

Question ID d297b42e

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: d297b42e

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

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

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

- A. He has the appearance of a distinguished figure, but it is uncertain whether he has accomplished anything to earn distinction.
- B. He looks like a person worthy of respect, but his memoirs reveal that some of his actions were dishonorable.
- C. He would be a celebrated public figure if his achievements did not have to be kept secret.
- D. He has maintained a modest profile even though he has served the public capably for many years.

Question ID 2e493764

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: 2e493764

Archaeologists have discovered a runestone in Norway that may contain the earliest example of written words in Scandinavia. Carbon dating at the discovery site revealed that the stone was likely carved between 1 and 250 CE. Runologist Kristel Zilmer believes the stone will be helpful in learning more about the use of runic alphabets in early Iron Age Scandinavia.

Which choice best states the main topic of the text?

- A. Battles of the Iron Age
- B. A runestone found in Norway
- C. A new method for dating rock samples
- D. The research interests of Kristel Zilmer

Question ID 5894816d

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
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ID: 5894816d

The ancient writing system used in the Maya kingdoms of southern Mexico and Central America had a symbol for the number zero. The earliest known example of the symbol dates to more than 2,000 years ago. At that time, almost none of the writing systems elsewhere in the world possessed a zero symbol. And the use of zero in Mexico and Central America may be even more ancient. Some historians suggest that Maya mathematicians inherited it from the Olmec civilization, which flourished in the region 2,400–3,600 years ago.

According to the text, what do some historians suggest about Maya civilization?

- A. Maya civilization acquired the use of zero from the Olmec civilization.
- B. Maya civilization respected its historians more than it respected its mathematicians.
- C. Maya civilization was highly secretive about its intellectual achievements.
- D. Maya civilization tried to introduce its writing system to other civilizations.

Question ID 9b772a22

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: 9b772a22

The following text is from Anton Chekhov’s 1898 short story “Ionitch” (translated by Marian Fell in 1915). The text is set in a Russian city referred to as the city of S.

If newcomers to the little provincial city of S. complained that life there was monotonous and dull, its inhabitants would answer that, on the contrary, S. was a very amusing place, indeed, that it had a library and a club, that balls were given there, and finally, that very pleasant families lived there with whom one might become acquainted. And they always pointed to the Turkins as the most accomplished and most enlightened family of all.

- What does the text suggest about the Turkins?
- A. They are relative newcomers to the city of S.
 - B. They have a unique status in the city of S.
 - C. They have long disliked living in the city of S.
 - D. They are amused by the other residents of the city of S.

Question ID b09073a6

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: b09073a6

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

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

- A. Historians agree that Mieszko II Lambert existed, but disagree about whether Siemomysł existed.
- B. Historians believe that the *Gesta principum Polonorum* provides more evidence for Siemomysł’s existence than it does for Mieszko II Lambert’s existence.
- C. Historians agree that Siemomysł ruled Poland much later than Mieszko II Lambert.
- D. Historians find the orally transmitted stories affirming the existence of Mieszko II Lambert to be more convincing than similar stories about Siemomysł.

Question ID c31ff09e

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
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ID: c31ff09e

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

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

- A. Its metaphorical significance derives from the semantic equivalence of the two nouns constituting the difrasismo.
- B. Its unintelligibility may cause its formal function within a line of verse to go unnoticed by present-day readers.
- C. Its apparent obscurity can be resolved when considered in the proper cultural context.
- D. Its frequency in Classical Nahuatl poetry confirms its intelligibility to the Aztec audience.

Question ID 0885945a

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
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ID: 0885945a

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

Which choice best states the main idea of the text?

- A. Although Smith is famed for his metaphor of the invisible hand, the metaphor was largely ignored until economists in the twentieth century came to realize that the metaphor was a robust model that anticipated their own views.
- B. Some twentieth-century economists gave Smith’s metaphor of the invisible hand a significance it does not have in Smith’s work, but it is nevertheless a useful model of how individuals produce aggregate benefits by pursuing their own economic interests.
- C. Smith’s metaphor of the invisible hand has been interpreted as a model of how individuals acting in their own interest produce aggregate benefits, but it was intended as a subtle critique of the economic theory of mercantilism.
- D. The reputation of Smith’s metaphor of the invisible hand is not due to the importance of the metaphor in Smith’s work but rather to the promotion of the metaphor by some later economists for their own ends.

Question ID 1d0ab3b7

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
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ID: 1d0ab3b7

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

- The text makes which point about the difference between the proportions of Quito residents and Lima residents using parks?
- A. It was much larger than the researchers conducting the study expected.
 - B. It is caused by something other than the parks’ proximity to city residents.
 - C. It could be due to inaccuracies in the survey results.
 - D. It was calculated using sources that predate the survey.

Question ID 68119550

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
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ID: 68119550

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

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

- A. It is the earliest known example of a titanosaur nesting and breeding site.
- B. It was very difficult to excavate given that it was discovered in a mine.
- C. It may have been occupied by other sauropods in addition to titanosaurs.
- D. It is farther north than any other nesting site discovered in South America.

Question ID adcc7e63

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
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ID: adcc7e63

Utah is home to Pando, a colony of about 47,000 quaking aspen trees that all share a single root system. Pando is one of the largest single organisms by mass on Earth, but ecologists are worried that its growth is declining in part because of grazing by animals. The ecologists say that strong fences could prevent deer from eating young trees and help Pando start thriving again.

According to the text, why are ecologists worried about Pando?

- A. It isn't growing at the same rate it used to.
- B. It isn't producing young trees anymore.
- C. It can't grow into new areas because it is blocked by fences.
- D. Its root system can't support many more new trees.

