

Question ID 340ca188

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT 8/9	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: 340ca188

Shimmering is a collective defense behavior that researchers have observed in giant honeybee colonies. When shimmering, different groups of bees flip their bodies up and down in what looks like waves. This defense is initiated when hornets hover near a colony, serving to deter the hornets from approaching the bees. Researchers hypothesize that this behavior is a specialized defense response to hornets, as it is not observed when other, larger predators approach the colony.

Which choice best states the main idea of the text?

- A. Researchers are unsure how giant honeybees defend against predators larger than hornets.
- B. Researchers think that shimmering in giant honeybees is a specific defense against hornets.
- C. Hornets are known to be the main predator of giant honeybees.
- D. Several different species of insects use shimmering to defend against hornets.

ID: 340ca188 Answer

Correct Answer: B

Rationale

Choice B is the best answer. The text describes a study about how giant honeybees use shimmering to defend against hornets, but not other predators. The researchers conclude that shimmering could be a specialized defense response to hornets.

Choice A is incorrect. The text says that giant honeybees don't appear to use shimmering against other, larger predators. However, it never suggests that researchers don't know which other defenses giant honeybees do use for those predators. Choice C is incorrect. The text says that hornets are one predator of giant honeybees, but it doesn't say that hornets are the main predator of giant honeybees. This choice also fails to mention "shimmering," which is a major focus of the text. Choice D is incorrect. The text only discusses the shimmering of giant honeybees—it doesn't discuss other insects' defense responses at all.

Question Difficulty: Medium

Question ID e42ac57f

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT 8/9	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: e42ac57f

When Kenyan writer Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o, who had previously published four novels in English, began writing in his native language, Gĩkũyũ, in the 1970s, several fellow writers and critics cautioned that doing so might make his works inaccessible outside his own community. Some noted that Kiswahili—widely spoken in Kenya and elsewhere in Africa—would be a more practical choice. Rejecting their arguments, Ngũgĩ went on to author dozens of acclaimed works in Gĩkũyũ that have been translated into a total of more than thirty languages.

Which choice best states the main idea of the text?

- A. The reaction to Ngũgĩ’s rejection of English illustrates that some literary experts believe that fame is most easily gained by writing in a widely understood language, such as Gĩkũyũ.
- B. Although Ngũgĩ insisted on publishing his first works in Gĩkũyũ, they have since been translated into many other languages.
- C. Although Ngũgĩ’s decision to write in Gĩkũyũ was met with some skepticism, it didn’t prevent him from achieving literary success.
- D. In the 1970s, Ngũgĩ became convinced that literature ought to be written in authors’ native languages, and he proceeded to publish many works in Gĩkũyũ.

ID: e42ac57f Answer

Correct Answer: C

Rationale

Choice C is the best answer because it most accurately states the main idea of the text. The text begins by explaining that Kenyan writer Ngũgĩ wa Thiong’o had published four novels in English before he began writing in his native language, Gĩkũyũ, in the 1970s. The text then explains that fellow writers and critics were skeptical of this decision, warning that the choice to publish in his native language, which the text implies isn’t widely understood, would limit his readership. The text concludes by stating that despite those warnings, Ngũgĩ proceeded to publish several acclaimed novels in Gĩkũyũ that were translated into several languages, suggesting that Ngũgĩ’s works in Gĩkũyũ achieved literary success in the forms of critical recognition and a wide international readership. Thus, the main idea is that although Ngũgĩ’s decision to write in Gĩkũyũ was met with some skepticism, this choice didn’t prevent him from achieving literary success.

Choice A is incorrect because it contradicts the description of Gĩkũyũ provided in the text. Rather than indicating that Gĩkũyũ is a widely understood language, as this choice claims, the text states that colleagues cautioned Ngũgĩ that writing in Gĩkũyũ instead of English “might make his works inaccessible outside his own community.” Furthermore, the text contrasts the choice of Gĩkũyũ with another alternative to English, Kiswahili, which the text indicates is “a more practical choice” given that it is “widely spoken in Kenya and elsewhere in Africa.” Choice B is incorrect because it contradicts information in the text. Although the text states that the novels Ngũgĩ published in Gĩkũyũ were later translated into other languages, the text explicitly states that Ngũgĩ had previously published four novels in English before he began writing in Gĩkũyũ in the 1970s. Thus, his first works were published in English,

not Gĩkũyũ. Choice D is incorrect. The text doesn't address what motivated Ngũgĩ's choice to publish in his native Gĩkũyũ, and nothing in the text suggests that he intended for other authors to follow his example.

Question Difficulty: Medium

Question ID fd6b755e

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT 8/9	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: fd6b755e

The following text is adapted from Edith Nesbit’s 1906 novel *The Railway Children*.
Mother did not spend all her time in paying dull [visits] to dull ladies, and sitting dully at home waiting for dull ladies to pay [visits] to her. She was almost always there, ready to play with the children, and read to them, and help them to do their home-lessons. Besides this she used to write stories for them while they were at school, and read them aloud after tea, and she always made up funny pieces of poetry for their birthdays and for other great occasions.

- According to the text, what is true about Mother?
- A. She wishes that more ladies would visit her.
 - B. Birthdays are her favorite special occasion.
 - C. She creates stories and poems for her children.
 - D. Reading to her children is her favorite activity.

ID: fd6b755e Answer

Correct Answer: C

Rationale

Choice C is the best answer because it describes something that is true of Mother, as presented in the text. The text indicates that in addition to other activities, Mother writes stories for her children while they are at school and makes up “funny pieces of poetry” for certain occasions.

Choice A is incorrect because the text suggests that Mother prefers to spend her time with her children and doesn’t sit at home hoping that ladies will visit her. Choice B is incorrect because the text says only that Mother makes up poetry for the children’s birthdays, not that she likes birthdays more than other special occasions. Choice D is incorrect because the text doesn’t suggest that Mother prefers reading to her children over the other activities she does with them, such as playing with them and writing stories and poems for them.

Question Difficulty: Medium

Question ID 307021b1

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT 8/9	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: 307021b1

Microplastics are pieces of plastic that are smaller than a grain of rice. These small plastics can be found in large quantities in ocean waters. Ecologist Jessica Reichert and her team are studying the role reef-building corals have in capturing microplastics from ocean waters. Through research, her team has found that these corals may be storing up to 20 million kilograms of microplastics each year in their skeletons and tissues.

Which choice best states the main idea of the text?

- A. Ecologists are interested in learning more about how certain corals build large reefs.
- B. Questions remain around the impact certain corals have on ocean ecosystems.
- C. Microplastics are small pieces of plastic that can be found in ocean waters.
- D. Ecologists predict that corals store large amounts of microplastics from ocean waters.

ID: 307021b1 Answer

Correct Answer: D

Rationale

Choice D is the best answer. The text describes a study about how reef-building corals capture microplastics from ocean waters, which found that these corals are storing 20 million kilograms of microplastics in their skeletons and tissues.

Choice A is incorrect. While the researchers are studying “reef-building corals,” the focus of their study isn’t how the corals build the reefs. Rather, they’re studying how corals may be storing microplastics from ocean waters. Choice B is incorrect. The text doesn’t mention any unanswered questions about the impact of corals on ocean ecosystems—rather, the study assesses one interaction between corals and microplastics. Choice C is incorrect. The text does say this, but it’s a detail—not the main idea. The main idea of the text is about the study that found that corals may be storing microplastics from ocean waters in their skeletons and tissues.

Question Difficulty: Medium

Question ID 29112b53

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT 8/9	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: 29112b53

The following text is from Beatrice Harraden’s 1894 novel *Ships that Pass in the Night*.

