
- C. hands’ between the two antennas’,
- D. hands’ between the two antennas,

ID: 3095b16c Answer

Correct Answer: B

Rationale

Choice B is the best answer. The convention being tested is the use of plural nouns in a sentence. The plural noun "hands" and the plural noun "antennas" correctly indicate that two hands are placed between two antennas when playing the theremin.

Choice A is incorrect because the context requires the plural nouns "hands" and "antennas," not the singular possessive nouns "hand’s" and "antenna’s." Choice C is incorrect because the context requires the plural nouns "hands" and "antennas," not the plural possessive nouns "hands’" and "antennas’." Choice D is incorrect because the context requires the plural noun "hands," not the plural possessive noun "hands’."

Question Difficulty: Medium

Question ID ec9ea164

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Form, Structure, and Sense	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: ec9ea164

Tortoises can be found in many works of literature. For example, in Tom Stoppard's 1993 play *Arcadia*, there is a tortoise that _____ by two names (Plautus and Lightning) and appears in both of the play's parallel timelines. As a character, the tortoise symbolizes the connection between the past and present.

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

- A. goes
- B. will have gone
- C. went
- D. had gone

ID: ec9ea164 Answer

Correct Answer: A

Rationale

Choice A is the best answer. The convention being tested is the use of verbs to express tense in a sentence. In this choice, the present tense verb "goes" is consistent with the other present tense verbs ("appears" and "symbolizes") used to describe the tortoise in Stoppard's play. Furthermore, it's conventional to use the present tense when discussing a literary work.

Choice B is incorrect because the future perfect tense verb "will have gone" isn't consistent with the other present tense verbs used to describe the tortoise in Stoppard's play. Choice C is incorrect because the past tense verb "went" isn't consistent with the other present tense verbs used to describe the tortoise in Stoppard's play. Choice D is incorrect because the past perfect tense verb "had gone" isn't consistent with the other present tense verbs used to describe the tortoise in Stoppard's play.

Question Difficulty: Medium

Question ID dbb48d23

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Form, Structure, and Sense	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: dbb48d23

By the time Hawaiian king Kamehameha III _____ the throne, the number of longhorn cattle, first introduced to the islands in 1793, had drastically increased, and so too had the need for *paniolo* (Hawaiian cowboys) to manage the wild herds that then roamed throughout the volcanic terrain.

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

- A. ascended
- B. will ascend
- C. ascends
- D. is ascending

ID: dbb48d23 Answer

Correct Answer: A

Rationale

Choice A is the best answer. "Ascended" is in the simple past tense. Since Kamehameha became king in the past, this makes the most sense.

Choice B is incorrect. "Will ascend" is in the future tense, but we wouldn't know about Kamehameha III's ascent if it hadn't happened yet. The information in the sentence, as well as the tense of other verbs, tells us that the events described happened in the past. Choice C is incorrect. "Ascends" is in the simple present tense. However, the information in the sentence, as well as the tense of other verbs, tells us that the events described happened in the past. Choice D is incorrect. "Is ascending" is in the continuous present tense, which we use to show that something is ongoing, but this doesn't make sense here—the information in the sentence, as well as the tense of other verbs, tells us that the events described happened in the past.

Question Difficulty: Medium

Question ID f0e6dbcd

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Form, Structure, and Sense	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: f0e6dbcd

In 1994, almost 200 years after the death of Wang Zhenyi, the International Astronomical _____ the contributions of the barrier-breaking 18th-century astronomer and author of “Dispute of the Procession of the Equinoxes,” naming a crater on Venus after her.

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

- A. Union would finally acknowledge
- B. Union to finally acknowledge
- C. Union, having finally acknowledged
- D. Union, finally acknowledging

ID: f0e6dbcd Answer

Correct Answer: A

Rationale

Choice A is the best answer. The convention being tested is the use of verb forms within a sentence. A main clause requires a finite (tensed) verb to perform the action of the subject (in this case “the International Astronomical Union”), and this choice supplies the finite modal verb phrase “would finally acknowledge” to indicate what the International Astronomical Union did.