Question ID 6f16c217

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
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ID: 6f16c217

Algae living within the tissues of corals play a critical role in keeping corals, and the marine ecosystems they are part of, thriving. Some coral species appear brown in color when healthy due to the algae colonies living in their tissues. In the event of an environmental stressor, the algae can die or be expelled, causing the corals to appear white. To recover the algae, the bleached corals then begin to produce bright colors, which block intense sunlight, encouraging the light-sensitive algae to recolonize the corals.

What does the text most strongly suggest about corals that produce bright colors?

- A. These corals have likely been subjected to stressful environmental conditions.
- B. These corals are likely more vulnerable to exposure from intense sunlight than white corals are.
- C. These corals have likely recovered from an environmental event without the assistance of algae colonies.
- D. These corals are more likely to survive without algae colonies than brown corals are.

Question ID 3a78185d

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
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ID: 3a78185d

Philadelphia’s Black Pearl Chamber Orchestra, founded by Jeri Lynne Johnson, performs classical music, from well-known compositions by Beethoven to contemporary works by Jessie Montgomery. For the orchestra’s iConduct! program, Johnson invites community members to learn some basic elements of conducting and then experience conducting the Black Pearl orchestra themselves.

Which choice best states the main idea of the text?

- A. The Black Pearl orchestra performs music from all over the world but mostly performs music composed by Philadelphians.
- B. Johnson founded the Black Pearl orchestra to perform classical music by contemporary artist Jessie Montgomery.
- C. The Black Pearl orchestra gives community members the chance to both listen to and participate in classical music performance.
- D. Johnson has community members conduct an orchestra to demonstrate how difficult the task is.

Question ID d0bc361d

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
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ID: d0bc361d

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

Which choice best states the main idea of the text?

- A. When the results of a natural-habitat study and those from a lab study of a wild animal such as the Western scrub-jay conflict, the study in the natural habitat is more likely than the lab study to have accurate results.
- B. Studying wild animals such as the Western scrub-jay in both their natural habitat and lab settings is likely to yield conflicting results that researchers cannot fully resolve.
- C. Wild animals such as the Western scrub-jay can be effectively studied in their natural habitat and in the lab, but each approach has drawbacks that could affect the accuracy of the findings.
- D. Differing results between natural-habitat and lab studies of wild animals such as the Western scrub-jay are a strong indication that both of the studies had design flaws that affected the accuracy of their results.

Question ID cef8f768

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
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ID: cef8f768

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

- According to the text, why was Wang and his team’s discovery of the *Terropterus xiushanensis* fossil significant?
- A. The fossil constitutes the first evidence found by scientists that mixopterids lived more than 400 million years ago.
 - B. The fossil helps establish that mixopterids are more closely related to modern arachnids and horseshoe crabs than previously thought.
 - C. The fossil helps establish a more accurate timeline of the evolution of mixopterids on the paleocontinents of Laurussia and Gondwana.
 - D. The fossil constitutes the first evidence found by scientists that mixopterids existed outside the paleocontinent of Laurussia.

Question ID 4e5d5c4f

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
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ID: 4e5d5c4f

Biologists have predicted that birds’ feather structures vary with habitat temperature, but this hadn’t been tested in mountain environments. Ornithologist Sahas Barve studied feathers from 249 songbird species inhabiting different elevations—and thus experiencing different temperatures—in the Himalayan Mountains. He found that feathers of high-elevation species not only have a greater proportion of warming downy sections to flat and smooth sections than do feathers of low-elevation species, but high-elevation species’ feathers also tend to be longer, providing a thicker layer of insulation.

Which choice best states the main idea of the text?

- A. Barve’s investigation shows that some species of Himalayan songbirds have evolved feathers that better regulate body temperature than do the feathers of other species, contradicting previous predictions.
- B. Barve found an association between habitat temperature and feather structure among Himalayan songbirds, lending new support to a general prediction.
- C. Barve discovered that songbirds have adapted to their environment by growing feathers without flat and smooth sections, complicating an earlier hypothesis.
- D. The results of Barve’s study suggest that the ability of birds to withstand cold temperatures is determined more strongly by feather length than feather structure, challenging an established belief.

Question ID 8bab41ce

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
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ID: 8bab41ce

The following text is adapted from María Cristina Mena’s 1914 short story “The Vine-Leaf.”

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

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

- A. Many have come to tolerate him despite his disheveled appearance.
- B. Few feel concerned that he will divulge their confidences.
- C. Some dislike how freely he discusses his own family.
- D. Most would be unimpressed by him were it not for his professional expertise.

Question ID ea9a8d8e

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
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ID: ea9a8d8e

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

Which choice best states the main idea of the text?

- A. The compilers of *The Fifty-Year Mission* had lofty goals for their oral history of the *Star Trek* franchise, but the published work lacks information about many key events in the franchise’s history.
- B. *The Fifty-Year Mission* includes more accounts from people involved with *Star Trek* television shows than it does from people involved with *Star Trek* films.
- C. The large amount of material compiled into *The Fifty-Year Mission* is surprising given that many of the people involved in the *Star Trek* franchise did not participate in the oral history project.
- D. *The Fifty-Year Mission* represents a worthwhile attempt to thoroughly recount the history of the *Star Trek* franchise, but its approach has an important limitation.

Question ID d4445ff1

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ID: d4445ff1

In West Africa, jalis have traditionally been keepers of information about family histories and records of important events. They have often served as teachers and advisers, too. New technologies may have changed some aspects of the role today, but jalis continue to be valued for knowing and protecting their peoples’ stories.

Which choice best states the main idea of the text?

- A. Even though there have been some changes in their role, jalis continue to preserve their communities’ histories.
- B. Although jalis have many roles, many of them like teaching best.
- C. Jalis have been entertaining the people within their communities for centuries.
- D. Technology can now do some of the things jalis used to be responsible for.