In an old second-hand bookshop in London, an old man sat reading Gibbon’s *History of Rome*. He did not put down his book when the postman brought him a letter. He just glanced indifferently at the letter, and impatiently at the postman. Zerviah Holme did not like to be interrupted when he was reading Gibbon; and as he was always reading Gibbon, an interruption was always regarded by him as an insult.

Based on the text, how did Zerviah Holme most likely feel when the letter was delivered?

- A. He felt relieved because he had been expecting an important letter.
- B. He felt excited because the letter was from a good friend.
- C. He felt sad because the postman did not stop to talk with him before leaving.
- D. He felt annoyed because he was interrupted while reading his favorite author.

ID: 29112b53 Answer

Correct Answer: D

Rationale

Choice D is the best answer because it presents a description of how Zerviah Holme felt that is directly supported by the text. The text states that Holme "did not like to be interrupted" while reading Gibbon and that he considered interruptions to be "an insult." Furthermore, the text suggests that Gibbon is Holme’s favorite author because, as the text states, "he was always reading Gibbon." Thus, Holme would have felt annoyed at having been interrupted when the letter was delivered.

Choice A is incorrect because the text doesn’t suggest that Holme is relieved to receive the letter. Instead, the text states that Holme "just glanced indifferently at the letter," suggesting that the letter wasn’t important to him. Choice B is incorrect because the text doesn’t suggest that Holme is excited to receive the letter. Instead, the text states that Holme didn’t put down his book to receive the letter and that he looked at the letter "indifferently" and at the postman "impatiently." This suggests that Holme isn’t excited. Also, there is no mention that Holme knows who sent the letter. Choice C is incorrect because the text doesn’t indicate that Holme is sad or that he wants to speak with the postman. Instead, the text describes Holme as looking "impatiently at the postman," which suggests that he wants the postman to leave.

Question Difficulty: Medium

Question ID 30a50d8c

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT 8/9	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: 30a50d8c

In the 1960s, Gloria Richardson led a movement to promote racial equality. Her involvement in this effort was inspired by her daughter, Donna Richardson. In 1961, Donna joined protests organized by the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee in Cambridge, Maryland. Following her daughter, Gloria joined these protests too. Gloria soon became the cochair of the Cambridge Nonviolent Action Committee. She was also the leader of what became known as the Cambridge movement.

According to the text, what did Gloria Richardson lead?

- A. The Cambridge movement
- B. Her daughter Donna’s high school
- C. Protests to support environmental protections
- D. A new business in Cambridge, Maryland

ID: 30a50d8c Answer

Correct Answer: A

Rationale

Choice A is the best answer because it presents information about Gloria Richardson that is supported by the text. The text provides a number of details about Gloria’s involvement in efforts to promote racial equality, including that she was the leader of what became known as the Cambridge movement.

Choice B is incorrect because the text never indicates that Gloria Richardson led her daughter Donna’s high school. The text says only that Gloria was inspired by her daughter to become involved in efforts to promote racial equality. Choice C is incorrect because the text doesn’t mention protests related to environmental protections. Rather, the text discusses Gloria Richardson’s involvement in efforts to promote racial equality. Choice D is incorrect because the text doesn’t indicate that Gloria Richardson led a new business in Cambridge, Maryland. Rather, the text states that she led what became known as the Cambridge movement.

Question Difficulty: Medium

Question ID 999bc294

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT 8/9	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: 999bc294

The following text is adapted from Ann Petry’s 1946 novel *The Street*. Lutie lives in an apartment in Harlem, New York.

The glow from the sunset was making the street radiant. The street is nice in this light, [Lutie] thought. It was swarming with children who were playing ball and darting back and forth across the sidewalk in complicated games of tag. Girls were skipping double dutch rope, going tirelessly through the exact center of a pair of ropes, jumping first on one foot and then the other.

©1946 by Ann Petry

Which choice best describes what is happening in the text?

- A. Lutie is observing the appearance of the street at a particular time of day and the events occurring on it.
- B. Lutie is annoyed by the noise of children playing games on her street.
- C. Lutie is puzzled by the rules of certain children’s games.
- D. Lutie is spending time alone in her apartment because she doesn’t want to interact with her neighbors.

ID: 999bc294 Answer

Correct Answer: A

Rationale

Choice A is the best answer because it most accurately states what is happening in the text. The narrator notes that Lutie thinks the street looks nice in the light of the sunset. The narrator goes on to describe what Lutie can see in the street: children playing ball or tag and girls skipping rope. Thus, what is happening in the text is that Lutie is observing the appearance of the street at a particular time of day and the events occurring on it.

Choice B is incorrect. Although Lutie is observing children playing games on her street, the text doesn’t suggest that she is annoyed by the noise of the games. Instead, the text says that Lutie thinks the street looks nice in the light of the sunset. Choice C is incorrect. Although Lutie is observing children playing games on her street, the text doesn’t suggest that she is puzzled by the rules of the games. Choice D is incorrect because there is no evidence in the text that Lutie doesn’t want to interact with her neighbors or that she is in her apartment alone. All the text indicates about Lutie is that she is watching the events on the street and thinks the street looks nice in the light of the sunset.

Question Difficulty: Medium

Question ID a74645a0

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT 8/9	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: a74645a0

The following text is from Edith Nesbit’s 1902 novel *Five Children and It*. Five young siblings have just moved with their parents from London to a house in the countryside that they call the White House.

It was not really a pretty house at all; it was quite ordinary, and mother thought it was rather inconvenient, and was quite annoyed at there being no shelves, to speak of, and hardly a cupboard in the place. Father used to say that the ironwork on the roof and coping was like an architect’s nightmare. But the house was deep in the country, with no other house in sight, and the children had been in London for two years, without so much as once going to the seaside even for a day by an excursion train, and so the White House seemed to them a sort of Fairy Palace set down in an Earthly Paradise.

Which choice best states the main idea of the text?

- A. Although their parents believe the house has several drawbacks, the children are enchanted by it.
- B. The children don’t like the house nearly as much as their parents do.
- C. Each member of the family admires a different characteristic of the house.
- D. The house is beautiful and well built, but the children miss their old home in London.

ID: a74645a0 Answer

Correct Answer: A

Rationale

Choice A is the best answer. The text lists complaints about the house made by the mother and father, but then it says that the children thought the house was a "Fairy Palace" and "Earthly Paradise."

Choice B is incorrect. The text states the opposite of this. It describes how the mother and father dislike the house and says the children think the house seems like paradise. Choice C is incorrect. This isn’t what the text says. Only the children are said to admire the house; mother and father both complain about the house. Choice D is incorrect. The text states the opposite of this. It tells us the house was ugly and poorly built ("an architect’s nightmare") and suggests the children were tired of London.

Question Difficulty: Medium

Question ID 4500066c

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT 8/9	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: 4500066c

Scrapbooks of saved fabric pieces were commonly kept by women in the nineteenth-century United States, but few are as meticulously detailed as Hannah Ditzler Alspaugh’s work. Alongside each piece of fabric, Alspaugh recorded intimate memories, such as dressmaking with her sister. Additionally, she listed the prices and how she used the fabric. Historians note that by representing fifty years of changing textures, patterns, and dress styles, the scrapbook is a record of nineteenth-century textiles and dressmaking as well as Alspaugh’s life.

Which choice best states the main idea of the text?

- A. Alspaugh inspired other women to save pieces of fabric in scrapbooks and provide historical records of nineteenth-century fashions in the United States.
- B. Historians rely on fabric scrapbooks to understand how fashions changed throughout the nineteenth-century United States.
- C. Fabric scrapbooks were a popular hobby for many women in the nineteenth-century United States.
- D. Alspaugh’s scrapbook provides a detailed account of her life and historical record of fashion trends in the nineteenth-century United States.

ID: 4500066c Answer

Correct Answer: D

Rationale

Choice D is correct. The text describes how Alspaugh’s scrapbook is both a record of her life and a historical record of nineteenth-century textiles and dressmaking.