Choice B is incorrect because it results in an ungrammatical sentence. The nonfinite to-infinitive “to finally acknowledge” doesn’t supply the main clause with a finite verb. Choice C is incorrect because it results in an ungrammatical sentence. The nonfinite participle “having finally acknowledged” doesn’t supply the main clause with a finite verb. Choice D is incorrect because it results in an ungrammatical sentence. The nonfinite participle “acknowledging” doesn’t supply the main clause with a finite verb.

Question Difficulty: Medium

Question ID ca25ad32

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Form, Structure, and Sense	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: ca25ad32

Literary agents estimate that more than half of all nonfiction books credited to a celebrity or other public figure are in fact written by ghostwriters, professional authors who are paid to write other _____ but whose names never appear on book covers.

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

- A. people’s stories
- B. peoples story’s
- C. peoples stories
- D. people’s story’s

ID: ca25ad32 Answer

Correct Answer: A

Rationale

Choice A is the best answer. The convention being tested is the use of plural and possessive nouns. The plural possessive noun “people’s” and the plural noun “stories” correctly indicate that there are multiple stories from multiple people.

Choice B is incorrect because the context requires the plural possessive noun “people’s” and the plural noun “stories,” not the plural noun “peoples” and the singular possessive noun “story’s.” Choice C is incorrect because the context requires the plural possessive noun “people’s,” not the plural noun “peoples.” Choice D is incorrect because the context requires the plural noun “stories,” not the singular possessive noun “story’s.”

Question Difficulty: Medium

Question ID 5a593d8f

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Form, Structure, and Sense	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: 5a593d8f

Led by Syrian American astronomer Shadia Habbal, the Solar Wind Sherpas are an intrepid team of scientists who travel the globe to study solar winds, the streams of particles emanating from the Sun that are only visible from certain locations during a total solar eclipse. When such an eclipse is imminent, the Sherpas pack up their telescopes and _____ ready.

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

- A. get
- B. had gotten
- C. got
- D. were getting

ID: 5a593d8f Answer

Correct Answer: A

Rationale

Choice A is the best answer. The convention being tested is the use of verbs to express tense in a sentence. In this choice, the present tense verb “get” is consistent with the other present tense verbs (“are,” “travel,” and “pack”) used to describe the Sherpas and their activities.

Choice B is incorrect. The past perfect verb “had gotten” isn’t consistent with the other present tense verbs used to describe the Sherpas and their activities. Choice C is incorrect. The past tense verb “got” isn’t consistent with the other present tense verbs used to describe the Sherpas and their activities. Choice D is incorrect. The past progressive verb “were getting” isn’t consistent with the other present tense verbs used to describe the Sherpas and their activities.

Question Difficulty: Medium

Question ID 5bd5cbd4

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Form, Structure, and Sense	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: 5bd5cbd4

Félix González-Torres debuted his sculpture *“Untitled” (USA Today)* in New York City in 1990. The work consists of piled candy, a material González-Torres became known for. _____ created additional installations using a variety of sweets, like bubblegum, lollipops, and chocolates.

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

- A. They all
- B. Those
- C. Both
- D. He

ID: 5bd5cbd4 Answer

Correct Answer: D

Rationale

Choice D is the best answer. The convention being tested is pronoun-antecedent agreement. The singular pronoun "he" agrees in number with the singular antecedent "Félix González-Torres," and it clearly indicates that González-Torres created the additional installations.

Choice A is incorrect because the plural noun phrase "they all" doesn't agree in number with the singular antecedent "Félix González-Torres," and it doesn't clearly indicate that he (González-Torres) created the additional installations. Choice B is incorrect because the plural pronoun "those" doesn't agree in number with the singular antecedent "Félix González-Torres," and it doesn't clearly indicate that he (González-Torres) created the additional installations. Choice C is incorrect because the plural pronoun "both" doesn't agree in number with the singular antecedent "Félix González-Torres," and it doesn't clearly indicate that he (González-Torres) created the additional installations.

Question Difficulty: Medium

Question ID 70a8fec0

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Form, Structure, and Sense	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: 70a8fec0

In 1930, Japanese American artist Chiura Obata depicted the natural beauty of Yosemite National Park in two memorable woodcuts: *Evening at Carl Inn* and *Lake Basin in the High Sierra*. In 2019, _____ exhibited alongside 150 of Obata’s other works in a single-artist show at the Smithsonian American Art Museum.