Question ID aefad9ba

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ID: aefad9ba

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

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

- A. It doesn’t have a retrograde orbit, but it likely has the same origin as the moons with retrograde orbits.
- B. Its orbit is so tilted with respect to the other moons’ orbits that it’s neither prograde nor retrograde.
- C. It has a prograde orbit that is likely the result of having collided with another body orbiting Saturn.
- D. It has a prograde orbit and may not be a remnant of an earlier body that orbited Saturn.

Question ID 5f70e1cd

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
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ID: 5f70e1cd

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

One man, who was more excited than the rest, flung his hat high into the air, and shouted (as well as I could make out) “Who roar for the Sub-Warden?” Everybody roared, but whether it was for the Sub-Warden, or not, did not clearly appear: some were shouting “Bread!” and some “Taxes!”, but no one seemed to know what it was they really wanted.

All this I saw from the open window of the Warden’s breakfast-saloon, looking across the shoulder of the Lord Chancellor. “What can it all mean?” he kept repeating to himself. “I never heard such shouting before—and at this time of the morning, too! And with such unanimity!”

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

- A. He asks about the meaning of the crowd’s shouting, even though he claims to know what the crowd wants.
- B. He indicates a desire to speak to the crowd, even though the crowd has asked to speak to the Sub-Warden.
- C. He expresses sympathy for the crowd’s demands, even though the crowd’s shouting annoys him.
- D. He describes the crowd as being united, even though the crowd clearly appears otherwise.

Question ID bcbb780a

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
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ID: bcbb780a

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

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

- A. It has been unjustly ignored by most scholars despite the importance of the themes addressed by many of the genre’s songs.
- B. It evolved over time from a superficial genre focused on romance to a genre focused on more serious concerns.
- C. It has been unfairly dismissed for the inclusion of subject matter that is also found in other musical genres.
- D. It gave rise to a Black women’s musical tradition that has endured even though the genre itself faded in the late twentieth century.

Question ID ec7f8dfb

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
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ID: ec7f8dfb

The following text is adapted from Christina Rossetti’s 1881 poem “Monna Innominata 2.”

I wish I could remember that first day,
First hour, first moment of your meeting me,
If bright or dim the season, it might be
Summer or Winter for [all] I can say;
So unrecorded did it slip away,
So blind was I to see and to foresee,
So dull to mark the budding of my tree
That would not blossom yet for many a May.

Which choice best states the main idea of the text?

- A. The speaker celebrates how the passage of time has strengthened a relationship that once seemed unimportant.
- B. Because the speaker did not anticipate how important a relationship would become, she cannot recall how the relationship began, which she regrets.
- C. As the anniversary of the beginning of an important relationship approaches, the speaker feels conflicted about how best to commemorate it.
- D. After years of neglecting a once valuable relationship, the speaker worries it may be too late for her to salvage the relationship.

Question ID 414cfbe8

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
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ID: 414cfbe8

The painter María Izquierdo played an important role in the development of twentieth-century Mexican art, but her work has never been well-known in the United States except among art historians. One reason for Izquierdo’s relative obscurity is the enormous popularity of some of her peers. In particular, the painters Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera have so captivated the interest of US audiences that Izquierdo and other Mexican artists from the period often get overlooked, despite the high quality of their work.

Which choice best states the main idea of the text?

- A. Izquierdo’s work is not as well-known in the United States as it should be because Kahlo and Rivera draw so much of the public’s attention.
- B. During Izquierdo’s lifetime, her paintings were displayed in galleries in the United States much more frequently than paintings by Kahlo and Rivera were.
- C. Izquierdo painted some of the same subjects that Kahlo and Rivera painted but used different techniques than they used.
- D. Few of Izquierdo’s works are in galleries today because she produced only a small number of paintings.

Question ID 97d4f5b7

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ID: 97d4f5b7

The ice melted on a Norwegian mountain during a particularly warm summer in 2019, revealing a 1,700-year-old sandal to a mountaineer looking for artifacts. The sandal would normally have degraded quickly, but it was instead well preserved for centuries by the surrounding ice. According to archaeologist Espen Finstad and his team, the sandal, like those worn by imperial Romans, wouldn't have offered any protection from the cold in the mountains, so some kind of insulation, like fabric or animal skin, would have needed to be worn on the feet with the sandal.

What does the text indicate about the discovery of the sandal?

- A. Temperatures contributed to both protecting and revealing the sandal.
- B. The discovery revealed that the Roman Empire had more influence on Norway than archaeologists previously assumed.
- C. Archaeologists would have found the sandal eventually without help from the general public.
- D. The sandal would have degraded if it hadn't been removed from the ice.

Question ID b6e78548

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ID: b6e78548

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

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

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Which choice best states the main idea of the text?

- A. A person was fortunate enough to have found love despite his obvious shortcomings.
- B. An exceptionally talented person professes humility to avoid intimidating others.
- C. A person appreciates the extensive time he passed in the company of someone he deeply admired.
- D. A truly brilliant person lets ideas mature in his mind before expressing them aloud.

Question ID 4e969314

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
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ID: 4e969314

To dye wool, Navajo (Diné) weaver Lillie Taylor uses plants and vegetables from Arizona, where she lives. For example, she achieved the deep reds and browns featured in her 2003 rug *In the Path of the Four Seasons* by using Arizona dock roots, drying and grinding them before mixing the powder with water to create a dye bath. To intensify the appearance of certain colors, Taylor also sometimes mixes in clay obtained from nearby soil.

Which choice best states the main idea of the text?

- A. Reds and browns are not commonly featured in most of Taylor’s rugs.
- B. Taylor draws on local resources in the approach she uses to dye wool.
- C. Taylor finds it difficult to locate Arizona dock root in the desert.
- D. *In the Path of the Four Seasons* is widely acclaimed for its many colors and innovative weaving techniques.