Choice A is incorrect. The text says that it was common for American women to keep scrapbooks of fabric pieces in the nineteenth century, and it says that Alspaugh was one of these women. However, it never says that other women were inspired by Alspaugh. Choice B is incorrect. This is too general and too strong. The text says that Alspaugh’s scrapbook is a historical record of nineteenth-century textiles and dressmaking, but it never says that historians rely on such scrapbooks in general to understand how fashions changed throughout that time period. This choice also fails to even mention Alspaugh, who is the real focus of the text. Choice C is incorrect. The text does say this, but it’s a detail—not the main idea. The text is mainly about one woman’s scrapbook (Alspaugh’s), and this choice doesn’t even mention her.

Question Difficulty: Medium

Question ID ce4dc739

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT 8/9	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: ce4dc739

The following text is adapted from Edgar Allan Poe’s 1849 story “Landor’s Cottage.”

During a pedestrian trip last summer, through one or two of the river counties of New York, I found myself, as the day declined, somewhat embarrassed about the road I was pursuing. The land undulated very remarkably; and my path, for the last hour, had wound about and about so confusedly, in its effort to keep in the valleys, that I no longer knew in what direction lay the sweet village of B—, where I had determined to stop for the night.

Which choice best states the main idea of the text?

- A. The narrator remembers a trip he took and admits to getting lost.
- B. The narrator recalls fond memories of a journey that he took through some beautiful river counties.
- C. The narrator describes what he saw during a long trip through a frequently visited location.
- D. The narrator explains the difficulties he encountered on a trip and how he overcame them.

ID: ce4dc739 Answer

Correct Answer: A

Rationale

Choice A is the best answer. The narrator is “embarrassed” about the route he took, which ends up leaving him lost and confused about how to get to his destination for the evening.

Choice B is incorrect. This choice doesn’t match the passage. The narrator is embarrassed, rather than fond, and he doesn’t describe the beauty of the place. Choice C is incorrect. This choice doesn’t match the passage. We don’t know from this excerpt whether or not the narrator has visited this part of New York multiple times. Choice D is incorrect. This choice doesn’t match the passage. The narrator doesn’t explain how he overcame being lost in this excerpt.

Question Difficulty: Medium

Question ID 2aba329f

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT 8/9	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: 2aba329f

Arthropods—brine shrimp, hawk moths, and many other invertebrate animals—have a nervous system made up of a brain, nerve cord, and other nerves. Researchers have gained insights about this system in ancient arthropods from traces found in various fossils. For example, in a study of two fossils of the extinct arthropod species *Mollisonia symmetrica*, Javier Ortega-Hernández, James Weaver, and team observed clear signs of a nerve cord. They also saw possible indications of a synganglion, a brain-like mass of nerves. Researchers hope to identify more features of the nervous systems of prehistoric arthropods as additional fossils are found.

Which choice best states the main idea of the text?

- A. There are several similarities between the brains of hawk moths and the brains of brine shrimp.
- B. Fossil evidence can contribute to the understanding of the nervous system in ancient arthropods.
- C. Newly discovered fossils suggest that ancient hawk moths and ancient brine shrimp had spines.
- D. Researchers need to focus on finding more fossils of ancient arthropods.

ID: 2aba329f Answer

Correct Answer: B

Rationale

Choice B is the best answer because it most accurately states the main idea of the text. The text states that researchers have used fossils to learn about the nervous systems of ancient arthropods. It then provides a specific example of researchers studying fossils of *Mollisonia symmetrica* and finding evidence of a nerve cord and possibly a synganglion (a brain-like mass of nerves). The text concludes by noting that researchers hope to discover more features of prehistoric arthropods’ nervous systems "as additional fossils are found." Thus, the main idea of the text is that fossil evidence can contribute to the understanding of the nervous system in ancient arthropods.

Choice A is incorrect because the text doesn’t compare the brains of hawk moths and brine shrimp. These animals are merely mentioned as examples of arthropods in the opening sentence, and the text doesn’t go on to discuss any similarities between their brains. Choice C is incorrect because the text discusses nervous systems, not spines, in ancient arthropods, and it doesn’t specifically mention findings about ancient hawk moths or brine shrimp. Choice D is incorrect. While the text concludes by noting that researchers aim to discover additional characteristics of prehistoric arthropods’ nervous systems as more fossils are uncovered, this statement doesn’t suggest that researchers need to focus on finding more fossils. Rather, it simply indicates that researchers expect to learn more about this topic as additional fossils are discovered. Moreover, the statement is just a detail that supports the main idea; it’s not the main idea itself.

Question Difficulty: Medium

Question ID 4c16d345

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT 8/9	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: 4c16d345

In the 1960s, Chavela Vargas became an unlikely star in ranchera, a style of traditional Mexican music. Most ranchera singers had clear, polished voices and performed with a full band. But Vargas accompanied her raspy voice with just her guitar. Dressed in men’s trousers and a poncho, she would perform classic songs that had been written from a male point of view and were usually sung by men. She also altered those songs by performing them much more slowly than other ranchera singers did. The slower tempo allowed her to express the emotional quality of the lyrics more fully.

According to the text, what is one way that Vargas differed from other ranchera singers?

- A. She possessed a voice that was clear and polished.
- B. She avoided singing songs written from a male point of view.
- C. She disliked performing classic songs.
- D. She altered classic songs by slowing them down.

ID: 4c16d345 Answer

Correct Answer: D

Rationale

Choice D is the best answer because it accurately describes an aspect of Chavela Vargas that the text indicates is unusual among ranchera artists. According to the text, Vargas differed from other ranchera singers by slowing the tempo of classic songs, which allowed her to express the emotional quality of the lyrics more fully.

Choice A is incorrect because the text states that Vargas possessed an unusually raspy voice for a ranchera singer, not a clear and polished voice. Choice B is incorrect because the text indicates that Vargas was known to perform songs written from a male point of view, not that she avoided such songs. Choice C is incorrect because nothing in the text suggests that Vargas disliked performing classic songs. Rather, it suggests that she found innovative ways of performing them to emphasize their emotional content, which seems to suggest an affinity for such songs, not dislike.

Question Difficulty: Medium

Question ID 9f093125

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT 8/9	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: 9f093125

Bicycles were first mass-produced in the late nineteenth century throughout Europe and North America, allowing individuals remarkable freedom to travel longer distances quickly and comfortably. This freedom, coupled with the affordability of the vehicle, made the bicycle immensely popular. Individuals were able to live farther from their workplaces, easily visit neighboring towns, and participate in new leisure and sport activities. Bicycling quickly became a popular social endeavor, with enthusiasts forming local cycling clubs to enjoy these newfound activities with others.

Which choice best states the main idea of the text?

- A. The widespread adoption of the bicycle in the late nineteenth century provided new opportunities for people.
- B. The affordability of the bicycle in the late nineteenth century made it the preferred way to travel.
- C. The popularity of the bicycle in the late nineteenth century gave rise to the first cycling clubs.
- D. The mass production of the bicycle in the late nineteenth century made it safer for people to use.

ID: 9f093125 Answer

Correct Answer: A

Rationale

Choice A is the best answer. The text discusses how the mass production of bicycles in the late nineteenth century allowed people to travel longer distances, live farther from their workplaces, visit neighboring towns, and participate in new activities and social clubs. All of these are new opportunities that were provided by the widespread adoption of the bicycle.

Choice B is incorrect. The text never says this. It does say that the bicycle was “affordable,” and that the “freedom to travel longer distances quickly and comfortably” made the bicycle “popular,” but it never says that the bicycle was more popular than any other way of traveling (like cars or trains or horses). Choice C is incorrect. This is a detail mentioned in the text, but not the main idea. Cycling clubs are only one of the new opportunities that arose from the popularity of the mass-produced bicycle. A “main idea” should capture more of the information in the text. Choice D is incorrect. The text never says this. It doesn’t mention the safety of the mass-produced bicycle at all.