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

- A. it was
- B. they were
- C. this was
- D. some were

ID: 70a8fec0 Answer

Correct Answer: B

Rationale

Choice B is the best answer. The convention being tested is pronoun–antecedent agreement. The plural pronoun “they” agrees in number with the plural antecedent “woodcuts” and clearly identifies what was exhibited at the Smithsonian American Art Museum.

Choice A is incorrect because the singular pronoun “it” doesn’t agree in number with the plural antecedent “woodcuts.” Choice C is incorrect because the singular pronoun “this” doesn’t agree in number with the plural antecedent “woodcuts.” Choice D is incorrect because the plural pronoun “some” is illogical in this context (referring to “some” of two woodcuts).

Question Difficulty: Medium

Question ID 193599bc

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Form, Structure, and Sense	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: 193599bc

Anthropologist LÍvia Barbosa, of the Universidade Federal Fluminense in Brazil, _____ food and sociability in contemporary Brazil —specifically, how foods such as cabidela (a rice and rabbit dish) and churrasco (a barbeque dish) function as central mechanisms in building social relationships, values, and identities.

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

- A. studies
- B. are studying
- C. have studied
- D. study

ID: 193599bc Answer

Correct Answer: A

Rationale

Choice A is the best answer. The convention being tested is subject-verb agreement. The singular verb "studies" agrees in number with the singular subject "anthropologist LÍvia Barbosa."

Choice B is incorrect because the plural verb "are studying" doesn't agree in number with the singular subject "anthropologist LÍvia Barbosa." Choice C is incorrect because the plural verb "have studied" doesn't agree in number with the singular subject "anthropologist LÍvia Barbosa." Choice D is incorrect because the plural verb "study" doesn't agree in number with the singular subject "anthropologist LÍvia Barbosa."

Question Difficulty: Medium

Question ID 08c5f686

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Form, Structure, and Sense	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: 08c5f686

French philosopher René Descartes doubted whether he could prove his own existence. Eventually, he found proof in his famous phrase “I think, therefore I am.” The _____ complexity: only those who exist would be able to ponder their existence.

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

- A. phrases’ simplicity masks its
- B. phrases simplicity masks their
- C. phrase’s simplicity masks their
- D. phrase’s simplicity masks its

ID: 08c5f686 Answer

Correct Answer: D

Rationale

Choice D is the best answer. The conventions being tested are the use of possessive nouns and the use of possessive determiners. The singular possessive noun "phrase’s" correctly indicates that there is only one simple phrase. The singular possessive determiner "its" agrees in number with the singular possessive noun "phrase’s," reinforcing the idea that there is only one simple yet complex phrase.

Choice A is incorrect because the context requires the singular possessive noun "phrase’s," not the plural possessive noun "phrases’." Choice B is incorrect because the context requires the singular possessive noun "phrase’s" and the corresponding singular possessive determiner "its," not the plural noun "phrases" and the corresponding plural possessive determiner "their." Choice C is incorrect because the context requires the singular possessive determiner "its," not the plural possessive determiner "their."

Question Difficulty: Medium

Question ID b6004ef8

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Form, Structure, and Sense	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: b6004ef8

Each year in the fall, when the weather starts to cool in the northern hemisphere, millions of North American monarch butterflies journey south. Searching for food and warmer habitats, they _____ thousands of miles—from as far north as Canada all the way down to Mexico—on this annual migration.

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

- A. flew
- B. were flying
- C. had flown
- D. fly

ID: b6004ef8 Answer

Correct Answer: D

Rationale

Choice D is the best answer. The convention being tested is the use of verbs to express tense. In this choice, the present tense verb “fly” is consistent with the other present tense verb (“journey”) used to describe the butterflies’ yearly migration. Together, these simple present tense verbs correctly indicate that the migration is a current, yearly occurrence.

Choice A is incorrect. The simple past tense verb “flew” isn’t consistent with the other present tense verb used to describe the butterflies’ yearly migration. Choice B is incorrect. The past progressive tense verb “were flying” isn’t consistent with the other present tense verb used to describe the butterflies’ yearly migration. Choice C is incorrect. The past perfect tense verb “had flown” isn’t consistent with the other present tense verb used to describe the butterflies’ yearly migration.