Question ID 227f7f9c

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: 227f7f9c

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

When little lights in little ports come out,
Quivering down through water with the stars,
And all the fishing fleet of slender spars
Range at their moorings, veer with tide about;

When race of wind is stilled and sails are furled,
And underneath our single riding-light
The curve of black-ribbed deck gleams palely white,
And slumbrous waters pool a slumbrous world;

—Then, and then only, have I thought how sweet
Old age might sink upon a windy youth,
Quiet beneath the riding-light of truth,
Weathered through storms, and gracious in retreat.

- Which choice best states the main idea of the text?
- A. The tranquility of a port in the evening can incline a person to appreciate the stillness of old age.
 - B. The difficulty of bringing a ship into port is apt training for dealing with the types of struggles encountered in old age.
 - C. A person who leads a long life that is varied and active may find it difficult to stay in a calm place.
 - D. The contrast between the peacefulness of a port at night and its activity during the day reflects the contrast between the calm of old age and the vibrancy of youth.

Question ID 3def2cfa

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: 3def2cfa

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

Which choice best states the main idea of the text?

- A. Dog breeds would not exist without many years of human intervention in dogs’ reproduction.
- B. Research fails to confirm a commonly held belief about dog breeds and behavior.
- C. The dog breeds most popular among owners have often changed over the past 160 years.
- D. A study of dog breeds is notable for its usage of both opinion surveys and DNA sequencing.

Question ID 6390fc17

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: 6390fc17

Using the Stratospheric Observatory for Infrared Astronomy (SOFIA), a team of astronomers mapped out the magnetic field of G47, one of the Milky Way’s galactic bones (dense clouds of gas and dust that run through the middle of the arm of a spiral galaxy). Surprisingly, the map revealed a magnetic field with no clear pattern or direction. The researchers had expected the magnetic field to be similar to the more uniform fields seen in galactic bones in other arms of the Milky Way.

According to the text, what was surprising about the researchers’ mapping of the magnetic field of galactic bone G47?

- A. It showed a weaker magnetic field than expected.
- B. It implied that previous mappings of the magnetic field were inaccurate.
- C. It produced magnetic field measurements similar to those for other galactic bones.
- D. It revealed a magnetic field that wasn’t uniform.

Question ID fae3b9fa

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: fae3b9fa

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

Which choice best states the main idea of the text?

- A. Literary theorist Mikhail Bakhtin argued that there are important characteristics of narratives that are not fully encompassed by two concepts that other theorists have used to analyze narratives.
- B. Literary theorist Mikhail Bakhtin claimed that meaning is not inherent in a narrative but is created when an audience encounters a narrative so that narratives are interpreted differently by different people.
- C. The storytelling methods used in *The Godfather Part II* may seem unusually complicated, but they can be easily understood when two concepts from literary theory are utilized.
- D. Narratives that are told out of chronological order are more difficult for audiences to understand than are narratives presented chronologically.

Question ID 8d57135d

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: 8d57135d

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

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

- A. They likely make use of different types of evidence than historians of capitalism typically rely on.
- B. They likely differ from historians of capitalism in the methods they use to derive longitudinal economic data from archival records.
- C. They likely have a different view about which activities should be considered capitalist in nature than historians of capitalism do.
- D. They likely view capitalism as having been more beneficial for Africa than historians of capitalism do.

Question ID 9844f071

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: 9844f071

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

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

- A. Waugh’s works can appropriately be separated into two periods by their subject matter and tone.
- B. Regardless of when they were written, Waugh’s works have important similarities that transcend their differences.
- C. The earliest of Waugh’s works exhibit a satirical tone, even if that tone is more apparent in Waugh’s later works.
- D. Over time, Waugh’s works became less humorous and more focused on weightier topics.

Question ID 0bc414ca

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: 0bc414ca

Online surveys are a common tool researchers use to collect information. These surveys are usually designed for use on personal computers (PCs), but more people are using smartphones to complete them than they are PCs. This shift in device usage may change how participants interact with online surveys. When researchers Jean Philippe Décieux and Philipp E. Sischka investigated, they found that PC users were more likely to multitask while taking surveys than smartphone users were, but PC users were also more likely to complete the surveys.

Which choice best states the main idea of the text?

- A. People are choosing to take online surveys on smartphones more often than they are on PCs because smartphones are convenient.
- B. Researchers are investigating why survey completion rates are higher on PCs than they are on smartphones, despite increased multitasking on PCs.
- C. Researchers prefer online surveys to other ways of collecting information because they think online survey results are more reliable.
- D. A study shows that the type of device people use to complete online surveys affects how they interact with these surveys.

Question ID a34de1df

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: a34de1df

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

Which choice best states the main idea of the text?

- A. Researchers have determined that the arrangement of Izapa’s structures was based on those of other nearby settlements.
- B. Cultural ceremonies in Izapa seem to have played a more important role for its residents than those in smaller, surrounding settlements did.
- C. Although archaeologists have learned much about Izapa over years of research, they have only recently found the smaller settlements that surrounded it.
- D. Researchers have inferred that Izapa was related to the smaller settlements that surrounded it based in part on the similarity of their construction.

Question ID d10ac377

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: d10ac377

During the World War II era, some Mexican American women adopted a striking new look called *pachuca* style. They wore altered men’s jackets or zoot suits (wide-legged, long-coated suits) and dramatic makeup, and they combed their hair into high, rounded shapes. Some people criticized *pachuca* style, saying it was dangerous and women should dress traditionally. But historians see things differently. They see *pachuca* style as a form of rebellion against the era’s rigid social expectations for women. They say that it showed a desire for self-expression and freedom on the part of women who adopted the style.

According to the text, how do historians view *pachuca* style?