Question Difficulty: Medium

Question ID a1991af1

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT 8/9	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: a1991af1

The following text is from Laila Lalami’s 2019 novel *The Other Americans*. The narrator is a member of her middle school’s jazz band.

One day the jazz band was invited to perform at the Summer Festival in Palm Springs. Walking across the stage to the piano, I did what my teacher had advised. Pretend you’re only playing for one person. That way you won’t be so nervous. I glanced at my father, who sat in the front row, leaning his head just so, waiting. Then I closed my eyes, and began to play.

©2019 by Laila Lalami

According to the text, what does the narrator do as she walks across the stage?

- A. She thinks about the differences between playing the piano alone and playing in a band.
- B. She feels excitement about playing in a music festival for the first time.
- C. She remembers how hard she has practiced for the performance.
- D. She follows her teacher’s advice about managing her nervousness.

ID: a1991af1 Answer

Correct Answer: D

Rationale

Choice D is the best answer because it presents a statement about what the narrator is doing that is directly supported by the text. According to the text, as the narrator walks across the stage to her piano, she recalls her teacher’s advice to pretend that she is playing for only one person. The text indicates that this advice was intended to help manage any nerves related to performing. Moreover, the text implies that the narrator follows this advice by deciding to focus on her father sitting in the audience. Thus, the text supports the idea that as she walks across the stage, the narrator follows her teacher’s advice about managing her nervousness.

Choice A is incorrect because the text doesn’t indicate that the narrator is thinking about how playing the piano alone is different from playing the piano in a band. Rather, the narrator thinks about her teacher’s advice to pretend that she is playing the piano for only one person to help ease her nervousness about performing. Choice B is incorrect because the text provides no indication that this is the first music festival that the narrator has performed in. Furthermore, the text indicates that the narrator is nervous, not excited, to play the piano at the festival. Choice C is incorrect because the text doesn’t suggest that the narrator is remembering how hard she practiced for the performance. Rather, she is thinking about what her teacher told her to do to help ease her nerves about playing the piano in front of an audience.

Question Difficulty: Medium

Question ID 5056dbd3

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT 8/9	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: 5056dbd3

The following text is adapted from Frances Hodgson Burnett’s 1911 novel *The Secret Garden*. Mary, a young girl, recently found an overgrown hidden garden.

Mary was an odd, determined little person, and now she had something interesting to be determined about, she was very much absorbed, indeed. She worked and dug and pulled up weeds steadily, only becoming more pleased with her work every hour instead of tiring of it. It seemed to her like a fascinating sort of play.

Which choice best states the main idea of the text?

- A. Mary hides in the garden to avoid doing her chores.
- B. Mary is getting bored with pulling up so many weeds in the garden.
- C. Mary is clearing out the garden to create a space to play.
- D. Mary feels very satisfied when she’s taking care of the garden.

ID: 5056dbd3 Answer

Correct Answer: D

Rationale

Choice D is the best answer because it most accurately states the main idea of the text. The text describes Mary’s activities in an overgrown hidden garden, saying that she was “very much absorbed” and was “only becoming more pleased with her work every hour” rather than getting tired of it. She also thinks of garden activities as a “fascinating sort of play.” Thus, the main idea of the text is that Mary feels very satisfied when taking care of the garden.

Choice A is incorrect because the text never makes any mention of Mary’s chores. Choice B is incorrect because the text indicates that Mary finds pulling up weeds to be fascinating, not boring. Choice C is incorrect because Mary thinks of garden activities in and of themselves as play, not as something necessary to do to create a space to play.

Question Difficulty: Medium

Question ID 91b912ec

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT 8/9	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: 91b912ec

In 2014, Amelia Quon and her team at NASA set out to build a helicopter capable of flying on Mars. Because Mars’s atmosphere is only one percent as dense as Earth’s, the air of Mars would not provide enough resistance to the rotating blades of a standard helicopter for the aircraft to stay aloft. For five years, Quon’s team tested designs in a lab that mimicked Mars’s atmospheric conditions. The craft the team ultimately designed can fly on Mars because its blades are longer and rotate faster than those of a helicopter of the same size built for Earth.

According to the text, why would a helicopter built for Earth be unable to fly on Mars?

- A. Because Mars and Earth have different atmospheric conditions
- B. Because the blades of helicopters built for Earth are too large to work on Mars
- C. Because the gravity of Mars is much weaker than the gravity of Earth
- D. Because helicopters built for Earth are too small to handle the conditions on Mars

ID: 91b912ec Answer

Correct Answer: A

Rationale

Choice A is the best answer because it presents an explanation about a helicopter that is directly supported by the text. The text states that Mars’s atmosphere is much less dense than Earth’s, and as a result, the air on Mars doesn’t provide the resistance required to support the blades of a helicopter built for Earth and to keep the helicopter aloft. In other words, a helicopter built for Earth can’t fly on Mars because of the differences in the two planets’ atmospheres.

Choice B is incorrect because instead of stating that the blades of helicopters built for Earth are too large to work on Mars, the text indicates that the helicopter built to fly on Mars actually has even longer blades than a helicopter built for Earth. Choice C is incorrect because the text never addresses the role of gravity on Mars or on Earth; instead, it focuses on atmospheric conditions. Choice D is incorrect because the text doesn’t indicate that helicopters built for Earth are too small to operate in the conditions on Mars. In fact, the text states that the size of the helicopter built to fly on Mars is the same size as a helicopter built for Earth, even though it has longer blades that rotate faster.

Question Difficulty: Medium

Question ID 271e41b6

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT 8/9	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: 271e41b6

NASA's *Cassini* probe has detected an unusual wobble in the rotation of Mimas, Saturn's smallest moon. Using a computer model to study Mimas's gravitational interactions with Saturn and tidal forces, geophysicist Alyssa Rhoden and colleagues have proposed that this wobble could be due to a liquid ocean moving beneath the moon's icy surface. The researchers believe other moons should be examined to see if they too might have oceans hidden beneath their surfaces.

- Which choice best states the main idea of the text?
- A. Rhoden and colleagues were the first to confirm that several of Saturn's moons contain hidden oceans.
 - B. Research has failed to identify signs that there is an ocean hidden beneath the surface of Mimas.
 - C. Rhoden and colleagues created a new computer model that identifies moons with hidden oceans without needing to analyze the moons' rotation.
 - D. Research has revealed that an oddity in the rotation of Mimas could be explained by an ocean hidden beneath its surface.

ID: 271e41b6 Answer

Correct Answer: D

Rationale

Choice D is the best answer. The study isn't definitive, but it says that Mimas's wobbly rotation could be explained by the hidden ocean.

Choice A is incorrect. This choice goes too far beyond the information in the text. Rhoden's team proposed that one moon of Saturn could have a liquid ocean beneath its surface, and that other moons should also be examined, but no one has confirmed anything. Choice B is incorrect. This choice conflicts with the text. Research has identified at least one sign—the unusual wobble in Mimas's rotation—that might be due to a hidden ocean beneath its surface. Choice C is incorrect. This choice doesn't reflect the text. The computer model studies "gravitational interactions," which seem to account for the wobbly rotation of Mimas.

Question Difficulty: Medium

Question ID dd8473ca

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT 8/9	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: dd8473ca

Oluwaseyi Moejoh cofounded U-recycle Initiative Africa when she was only a teenager. Moejoh and her team founded the organization to teach young people how their actions affect the environment and why recycling is important. For example, the organization put on an exhibit of art made using recycled materials.

According to the text, what is one reason Moejoh and others founded U-recycle Initiative Africa?