Question Difficulty: Medium

Question ID 55fce911

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Form, Structure, and Sense	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: 55fce911

Scientists believe that, unlike most other species of barnacle, turtle barnacles (*Chelonibia testudinari*) can dissolve the cement-like secretions they use to attach _____ to a sea turtle shell, enabling the barnacles to move short distances across the shell’s surface.

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

- A. it
- B. themselves
- C. them
- D. itself

ID: 55fce911 Answer

Correct Answer: B

Rationale

Choice B is the best answer. The convention being tested is pronoun-antecedent agreement. The plural reflexive pronoun “themselves” agrees in number with the plural antecedent “turtle barnacles,” correctly indicating what is attached to a sea turtle shell.

Choice A is incorrect because the singular pronoun “it” doesn’t agree in number with the plural antecedent “turtle barnacles.” Choice C is incorrect because it results in an unclear and confusing sentence. In this context, it’s unclear what the plural pronoun “them” refers to. Choice D is incorrect because the singular reflexive pronoun “itself” doesn’t agree in number with the plural antecedent “turtle barnacles.”

Question Difficulty: Medium

Question ID 80e557a3

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Form, Structure, and Sense	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: 80e557a3

A pioneer in the field of taphonomy (the study of how organic remains become fossils), _____ may be just as prevalent in the fossil record as those of thick-shelled organisms.

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

- A. fossils of thin-shelled organisms, Anna Behrensmeyer demonstrated in a 2005 analysis,
- B. Anna Behrensmeyer demonstrated in a 2005 analysis that fossils of thin-shelled organisms
- C. it was demonstrated in a 2005 analysis by Anna Behrensmeyer that fossils of thin-shelled organisms
- D. a 2005 analysis—by Anna Behrensmeyer—demonstrated that fossils of thin-shelled organisms

ID: 80e557a3 Answer

Correct Answer: B

Rationale

Choice B is the best answer. The convention being tested is subject-modifier placement. This choice makes the noun phrase “Anna Behrensmeyer” the subject of the sentence and places it immediately after the modifying phrase “a pioneer...fossils.” In doing so, this choice clearly establishes that Anna Behrensmeyer—and not another noun in the sentence—is a pioneer in the field of taphonomy.

Choice A is incorrect because it results in a dangling modifier. The placement of the noun phrase “fossils of thin-shelled organisms” immediately after the modifying phrase illogically suggests that the “fossils” are a pioneer in the field of taphonomy. Choice C is incorrect because it results in a dangling modifier. The placement of the pronoun “it” immediately after the modifying phrase illogically suggests that “it” is a pioneer in the field of taphonomy. Choice D is incorrect because it results in a dangling modifier. The placement of the noun phrase “a 2005 analysis” immediately after the modifying phrase illogically suggests that “a 2005 analysis” is a pioneer in the field of taphonomy.

Question Difficulty: Medium

Question ID 746d729c

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Form, Structure, and Sense	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: 746d729c

Food and the sensation of taste are central to Monique Truong’s novels. In *The Book of Salt*, for example, the exiled character of Binh connects to his native Saigon through the food he prepares, while in *Bitter in the Mouth*, the character of Linda _____ a form of synesthesia whereby the words she hears evoke tastes.

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

- A. experienced
- B. had experienced
- C. experiences
- D. will be experiencing

ID: 746d729c Answer

Correct Answer: C

Rationale

Choice C is the best answer. The convention being tested is the use of verbs to express tense. In this choice, the present tense verb “experiences” is consistent with the other present tense verbs (e.g., “connects” and “prepares”) used to describe the events in Truong’s novels. Furthermore, it’s conventional to use the present tense when discussing a literary work.

Choice A is incorrect because the past tense verb “experienced” isn’t consistent with the other present tense verbs used to describe the events in Truong’s novels. Choice B is incorrect because the past perfect tense verb “had experienced” isn’t consistent with the other present tense verbs used to describe the events in Truong’s novels. Choice D is incorrect because the future progressive tense verb “will be experiencing” isn’t consistent with the other present tense verbs used to describe the events in Truong’s novels.

Question Difficulty: Medium

Question ID d11ee881

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Form, Structure, and Sense	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: d11ee881

Every last second of space shuttle mission STS-79, which lasted ten days and three hours, _____ carefully monitored by a team of experts.