- A. They think that *pachuca* style was such a popular trend that it continues to influence fashion in the United States to the present day.
- B. They think that *pachuca* style was a way for some Mexican American women to express themselves and resist strict social expectations.
- C. They think that *pachuca* style was celebrated because it enabled some Mexican American women to show their support for the United States during World War II.
- D. They think that *pachuca* style was similar to other fashion trends that different groups of women adopted in the same period.

Question ID 3d07a252

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: 3d07a252

A contraction of “you all,” the pronoun “y’all” has long been used as a plural version of “you” in the South and in Black communities around the US. In recent decades, most other English-speaking communities in the US have begun to use “y’all.” What explains its rise in popularity? Many varieties of English have no pronoun that specifically addresses more than one person and instead must use “you” to address both one person and more than one. But “y’all” always refers to two or more people. As a result, it conveys the speaker’s meaning more precisely than “you” can.

Which question does the text most directly attempt to answer?

- A. How many other plural versions of the pronoun “you” are there in English, besides “y’all”?
- B. Why has the pronoun “y’all” become more widely used in the US?
- C. When was the first recorded use of the pronoun “y’all” in the English language?
- D. Is “y’all” commonly used in English-speaking regions of the world besides the US?

Question ID 8a3275db

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: 8a3275db

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

Which choice best states the main idea of the text?

- A. Although it may seem surprising that foreign investment declines in developing countries as natural-resource extraction makes up a larger share of those countries’ economies, that decline happens because resource extraction requires initial investments too large for foreign investors to supply.
- B. Although developing countries tend to become less dependent on foreign investment as natural-resource industries make up a larger share of their economies, this change may not occur if the boom-bust cycle of those industries destabilizes local currencies or increases countries’ vulnerability to external shocks.
- C. Although one might expect that foreign investment would increase as natural-resource extraction makes up a larger share of developing countries’ economies, the opposite happens because heavy reliance on natural resources can lead to unattractive conditions for investors.
- D. Although foreign investors tend to avoid initial investments in natural-resource industries in developing countries, foreign investment may increase significantly as those industries stabilize and the risks associated with them decline.

Question ID ee29c9d6

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: ee29c9d6

Recently, scientists looked at data collected by NASA’s InSight lander to learn more about seismic activity on Mars, known as marsquakes. The data show that the marsquakes all started from the same location on the planet. This discovery was surprising to scientists, as they expected that the marsquakes would originate from all over the planet because of the cooling of the planet’s surface. Now, scientists believe that there could be areas of active magma flows deep beneath the planet’s surface that trigger the marsquakes.

According to the text, what was surprising to scientists studying the seismic activity data from NASA’s InSight lander?

- A. The surface temperature of Mars has been rising.
- B. There were different types of seismic waves causing marsquakes.
- C. NASA’s InSight lander collected less data than scientists had expected.
- D. All the marsquakes started from the same location on the planet.

Question ID 5dd9a927

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: 5dd9a927

Businesses selling clothing and other fashion items face obstacles in trying to forecast how much product to order: tastes and styles change quickly, while manufacturing clothing takes a significant amount of time. Researchers Youran Fu and Marshall Fisher have found that combining sellers’ own data with information gathered from social media can dramatically improve the accuracy of such forecasts—by 24 to 57 percent in the cases they directly studied. Better predictions mean demand is easier to meet without retailers becoming overstocked.

Which choice best states the main idea of the text?

- A. Using multiple data sources can enhance the ability of sellers in the fashion industry to anticipate demand.
- B. Social media is revolutionizing how both sellers and researchers view the fashion industry.
- C. Becoming overstocked is the main preoccupation of sellers trying to forecast demand for fashion items.
- D. Retailers can use their own data to accurately predict how tastes and styles are evolving.

Question ID 31f15c17

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: 31f15c17

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

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

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

- A. Though it is true that stories of even the most uninteresting people are themselves interesting because all people are unique, the reason this story is interesting is nonetheless difficult to understand because of the passage of time.
- B. Even though it is a story of a person of no particular importance, its age and the manner in which it therefore must be told are both indicators that the story itself is important.
- C. Like all stories about the lives of inconsequential people, this story must necessarily be related in a particular way if the reason the story is consequential is to be made evident to the audience.
- D. It is a remarkable story that happened to an unremarkable person, though one could plausibly argue that because the story is valuable, some of its value accrues to the person at its center.

Question ID 5cf669ce

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: 5cf669ce

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

Which choice best states the main idea of the text?

- A. Continued research and development in artificial-leaf technology is needed before the devices can be widely used as an energy source.
- B. The recent increase in the commercial use of artificial leaves as an energy source has encouraged many scientists to research ways to improve the technology.
- C. Artificial leaves split water molecules into oxygen and hydrogen gas using catalysts more efficiently than plants do using the process of photosynthesis.
- D. Artificial leaves were developed to mimic the natural process of photosynthesis in plants in order to store energy for long-term commercial use.

Question ID 70e105da

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: 70e105da

A subject of much speculation, distinctive sets of parallel ridges mark the icy crust of Europa, Jupiter’s smallest moon. Researchers now claim that the ridges’ formation mechanism mirrors that of a strikingly similar pair on Greenland’s ice sheet. There, surface water seeped through fissures in the sheet and formed a water pocket that subsequently disrupted the overlying ice, forcing fragments of it upward and outward into peaks, as the pocket froze and expanded. Although Europa lacks liquid surface water, the same process could be driven by the moon’s subsurface ocean.

Which choice best states the main idea of the text?

- A. Researchers think that the ridges on Europa and the ridges in Greenland may have been formed by the same process even though Europa, unlike Greenland, doesn’t have liquid water on its surface.
- B. The primary difference between the ridges on Europa and the ridges in Greenland is that unlike the Europa ridges, the Greenland ridges are parallel.
- C. The pair of ridges found on Greenland’s ice sheet appear to have formed long before the recently discovered sets of ridges on Europa formed.
- D. Researchers don’t understand why Europa is marked by so many sets of ridges when the moon doesn’t have any liquid water on its surface that could have collected and expanded under the icy crust.