- A. To bring attention to overlooked African artists
- B. To teach young people why recycling is important
- C. To help adults gain important outdoor skills
- D. To give teenagers advice about starting businesses

ID: dd8473ca Answer

Correct Answer: B

Rationale

Choice B is the best answer because it describes a reason that Moejoh and team founded U-recycle Initiative Africa. The text mentions two reasons the initiative was founded: to teach young people about how they affect the environment and to teach them “why recycling is important.” Thus, teaching the importance of recycling to young people accurately describes a motivation that the text cites as a reason for the initiative’s founding.

Choice A is incorrect. Although art is mentioned in the text, there are no details about artists or whether they are being overlooked. Choice C is incorrect because the text is explicitly about young people and their relationship to the environment and recycling. There is no mention of adults or outdoor skills. Choice D is incorrect. Although the text discusses young people, which likely includes teenagers, there is no mention of starting businesses.

Question Difficulty: Medium

Question ID 742f5d5c

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT 8/9	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: 742f5d5c

The following text is adapted from Oscar Wilde’s 1891 novel *The Picture of Dorian Gray*. Dorian Gray is taking his first look at a portrait that Hallward has painted of him.

Dorian passed listlessly in front of his picture and turned towards it. When he saw it he drew back, and his cheeks flushed for a moment with pleasure. A look of joy came into his eyes, as if he had recognized himself for the first time. He stood there motionless and in wonder, dimly conscious that Hallward was speaking to him, but not catching the meaning of his words. The sense of his own beauty came on him like a revelation. He had never felt it before.

According to the text, what is true about Dorian?

- A. He wants to know Hallward’s opinion of the portrait.
- B. He is delighted by what he sees in the portrait.
- C. He prefers portraits to other types of paintings.
- D. He is uncertain of Hallward’s talent as an artist.

ID: 742f5d5c Answer

Correct Answer: B

Rationale

Choice B is the best answer because it presents a statement about Dorian that is directly supported by the text. The narrator of the text says that when Dorian sees his portrait, “his cheeks flushed for a moment with pleasure” and “a look of joy came into his eyes.” The narrator goes on to say that Dorian looked at the portrait “in wonder” and presents him as being so entranced by the portrait that he doesn’t notice what Hallward is saying to him. All these details support the description of Dorian as being delighted by what he sees in the portrait.

Choice A is incorrect because Dorian isn’t depicted as interested in Hallward’s opinion of the portrait but rather as so enraptured by the painting that he’s hardly even aware of Hallward. Choice C is incorrect because the portrait of Dorian is the only painting that is mentioned in the text, so there’s no evidence that Dorian prefers portraits to other types of paintings. Although Dorian is depicted as delighted with this particular portrait, there’s no way of knowing from the text whether he likes portraits better than other kinds of paintings. Choice D is incorrect because nothing in the text suggests that Dorian is uncertain about Hallward’s talent. Instead, the text is focused on Dorian’s delight with the portrait.

Question Difficulty: Medium

Question ID 4f24cbbe

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT 8/9	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: 4f24cbbe

Archaeologist Veronica Waweru visited the Lewa Wildlife Conservancy in Kenya. While exploring there, Waweru noticed many rows of shallow pits carved into stone. Waweru believed the pits could have been used as game boards to play ancient versions of mancala, a two-person strategy game that is still popular today. Some of the more recent pits were carved on top of older pits. This led Waweru to think that the game was played at the site for a long time.

According to the text, why does Waweru think that mancala was played at the site for a long time?

- A. Some of the newer pits were carved on top of the older pits.
- B. She noticed many rows of shallow pits carved into stone.
- C. She discovered the pits at the Lewa Wildlife Conservancy.
- D. Some of the pits were shallow and others were quite deep.

ID: 4f24cbbe Answer

Correct Answer: A

Rationale

Choice A is the best answer because it presents a statement about Veronica Waweru’s thinking that is supported by the text. The text begins by discussing Waweru’s discovery of evidence that ancient versions of the board game mancala had been played at a site in the Lewa Wildlife Conservancy. The evidence consisted of many rows of shallow pits carved into stone. The text goes on to state that some newer pits were carved on top of older pits, suggesting that people may have continued to play the game there over multiple generations, creating new pits over time. The text then explicitly states that the presence of newer pits carved on top of older pits was precisely what caused Waweru to think that mancala had been played at the site for a long time.

Choice B is incorrect. While the text does state that Waweru "noticed many rows of shallow pits carved into stone," this observation led her to believe that the pits could have been used as game boards for ancient versions of mancala but did not specifically suggest to her that the game had been played at the site for a long time. The multiple rows of pits merely suggest that these pits functioned as part of a game board; they don’t necessarily indicate how long the site had been used for that purpose. Rather, it was the fact that there appeared to be newer pits carved on top of older pits that led Waweru to think that mancala had been played at the site for a long time. Choice C is incorrect. Although the text states that Waweru found the pits at the Lewa Wildlife Conservancy, this isn’t the reason the text gives for why she thought that mancala had been played at the site for a long time. The location of the discovery only provides information about where the game was played, not how long the game had been played there. Choice D is incorrect because the text doesn’t mention any variation in the depth of the pits. The text only describes the pits collectively as shallow and doesn’t indicate that the depth of the pits factored into Waweru’s thinking about how long the site had been used for playing mancala.

Question Difficulty: Medium

Question ID 72c86ca1

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT 8/9	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: 72c86ca1

Psychologists wanted to test how young children think about rewards and fairness. In an experiment, two teachers handed out rewards while children (ages four to six) watched. The teachers gave out the same number of rewards, but one of them counted the rewards out loud. The children were then asked who was fairer. 73% chose the teacher who counted. The psychologists think that counting showed the children that the teacher wanted to be fair. The children may have believed that the teacher who did not count did not care about fairness.

- Which choice best states the main idea of the text?
- A. Psychologists think children cannot understand the concept of fairness until they are six years old.
 - B. An experiment found that counting out loud is the best way to teach mathematical concepts to children.
 - C. Psychologists think young children expect to be rewarded when the children show that they care about fairness.
 - D. An experiment showed that the way rewards are given out may affect whether young children think the situation is fair.

ID: 72c86ca1 Answer

Correct Answer: D

Rationale

Choice D is the best answer. The text describes a study assessing how children think of rewards and fairness and its results. It concludes that the children in the study may have thought that a teacher who counted out loud when giving rewards cared more about fairness than a teacher who did not count out loud.

Choice A is incorrect. The children in the study are described as being “four to six,” and the text doesn’t mention any differences among the different ages. Choice B is incorrect. The experiment wasn’t about teaching math—rather, it was about how counting out loud affected the children’s perception of fairness. Choice C is incorrect. The experiment doesn’t focus on whether the children care about fairness, and the text never mentions the children’s expectations of being rewarded.

Question Difficulty: Medium

Question ID 3827b106

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT 8/9	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: 3827b106

The following text is adapted from Johanna Spyri’s 1881 novel *Heidi* (translated by Elisabeth Stork in 1915). Eight-year-old Heidi and her friend’s grandmother are looking at some illustrated books.

Heidi had come and was looking with wondering eyes at the splendid pictures in the large books, that Grandmama was showing her. Suddenly she screamed aloud, for there on the picture she saw a peaceful flock grazing on a green pasture. In the middle a shepherd was standing, leaning on his crook. The setting sun was shedding a golden light over everything. With glowing eyes Heidi devoured the scene.

- Which choice best states the main idea of the text?
- A. Heidi is upset until she sees a serene image of a pasture in one of Grandmama’s books.
 - B. Heidi is delighted and fascinated by an image she sees in one of Grandmama’s books.
 - C. Heidi is initially frightened by an image in one of Grandmama’s books but quickly comes to appreciate its beauty.
 - D. Heidi is inspecting an image in one of Grandmama’s books because she has never seen a shepherd with his sheep before.