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

- A. have been
- B. are
- C. was
- D. were

ID: d11ee881 Answer

Correct Answer: C

Rationale

Choice C is the best answer. The convention being tested is subject-verb agreement. The singular verb "was" agrees in number with the singular subject "every last second."

Choice A is incorrect because the plural verb "have been" doesn't agree in number with the singular subject "every last second." Choice B is incorrect because the plural verb "are" doesn't agree in number with the singular subject "every last second." Choice D is incorrect because the plural verb "were" doesn't agree in number with the singular subject "every last second."

Question Difficulty: Medium

Question ID 5444f8de

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Form, Structure, and Sense	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: 5444f8de

Because a cycle of lunar phases _____ 29.5 days to complete, it’s possible to observe two full moons in a single month, one at the beginning and one at the end.

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

- A. are taking
- B. have taken
- C. take
- D. takes

ID: 5444f8de Answer

Correct Answer: D

Rationale

Choice D is the best answer. The convention being tested is subject-verb agreement. The singular verb "takes" agrees in number with the singular subject "a cycle of lunar phases."

Choice A is incorrect because the plural verb "are taking" doesn’t agree in number with the singular subject "a cycle of lunar phases." Choice B is incorrect because the plural verb "have taken" doesn’t agree in number with the singular subject "a cycle of lunar phases." Choice C is incorrect because the plural verb "take" doesn’t agree in number with the singular subject "a cycle of lunar phases."

Question Difficulty: Medium

Question ID c16737c5

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Form, Structure, and Sense	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: c16737c5

In January 1776, Thomas Paine published *Common Sense*, an appeal for freedom from the British monarchy that famously helped ignite the desire for independence among the American colonists. After the colonies achieved their independence, Paine moved to Paris, where the provocative _____ would contribute to another revolution—the French Revolution.

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

- A. authors political writings
- B. author’s political writings
- C. author’s political writing’s
- D. authors’ political writings’

ID: c16737c5 Answer

Correct Answer: B

Rationale

Choice B is the best answer. The conventions being tested are the use of plural and possessive nouns. The singular possessive noun "author’s" correctly indicates that the political writings are those of Thomas Paine, and the plural noun "writings" correctly indicates that multiple works by Paine are being discussed.

Choice A is incorrect because the context requires the singular possessive noun "author’s," not the plural noun "authors." Choice C is incorrect because the context requires the plural noun "writings," not the singular possessive noun "writing’s." Choice D is incorrect because the context requires the singular possessive noun "author’s" and the plural noun "writings," not the plural possessive nouns "authors'" and "writings'."

Question Difficulty: Medium

Question ID 60c4cb38

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT/NMSQT & PSAT 10	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Form, Structure, and Sense	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: 60c4cb38

One of the few African American global explorers during the turn of the 20th century, _____

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

- A. Matthew Henson made several treks across Greenland between 1891 and 1909.
- B. 1891 and 1909 were the years between which Matthew Henson made several treks across Greenland.
- C. Greenland was where Matthew Henson made several treks between 1891 and 1909.
- D. several treks across Greenland were made by Matthew Henson between 1891 and 1909.

ID: 60c4cb38 Answer

Correct Answer: A

Rationale

Choice A is the best answer. The convention being tested is subject-modifier placement. This choice makes the proper noun "Matthew Henson" the subject of the sentence and places it immediately after the modifying phrase "one...century." In doing so, this choice clearly establishes that Matthew Henson—and not another noun in the sentence—is being described as one of the few African American global explorers during the turn of the 20th century.

Choice B is incorrect because it results in a dangling modifier. The placement of the noun phrase "1891 and 1909" immediately after the modifying phrase illogically suggests that those years were one of the few African American global explorers during the turn of the 20th century. Choice C is incorrect because it results in a dangling modifier. The placement of the proper noun "Greenland" immediately after the modifying phrase illogically suggests that Greenland was one of the few African American global explorers during the turn of the 20th century. Choice D is incorrect because it results in a dangling modifier. The placement of the noun phrase "several treks across Greenland" immediately after the modifying phrase illogically suggests that the treks were one of the few African American global explorers during the turn of the 20th century.

Question Difficulty: Medium