Question ID 23121ffa

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: 23121ffa

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

Which choice best states the main idea of the text?

- A. Of the three films for which Carlos is credited, *Tron* features the most original music from her.
- B. The director of *The Shining* used most of the music that Carlos composed for it.
- C. Beethoven is widely considered to be a more important composer than Carlos.
- D. Carlos is a notable innovator among film composers in the 1970s and 1980s.

Question ID 3765041a

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: 3765041a

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

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

- A. He draws from traditional Native art forms to create his original works.
- B. He has been influenced by Native and non-Native artists equally.
- C. He finds inspiration from boxing in designing the dresses he makes.
- D. He rejects expectations about color and pattern when incorporating beadwork.

Question ID 5a36e9e0

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: 5a36e9e0

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

Which choice best states the main idea of the text?

- A. As the leader of NASA's Aspera mission, Vargas will be the first person to investigate the makeup of the CGM.
- B. Although galaxies that are surrounded by the CGM have been studied, researchers have been unable to directly observe low-density gas in the CGM in the "warm-hot" phase.
- C. Researchers don't yet have a complete understanding of the process of galaxy evolution but have raised the possibility that galaxies interact with each other at times.
- D. The Aspera mission is expected to produce the first direct observations of CGM gas in the "warm-hot" phase, which likely has an important role in the evolution of galaxies.

Question ID bc7cfb93

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: bc7cfb93

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

MIRANDA: ’Tis far off,
And rather like a dream than an assurance
That my remembrance warrants. Had I not
Four or five women once that tended me?

PROSPERO: Thou hadst, and more, Miranda. But how is it
That this lives in thy mind? What seest thou else
In the dark backward and abysm of time?
If thou remember’st ought ere thou camest here,
How thou camest here thou mayst.

- In the text, which point does Prospero most directly make about Miranda and her memories?
- A. Miranda’s reminiscences about her early childhood have a melancholy quality that betrays her discontented view of her current circumstances.
 - B. Miranda’s doubts about the accuracy of one recollection of a place other than the island are clouding her judgment and seem to be making her reluctant to explore her recollection of traveling to the island.
 - C. Miranda’s ability to summon details of an experience she had before arriving on the island suggests that she may also be able to summon details of her arrival on the island.
 - D. Miranda’s impression of a scene is vague because she is remembering a scenario she had daydreamed about as a child rather than a scenario that had occurred in reality.

Question ID e688875b

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: e688875b

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

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

Which choice best states the main idea of the text?

- A. The narrator feels a growing sense of isolation even though his companions are nearby during the balloon ride.
- B. The narrator and his companions are completely absorbed in the change in perspective they gain while riding in the balloon.
- C. The narrator and his companions are troubled by the disorienting effects of the altitude while riding in the balloon.
- D. The narrator is pleasantly surprised by his companions’ unrestrained enthusiasm about the sensation of riding in the balloon.

Question ID 17607b25

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: 17607b25

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

Which choice best states the main idea of the text?

- A. Because of a new technology, researchers can locate and recover more shipwrecks than they could in the past.
- B. Researchers have been able to identify the location of a number of Chinese kilns in operation 1,000 years ago.
- C. With the help of a special tool, researchers have determined the likely origin of bowls recovered from a shipwreck.
- D. Before the invention of portable X-ray fluorescence, researchers needed to take a small piece out of an artifact to analyze its components.

Question ID ea1b9108

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: ea1b9108

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

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

- A. It holds a greater number of fossils but from a smaller variety of species than the formation in the Minatogawa quarry does.
- B. It has provided evidence that the earliest human species may have emerged before the Pleistocene era.
- C. It is widely considered by paleontologists to be the most valuable source of information about prehistoric life forms.
- D. It contains specimens from an older time period than those found in the formation in the Minatogawa quarry.

Question ID 9393428d

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: 9393428d

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

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

- A. *M. robustus* leave the Octopus Garden upon reaching an intermediary stage of development.
- B. The *M. robustus* population at the Octopus Garden remains stable despite variations in water temperature.
- C. *M. robustus* nests in the Octopus Garden contain on average fewer but larger eggs than nests at similar ocean depths.
- D. The Octopus Garden provides an ideal feeding ground for *M. robustus* hatchlings.

Question ID 7f22da70

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: 7f22da70

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

Which choice best states the main idea of the text?

- A. A partnership between the Quinault Indian Nation and Wild Salmon Center shows the importance of collaborative approaches to preserving biodiversity.
- B. Nature-based approaches can be effective ways to achieve conservation goals.
- C. As indicated by a recent project, logjams help the blueback salmon thrive and reproduce.
- D. Scientists now realize that nature-based conservation methods offer better long-term solutions to environmental issues than methods that are not nature-based do.

Question ID 613e4900

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: 613e4900

Some astronomers searching for extraterrestrial life have proposed that atmospheric NH₃ (ammonia) can serve as a biosignature gas—an indication that a planet harbors life. Jingcheng Huang, Sara Seager, and colleagues evaluated this possibility, finding that on rocky planets, atmospheric NH₃ likely couldn't reach detectably high levels in the absence of biological activity. But the team also found that on so-called mini-Neptunes—gas planets smaller than Neptune but with atmospheres similar to Neptune's—atmospheric pressure and temperature can be high enough to produce atmospheric NH₃.

Based on the text, Huang, Seager, and colleagues would most likely agree with which statement about atmospheric NH₃?