ID: 3827b106 Answer

Correct Answer: B

Rationale

Choice B is the best answer because it most effectively states the main idea of the text, which is that Heidi is delighted and fascinated by an image she sees in one of Grandmama’s books. In the text, Heidi screams upon first seeing the picture of the green pasture. In another context, such a reaction might suggest fear, but here the reaction is followed by descriptions of an image that’s peaceful rather than scary. The text goes on to describe Heidi’s eyes as “glowing” and states that she “devoured the scene,” suggesting that the image delights and fascinates her so much that she wants to examine every detail. Together, these descriptions suggest that Heidi is thrilled and intrigued by the image in the book.

Choice A is incorrect because there’s nothing in the text to suggest that Heidi is upset before seeing the peaceful image of the green pasture. Before Heidi sees that image, the text describes her as “looking with wondering eyes at the splendid pictures” in the book, suggesting that Heidi is intrigued, not that she’s unhappy. Choice C is incorrect. Although Heidi screams upon first seeing the image, the text’s description of the image and Heidi’s other reactions to it suggest that she is screaming with delight, not fear. The text describes the images in the book as “splendid” and the particular image that causes her to scream as peaceful rather than frightening. It also describes Heidi’s eyes as “glowing” and states that she “devoured the scene,” suggesting that the image of the green pasture delights and fascinates her so much that she wants to examine every detail. Choice D is incorrect because it’s unclear from the text whether Heidi has ever seen a shepherd with his sheep before. The text merely suggests that she is delighted and fascinated by the image of the shepherd and his sheep.

Question Difficulty: Medium

Question ID 8f05b1ab

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT 8/9	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: 8f05b1ab

When fashion designer Lloyd Henri Kiva New opened his store in Scottsdale, Arizona, in 1945, he quickly became known for creating delicately crafted leather goods, like belts and hats. He was perhaps most renowned for his colorful handbags, which he made by hand using a long and painstaking process. As he gained more customers, New began using sewing machines and other tools to help him produce bags more efficiently, though he continued to handcraft the crucial details that made each bag unique.

Based on the text, what would have been the most likely consequence if New had not begun using sewing machines?

- A. He would have been unable to ensure that each bag included unique, handcrafted details.
- B. He would have struggled to meet the increasing demand for his bags.
- C. He would have had to individually design each bag he produced.
- D. He would not have been able to generate as much interest in his bags.

ID: 8f05b1ab Answer

Correct Answer: B

Rationale

Choice B is the best answer because it presents the most likely consequence if New had not begun using sewing machines. The text states that New gained new customers and that sewing machines allowed him to make bags more efficiently, or in less time than he could when sewing by hand. It’s reasonable to conclude that if New hadn’t reduced the time it took to make each bag by starting to use sewing machines, it would have been hard for him to keep up with the increased demand.

Choice A is incorrect because the text indicates that New added unique, handcrafted details to his bags before he started using sewing machines and continued to do so after he started using them. Choice C is incorrect because the text doesn’t suggest that individually designing each bag would have been a consequence of not using sewing machines, since New was already designing unique details for each bag before he started using sewing machines and continued to do so after he started using them. Choice D is incorrect because the text indicates that people were already interested in New’s bags before he started using sewing machines. Rather than allowing New to generate more interest in his bags, sewing machines helped New keep up with the interest that had already grown.

Question Difficulty: Medium

Question ID 1977388d

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT 8/9	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: 1977388d

Ruth Asawa was an accomplished artist who worked in many art forms, including her unique tied-wire sculptures, but she was dedicated to more than the creation of art. Asawa also wanted to bring art to children in her hometown of San Francisco, California. To that end, in 1968 she cofounded the Alvarado School Arts Workshop, which brought works of art and artists into public schools, and in 1982 she helped found a San Francisco public arts high school, which was later named after her.

Which choice best states the main idea of the text?

- A. Asawa inspired many other artists to share their work with students in public schools.
- B. Asawa’s unique sculptures were appreciated more by local art communities than they were nationwide.
- C. Asawa’s interest in art education prompted her to create art programs for students in San Francisco.
- D. Asawa left a promising career as a sculptor to work as an art teacher in San Francisco schools.

ID: 1977388d Answer

Correct Answer: C

Rationale

Choice C is the best answer because it most accurately states the main idea of the text. The text begins by establishing Ruth Asawa as an artist who worked in several art forms but emphasizes that she was interested in art for reasons other than her desire to create it. The text mentions two ways in which Asawa brought art to children through public schools: cofounding the Alvarado School Arts Workshop in 1968 and helping found a public arts high school in 1982. Thus, the main idea is that Asawa’s interest in art education motivated her to establish arts programs for students in San Francisco.

Choice A is incorrect because the text doesn’t mention Asawa inspiring other artists to share their work with students. While the text does note that the Alvarado School Arts Workshop brought works of art and artists into public schools, it doesn’t state that Asawa motivated these artists. Choice B is incorrect because the text makes no comparison between local and national appreciation of Asawa’s sculptures. While the text does mention that Asawa created unique tied-wire sculptures and was connected to San Francisco, it does not contrast her local and national critical receptions. Choice D is incorrect. Although the text emphasizes Asawa’s educational initiatives, it doesn’t state or imply that she abandoned her career as a sculptor to work as an art teacher. Instead, the text portrays her educational work as a complement to her career as a successful artist.

Question Difficulty: Medium

Question ID 2647b53b

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT 8/9	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: 2647b53b

To make her art more widely available, graphic artist Elizabeth Catlett turned to linocuts. In linocut printing, an artist carves an image into a sheet of linoleum to create a stamp that is used to mass-produce prints. In the linocut series *The Black Woman* (1946–1947), Catlett depicts the everyday experiences of Black women alongside the achievements of well-known Black women. This pairing invites the viewer to draw connections among the women. The linocut process enabled Catlett’s work to reach a wide audience and supported her aim to unite Black women through her art.

- According to the text, what is significant about Catlett’s use of linocut printing?
- A. Linocut printing involved using materials that were readily available to Catlett.
 - B. Linocut printing helped Catlett use art to connect people, especially Black women.
 - C. Catlett became commercially successful once she started using linocut printing.
 - D. Catlett was one of the first Black artists to use linocut printing.

ID: 2647b53b Answer

Correct Answer: B

Rationale

Choice B is the best answer. The last sentence states that the linocut process “supported her [Catlett’s] aim to unite Black women through her art.”

Choice A is incorrect. The text briefly describes the linocut printing process but doesn’t discuss the availability of the materials used in the process. Choice C is incorrect. The text says that the linocut process “enabled Catlett’s work to reach a wide audience,” but that doesn’t mean that linocuts made her “commercially successful.” In other words, we don’t know how much money she made off her linocuts—we only know that more people were able to see her work. Choice D is incorrect. The text says that Catlett depicted Black women in her linocuts, but not that she was one of the first Black artists to use linocut printing.

Question Difficulty: Medium

Question ID cdf5d7e2

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT 8/9	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: cdf5d7e2

It has long been thought that the original author of the US Pledge of Allegiance was Francis Bellamy, who said that he wrote the pledge one evening in August of 1892. But a historian recently discovered a newspaper article that was published several months before August 1892. The article describes students reciting the same pledge that Bellamy claims he first wrote in August. This means that Bellamy may not have created the pledge after all.

Based on the text, what piece of knowledge about the Pledge of Allegiance has recently become uncertain?