- A. Its presence is more likely to indicate that a planet is a mini-Neptune than that the planet is a rocky planet that could support life.
- B. Its absence from a planet that's not a mini-Neptune indicates that the planet probably doesn't have life.
- C. It should be treated as a biosignature gas if detected in the atmosphere of a rocky planet but not if detected in the atmosphere of a mini-Neptune.
- D. It doesn't reliably reach high enough concentrations in the atmospheres of rocky planets or mini-Neptunes to be treated as a biosignature gas.

Question ID 3c2ac1ec

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: 3c2ac1ec

The following text is adapted from Robert Louis Stevenson’s 1883 novel *Treasure Island*. Bill is a sailor staying at the Admiral Benbow, an inn run by the narrator’s parents.

Every day when [Bill] came back from his stroll he would ask if any seafaring men had gone by along the road. At first we thought it was the want of company of his own kind that made him ask this question, but at last we began to see he was desirous to avoid them. When a seaman did [stay] at the Admiral Benbow (as now and then some did) he would look in at him through the curtained door before he entered the parlour; and he was always sure to be as silent as a mouse when any such was present.

According to the text, why does Bill regularly ask about “seafaring men”?

- A. He’s hoping to find an old friend and fellow sailor.
- B. He’s trying to secure a job as part of the crew on a new ship.
- C. He isn’t sure that other guests at the inn will be welcoming of sailors.
- D. He doesn’t want to encounter any other sailor unexpectedly.

Question ID 497b2ccd

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: 497b2ccd

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

Which choice best states the main idea of the text?

- A. One potential means of justifying opposition to lying is Pallikkathayil’s argument that we have an obligation to respect other people’s agency that entails a commitment to truthfulness except in certain circumstances.
- B. Many people have an intuitive sense that lying is permissible in some circumstances but lack a principled way to identify those circumstances, and Pallikkathayil’s argument may provide a means of resolving that problem.
- C. Pallikkathayil’s argument suggests that if we have a duty to respect other people’s agential interests and if possession of false beliefs constrains agency, then we have an inviolable duty to speak truthfully.
- D. Pallikkathayil’s argument shows that if our intuition that circumstances may make lying permissible is correct, then it is unclear whether there are any grounds for an opposition to lying in the first place.

Question ID 0ccf0b35

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: 0ccf0b35

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

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

- A. It provided preliminary evidence that microorganism-mediated nutrient cycling was accelerated in the transplanted cores.
- B. It suggested that temperature-induced changes in microorganism activity may be occurring at increasingly high elevations.
- C. It ruled out a potential alternative explanation for the acceleration in microorganism-mediated nutrient cycling.
- D. It clarified that microorganism activity levels in the plant-soil cores varied depending on which microorganisms comprised the community.

Question ID e0ed503d

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: e0ed503d

Culinary anthropologist Vertamae Smart-Grosvenor may be known for her decades of work in national public television and radio, but her book *Vibration Cooking: or, the Travel Notes of a Geechee Girl* is likely her most influential project. The 1970 book, whose title refers to Smart-Grosvenor’s roots in the Low Country of South Carolina, was unusual for its time. It combined memoir, recipes, travel writing, and social commentary and challenged notions about conventions of food and cooking. Long admired by many, the book and its author have shaped contemporary approaches to writing about cuisine.

Which choice best describes the main idea of the text?

- A. Smart-Grosvenor’s unconventional book *Vibration Cooking: or, the Travel Notes of a Geechee Girl* is an important contribution to food writing.
- B. Smart-Grosvenor held many different positions over her life, including reporter and food writer.
- C. Smart-Grosvenor’s groundbreaking book *Vibration Cooking: or, the Travel Notes of a Geechee Girl* didn’t receive the praise it deserved when it was first published in 1970.
- D. Smart-Grosvenor was a talented chef whose work inspired many people to start cooking for themselves.

Question ID 4591c86f

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: 4591c86f

Microplastics are tiny pieces of plastic waste. Areas of the ocean with higher concentrations of microplastic particles also have smaller and fewer waves. A study by Yukun Sun and colleagues found that the concentration of microplastic particles cannot be the only reason for this reduced wave activity because the concentration of particles that would have the observed effect is much higher than that found in these areas of the ocean. However, they found that surfactants, chemicals often used to manufacture plastics, are released into the water from microplastics and have a much stronger wave-reducing effect.

According to the text, what did Sun and colleagues discover about surfactants?

- A. They have a much stronger effect on wave activity than microplastics alone do.
- B. They are mainly composed of water.
- C. They are helpful for removing microplastics from the ocean.
- D. They can be used to contain microplastics within certain areas of the ocean.

Question ID d09e5eb4

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: d09e5eb4

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

Which choice best states the text’s main idea?

- A. The slimy threads that hagfish release might help researchers create a new kind of fabric.
- B. Hagfish have inspired researchers to develop a new petroleum-based fabric.
- C. Hagfish are not well suited to being raised in captivity.
- D. The ability of hagfish to slime their attackers compensates for their being jawless.

Question ID 1f8c598e

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: 1f8c598e

A common assumption among art historians is that the invention of photography in the mid-nineteenth century displaced the painted portrait in the public consciousness. The diminishing popularity of the portrait miniature, which coincided with the rise of photography, seems to support this claim. However, photography’s impact on the portrait miniature may be overstated. Although records from art exhibitions in the Netherlands from 1820 to 1892 show a decrease in the number of both full-sized and miniature portraits submitted, this trend was established before the invention of photography.

- Based on the text, what can be concluded about the diminishing popularity of the portrait miniature in the nineteenth century?
- A. Factors other than the rise of photography may be more directly responsible for the portrait miniature’s decline.
 - B. Although portrait miniatures became less common than photographs, they were widely regarded as having more artistic merit.
 - C. The popularity of the portrait miniature likely persisted for longer than art historians have assumed.
 - D. As demand for portrait miniatures decreased, portrait artists likely shifted their creative focus to photography.