- A. How many changes were made to the pledge in the 1900s
- B. The identity of the person who first wrote the pledge
- C. The name of the newspaper that first published the pledge
- D. Which part of the pledge students liked best in 1892

ID: cdf5d7e2 Answer

Correct Answer: B

Rationale

Choice B is the best answer because it presents a supposed fact about the Pledge of Allegiance that, as the text explains, has recently become uncertain. The text begins by explaining the long-held belief that the original author of the US Pledge of Allegiance was Francis Bellamy, who claimed to have written it in August 1892. The text then describes a historian’s recent discovery of a newspaper article published several months before August 1892 that mentions students reciting the same pledge. The text concludes that this discovery suggests Bellamy may not have created the pledge after all. Thus, what has recently become uncertain is the identity of the person who first wrote the pledge.

Choice A is incorrect because the text doesn’t address any changes made to the Pledge of Allegiance in the 1900s. The text focuses solely on the question of who originally authored the pledge in or before 1892 and doesn’t mention any subsequent modifications to its wording. Choice C is incorrect. While the text does mention a historian’s discovery of a newspaper article that described students reciting the pledge, it doesn’t suggest that the pledge was published in its entirety within that article. Moreover, the text doesn’t identify the newspaper by name or suggest the possibility of an earlier mention of the pledge in a different newspaper. Choice D is incorrect because the text doesn’t mention which parts of the Pledge of Allegiance students preferred in 1892 or at any other time. The text only states that a newspaper article described students reciting the pledge, without providing any information about their preferences regarding different portions of it.

Question Difficulty: Medium

Question ID c74e460e

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT 8/9	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: c74e460e

Xin Wang and colleagues have discovered the earliest known example of a flower bud in a 164-million-year-old plant fossil in China. The researchers have named the new species *Florigerminis jurassica*. They believe that the discovery pushes the emergence of flowering plants, or angiosperms, back to the Jurassic period, which occurred between 145 million and 201 million years ago.

According to the text, how old was the fossil that Wang and colleagues discovered?

- A. 150 million years old
- B. 145 million years old
- C. 164 million years old
- D. 201 million years old

ID: c74e460e Answer

Correct Answer: C

Rationale

Choice C is the best answer because it gives the age for the fossil discovered by Wang and colleagues that is directly supported by the text. According to the text, Xin Wang and colleagues discovered a 164-million-year-old plant fossil. This plant fossil included a flower bud, which the researchers believe provides evidence that flowering plants emerged in the Jurassic period, which falls between 145 million and 201 million years ago.

Choice A is incorrect because the text states that Wang and colleagues discovered a 164-million-year-old flowering plant fossil in China, not one that is 150 million years old. Although 150 million years ago would fall within the Jurassic period, according to the text it isn't the age of the discovered fossil. Choice B is incorrect because the text states that Wang and colleagues discovered a 164-million-year-old flowering plant fossil in China, not one that is 145 million years old. Although 145 million years ago would fall at the end of the Jurassic period, according to the text it isn't the age of the discovered fossil. Choice D is incorrect because the text states that Wang and colleagues discovered a 164-million-year-old flowering plant fossil in China, not one that is 201 million years old. Although 201 million years ago would fall at the beginning of the Jurassic period, according to the text it isn't the age of the discovered fossil.

Question Difficulty: Medium

Question ID 4d49c58f

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT 8/9	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: 4d49c58f

Having written the impassioned call to arms “Letter to the Spanish Americans” in 1791, Peruvian intellectual Juan Pablo Viscardo y Guzmán is often considered a forerunner for the independence movements in Latin America. But Viscardo’s role in history would have remained insignificant were it not for Venezuelan revolutionary Francisco de Miranda, who was handed the unpublished letter after Viscardo’s death. Miranda not only helped circulate the letter, but his edits and footnotes to the text position Miranda as a central figure in the text’s creation.

Which choice best states the main idea of the text?

- A. The original authorship of “Letter to the Spanish Americans” is disputed by contemporary historians.
- B. The majority of the most eloquently stated arguments in “Letter to the Spanish Americans” were written by Miranda.
- C. Miranda played a crucial role in influencing the content and distribution of “Letter to the Spanish Americans.”
- D. “Letter to the Spanish Americans” persuaded many people in Latin America to pursue national independence.

ID: 4d49c58f Answer

Correct Answer: C

Rationale

Choice C is the best answer. The text describes how Miranda circulated, edited, and added footnotes to “Letter to the Spanish Americans,” and it claims that the letter and its author would have “remained insignificant” if it weren’t for Miranda’s efforts.

Choice A is incorrect. The text only says that Viscardo wrote the letter and that Miranda edited it: it never suggests that the original authorship of the letter is up for debate. Choice B is incorrect. This contradicts the text. The text says that Miranda edited and footnoted the letter, but it identifies Viscardo as the letter’s author. It also never identifies certain arguments as more eloquent than others. Choice D is incorrect. This is outside the scope of the text. The paragraph describes Miranda’s role in the creation and distribution of the letter, but it doesn’t get into the effects of the letter on other people.

Question Difficulty: Medium

Question ID 9cfd222f

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT 8/9	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: 9cfd222f

In 2022, researchers rediscovered ancient indigenous glyphs, or drawings, on the walls of a cave in Alabama. The cave’s ceiling was only a few feet high, affording no position from which the glyphs, being as wide as ten feet, could be viewed or photographed in their entirety. However, the researchers used a technique called photogrammetry to assemble numerous photos of the walls into a 3D model. They then worked with representatives of tribes originally from the region, including the Chickasaw Nation, to understand the significance of the animal and humanoid figures adorning the cave.

According to the text, what challenge did the researchers have to overcome to examine the glyphs?

- A. The cave was so remote that the researchers couldn’t easily reach it.
- B. Some of the glyphs were so faint that they couldn’t be photographed.
- C. The researchers were unable to create a 3D model of the cave.
- D. The cave’s dimensions prevented the researchers from fully viewing the glyphs.

ID: 9cfd222f Answer

Correct Answer: D

Rationale

Choice D is the best answer. The text describes the very low ceiling of the cave, making it impossible to photograph the very wide glyphs all at once.

Choice A is incorrect. The text doesn’t say this. It never suggests that the cave was remote or difficult to access, just that the cave itself was difficult to photograph well. Choice B is incorrect. The text doesn’t say this. The glyphs were so wide that they couldn’t be photographed completely. Choice C is incorrect. The text states the opposite of this. The researchers “used a technique called photogrammetry to assemble numerous photos of the walls into a 3D model.”

Question Difficulty: Medium

Question ID bb571b13

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT 8/9	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: bb571b13

In 1935 Hallie Flanagan was chosen to lead the Federal Theatre Project (FTP). This project was part of the new Works Progress Administration (WPA), a program created by President Franklin D. Roosevelt to provide jobs for unemployed people during the Great Depression. As the director of the FTP, Flanagan created jobs for over 12,500 performers, designers, and other theater professionals across the country. She also kept ticket prices low for the shows they staged, which meant that many people could afford to experience theater for the first time.

Which choice best states the main idea of the text?

- A. Jobs provided by the FTP were intended mainly for performers, designers, and other theater professionals.
- B. President Roosevelt created the WPA to provide jobs for unemployed people.
- C. During the Great Depression, many people couldn't afford to buy theater tickets.
- D. As the director of the FTP, Flanagan succeeded in creating many jobs and introducing people to theater.

ID: bb571b13 Answer

Correct Answer: D

Rationale

Choice D is the best answer because it most accurately states the main idea of the text. The text begins by stating that Flanagan was chosen in 1935 to lead the Federal Theatre Project (FTP), which was part of a program created by President Franklin D. Roosevelt. The text then explains that as the director of the FTP, Flanagan created jobs for more than 12,500 theater professionals and ensured that ticket prices stayed low so that many people could afford to experience theater for the first time. Thus, the main idea of the text is that as the FTP's director, Flanagan succeeded in creating many jobs and introducing people to theater.

Choice A is incorrect. The text does suggest that jobs provided by the FTP were intended mainly for theater professionals, but this isn't the text's main idea. The focus of the text is Hallie Flanagan's work as the director of the FTP, with the text's main point being that Flanagan succeeded in creating many jobs and introducing people to theater. Choice B is incorrect. The text does state that President Roosevelt created the WPA to provide jobs for unemployed people, but this is supporting information, not the text's main idea. The focus of the text is Hallie Flanagan's work as the director of the FTP, which was part of the WPA, and the text's main point is that Flanagan succeeded in creating many jobs and introducing people to theater. Choice C is incorrect. It's true that many people couldn't afford to buy theater tickets during the Great Depression, but this isn't the text's main idea. The focus of the text is Hallie Flanagan's work as the director of the FTP, with the text's main point being that Flanagan succeeded in creating many jobs and introducing people to theater.

Question Difficulty: Medium

Question ID 8114c6fa

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT 8/9	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: 8114c6fa

Few animals are known to spit: among them are humans, cobras, and camels. But in January 2022 at a nature preserve in southern England, bird-watcher Clare Jacobs observed a gray seal spitting a jet of water at a white-tailed eagle flying overhead. Seals had never been seen spitting before. Biologist Sean Twiss, who studies gray seals, believes that the seal may have been attempting to scare the eagle away from a food source or that the seal may have just been playing.

Which choice best states the main topic of the text?

- A. Bird-watching in southern England
- B. A previously unseen behavior of gray seals
- C. How white-tailed eagles defend their territory against other predators
- D. Differences between gray seals and white-tailed eagles

ID: 8114c6fa Answer

Correct Answer: B

Rationale

Choice B is the best answer because it most accurately states the main topic of the text. The text begins by noting that few animals are known to spit, and then it focuses on Clare Jacobs’s January 2022 observation of a gray seal spitting water at a white-tailed eagle. The text explicitly notes that this behavior had never before been observed in seals, highlighting that this was a previously unseen behavior. The text concludes with biologist Sean Twiss’s hypotheses about why the seal might have been spitting. Thus, the main topic is the observation of a previously unseen behavior (spitting) of gray seals.

Choice A is incorrect because while the text does mention bird-watcher Clare Jacobs making an observation in southern England, bird-watching itself is not the main topic. The reference to bird-watching is incidental to the central focus of the novel behavior of a gray seal spitting water at an eagle. Choice C is incorrect because the text only mentions a white-tailed eagle as the target of a seal’s spitting behavior; it doesn’t provide any information about how these eagles typically behave when defending territory or interacting with other predators. Choice D is incorrect because the text doesn’t discuss differences between gray seals and white-tailed eagles. While both animals are mentioned, the text is focused on the seal’s unusual spitting behavior rather than comparing the two animals in any way.

Question Difficulty: Medium

Question ID cf249983

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT 8/9	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: cf249983

Stores often play background music to create a pleasant shopping experience. Based on a survey, Amir Manzoor found that such music was linked to reduced enjoyment among customers. Manzoor thinks that one explanation for this result is that the surveyed customers may have wanted to finish their shopping as quickly as possible. They therefore weren't focused on enjoying the experience. It's possible that background music could improve the experience of other customers whose main goal is to have a good time while they shop.

Based on the text, which research question was Manzoor's study most likely intended to answer?

- A. Does the volume of a store's background music affect how much time customers spend in the store?
- B. How does the use of background music in stores affect customers' shopping experience?
- C. Do customers spend more money when shopping for music in stores or online?
- D. What genres of music do customers prefer to listen to while they are shopping?

ID: cf249983 Answer

Correct Answer: B

Rationale

Choice B is the best answer because it presents a research question that is clearly addressed by Manzoor's study as described in the text. The text indicates that Manzoor surveyed customers and found that background music was linked to reduced enjoyment while shopping. Manzoor then explains this result in terms of the music interfering with customers' main goal (finishing their shopping as quickly as possible), speculating that background music might improve the experience of customers with different shopping goals. Throughout the text, the focus is on the relationship between background music and customers' shopping experience, suggesting that Manzoor's study was designed to answer how background music affects that experience.

Choice A is incorrect because the text doesn't mention the volume of background music or how much time customers spend in a store. Instead, the text focuses on whether background music is linked to customer enjoyment of the shopping experience. Choice C is incorrect because the text doesn't address how much money customers spend or compare in-store and online purchasing. Rather, the text discusses background music played during shopping, not music as a product to be purchased. Choice D is incorrect because the text doesn't discuss different genres of music or customers' preferences for particular genres. Instead, the text addresses background music in general and its link to customer enjoyment.

Question Difficulty: Medium

Question ID ce0780fd

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT 8/9	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: ce0780fd

Scent is tightly interwoven with our daily lives, often evoking significant memories and important social events. This connection is of growing interest to archaeologists who hope to use it to better understand ancient rituals, trade, social hierarchies, and medicine. Although the speed at which odor molecules dissipate makes identifying ancient scents challenging, advancements in biomolecular technologies show promise in unlocking ancient aromas from preserved artifacts. Archaeological studies making use of these advancements may provide new insights into past societies.

According to the text, what is one reason some archaeologists are interested in recovering scents from ancient artifacts?

- A. They are investigating whether people’s sense of smell has declined in recent centuries.
- B. They believe the scents could illuminate important aspects of ancient life.
- C. They think that ancient scents would be enjoyable to people today.
- D. They hope to develop new medicines using ancient scent molecules.

ID: ce0780fd Answer

Correct Answer: B

Rationale

Choice B is the best answer. The text states that archaeologists are interested in using scents to better understand "ancient rituals, trade, social hierarchies, and medicine," all of which are important aspects of ancient life.

Choice A is incorrect. The text doesn’t say anything about investigating if people’s sense of smell has declined in recent centuries. It says that scents fade over time—not that people have gotten worse at smelling scents. Choice C is incorrect. The text says that archaeologists are interested in using scents to better understand "ancient rituals, trade, social hierarchies, and medicine," but it doesn’t say anything about ancient scents being enjoyable to people today. Choice D is incorrect. The text doesn’t say anything about developing new medicines. Rather, it says that archaeologists are interested in using scents to better understand "ancient rituals, trade, social hierarchies, and medicine."

Question Difficulty: Medium

Question ID b9d7e8ce

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT 8/9	Reading and Writing	Information and Ideas	Central Ideas and Details	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: b9d7e8ce

Artist Justin Favela explained that he wanted to reclaim the importance of the piñata as a symbol in Latinx culture. To do so, he created numerous sculptures from strips of tissue paper, which is similar to the material used to create piñatas. In 2017, Favela created an impressive life-size piñata-like sculpture of the Gypsy Rose lowrider car, which was displayed at the Petersen Automotive Museum in Los Angeles, California. The Gypsy Rose lowrider was famously driven by Jesse Valadez, an early president of the Los Angeles Imperials Car Club.

According to the text, which piece of Favela’s art was on display in the Petersen Automotive Museum in 2017?

- A. A painting of Los Angeles
- B. A sculpture of a lowrider car
- C. A painting of a piñata
- D. A sculpture of Jesse Valadez

ID: b9d7e8ce Answer

Correct Answer: B

Rationale

Choice B is the best answer. The text describes Favela’s approach to sculpture, and then describes the lowrider car that he depicted in 2017.

Choice A is incorrect. This isn’t what the text says. The Petersen Automotive Museum is located in Los Angeles, but Favela’s artwork isn’t a painting, and it doesn’t depict L.A. Choice C is incorrect. This isn’t what the text says. Favela makes sculptures similar to piñatas, not paintings of them. Choice D is incorrect. This isn’t what the text says. Jesse Valadez owned the lowrider car that Favela depicted in sculpture.

Question Difficulty: Medium