Question ID bc17231b

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: bc17231b

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

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

- A. He often depicts the subjects of his sculptures using an unrealistic style.
- B. He uses different kinds of materials depending on what kind of sculpture he plans to create.
- C. He tends to base his art on important historical figures rather than on fictional characters.
- D. He has altered his approach to sculpture over time, and his works have become increasingly abstract.

Question ID 2a7bd213

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: 2a7bd213

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

Which choice best states the main idea of the text?

- A. Antihydrogen ballistics observations were conducted at CERN to test specific conclusions about antigravity presented in the 2022 paper by Dimopoulos et al.
- B. Although theoreticians were justified in studying antigravity before the release of the 2023 report, the report’s findings suggest that the rationale for theoretical consideration offered in the 2022 paper by Dimopoulos et al. is no longer applicable.
- C. The theoretical approach represented in the 2022 paper by Dimopoulos et al. assumed that unambiguous proof of antigravity would not be achievable, but the results in the 2023 report undermine that assumption.
- D. Before 2023, researchers’ inordinate focus on theoretical considerations hindered the development of the experimental regimen for direct antihydrogen ballistics observations.

Question ID 67d94bb6

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: 67d94bb6

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

Which choice best states the main idea of the text?

- A. Medina-Alcaide and her team’s study demonstrated that fireplaces were essential to the creators of Paleolithic cave art.
- B. Medina-Alcaide and her team discovered that Paleolithic cave artists in Spain used animal-fat lamps more often than they used torches.
- C. Medina-Alcaide and her team were reluctant to draw many conclusions from their study because of the difficulty they had replicating light sources based on known artifacts.
- D. Medina-Alcaide and her team tested Paleolithic light sources and learned some details about how Paleolithic artists traveled within dark caves.

Question ID 2df0f36b

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: 2df0f36b

Since its completion in 2014, Bosco Verticale (Vertical Forest)—a pair of residential towers in Milan, Italy, covered by vegetation—has become a striking symbol of environmental sustainability in architecture. Stefano Boeri intended his design, which features balconies that are home to hundreds of trees, to serve as a model for promoting urban biodiversity. However, the concept has faced skepticism: critics note that although the trees used in Bosco Verticale were specifically cultivated for the project, it’s too early to tell if they can thrive in this unusual setting.

According to the text, why are some critics skeptical of the concept behind Bosco Verticale?

- A. Some essential aspects of Bosco Verticale’s design are difficult to adapt to locations other than Milan.
- B. The plant life on Bosco Verticale ended up being less varied than Boeri had envisioned it would be.
- C. The construction of Bosco Verticale was no less environmentally damaging than the construction of more conventional buildings is.
- D. It is unclear whether Bosco Verticale can support the plant life included in its design.

Question ID 951a51e7

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: 951a51e7

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

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

©1984 by Milan Kundera. Translation ©1984 by Harper & Row, Publishers, Inc.

Which choice best states the main idea of the text?

- A. As a dog, Karenin possesses a sense of time that involves a strong preference for predictability and an aversion to disruption.
- B. After he’s moved to a new home, Karenin’s negative response to changes has become more pronounced.
- C. Similar to Tomas and Tereza, Karenin comprehends time as circular rather than as a straightforward progression.
- D. As is the case for other dogs, Karenin’s sense of time seems to accelerate depending on the objects and places that surround him.

Question ID 116148ea

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: 116148ea

Cats can judge unseen people’s positions in space by the sound of their voices and thus react with surprise when the same person calls to them from two different locations in a short span of time. Saho Takagi and colleagues reached this conclusion by measuring cats’ levels of surprise based on their ear and head movements while the cats heard recordings of their owners’ voices from two speakers spaced far apart. Cats exhibited a low level of surprise when owners’ voices were played twice from the same speaker, but they showed a high level of surprise when the voice was played once each from the two different speakers.

According to the text, how did the researchers determine the level of surprise displayed by the cats in the study?

- A. They watched how each cat moved its ears and head.
- B. They examined how each cat reacted to the voice of a stranger.
- C. They studied how each cat physically interacted with its owner.
- D. They tracked how each cat moved around the room.

Question ID f4c261c7

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: f4c261c7

Paleontologist Alan Tennyson and colleagues studied fossil bones found in New Zealand that are more than 55 million years old. The researchers determined that the fossil bones belonged to two previously unknown species of prehistoric penguins. Moreover, they estimated that one of the two penguin species was more than three times the size of the emperor penguin, which is the largest penguin species that exists today.

Based on the text, which choice best describes the two previously unknown penguin species?

- A. They are frequently studied by paleontologists.
- B. They are no longer living species.
- C. They were smaller than penguin species that exist today.
- D. They spent little of their lives in water.

Question ID 755dd24b

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: 755dd24b

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

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

- A. Fynbos roots damage the root systems of forest plants, leaving those plants unable to acquire sufficient nutrients.
- B. Fynbos roots extend close enough to the forest plants’ roots that they constitute a physical barrier that forest plants’ roots cannot pass.
- C. The root systems of fynbos plants allow the plants to take in so many soil nutrients that forest plants are prevented from flourishing in the fynbos.
- D. The root systems of fynbos plants enhance the soil immediately surrounding the plants, allowing them to thrive in an otherwise harsh habitat.

Question ID ca3e7233

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: ca3e7233

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

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

- A. The songs have grown in popularity since Rainey and Smith first sang them.
- B. There were more recordings made of Rainey’s songs than there were of Smith’s.
- C. There were few, if any, reliable transcriptions of Smith’s and Rainey’s improvised lyrics when Davis began her research.
- D. According to Davis, the songs sung by Rainey were more musically innovative than those sung by Smith typically were.