

Question ID c5e7bcb0

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT 8/9	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Boundaries	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: c5e7bcb0

In 1976, the Inuit rock group Sikumiut recorded the album *People of the Ice*. Though only their first record, it shows a band already skilled at the difficult task of making music that sounds easy and fun. On songs like “Utirumavunga,” Lucassie Koperqualuk’s guitar riffs effortlessly _____ Charlie Adams’s delightfully catchy vocal melodies.

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

- A. blend, with
- B. blend. With
- C. blend; with
- D. blend with

ID: c5e7bcb0 Answer

Correct Answer: D

Rationale

Choice D is the best answer. The convention being tested is punctuation between a verb and a prepositional phrase. No punctuation is needed between the verb “blend” and the prepositional phrase “with Charlie Adams’s delightfully catchy vocal melodies.” The prepositional phrase completes the idea of the sentence, explaining with what Koperqualuk’s guitar riffs blend.

Choice A is incorrect because no punctuation is needed between the verb and the prepositional phrase. Choice B is incorrect because no punctuation is needed between the verb and the prepositional phrase. Choice C is incorrect because no punctuation is needed between the verb and the prepositional phrase.

Question Difficulty: Easy

Question ID 7c04e27a

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT 8/9	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Boundaries	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: 7c04e27a

By analyzing ice cores from Greenland and Antarctica, a research team at Sweden’s Lund University discovered evidence of a solar storm that occurred 9,200 years ago. Scientists had previously thought the Sun to be in a relatively “quiet” phase at that _____ the Lund team’s finding suggests otherwise.

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

- A. time but
- B. time, but
- C. time,
- D. time

ID: 7c04e27a Answer

Correct Answer: B

Rationale

Choice B is the best answer. The convention being tested is the coordination of main clauses within a sentence. This choice correctly uses a comma and the coordinating conjunction "but" to join the first main clause ("Scientists...time") and the second main clause ("the Lund...otherwise").

Choice A is incorrect because when coordinating two longer main clauses such as these, it’s conventional to use a comma before the coordinating conjunction. Choice C is incorrect because it results in a comma splice. Without a conjunction following it, a comma can’t be used in this way to join two main clauses. Choice D is incorrect because it results in a run-on sentence. The two main clauses are fused without punctuation and/or a conjunction.

Question Difficulty: Easy

Question ID c7e787c6

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT 8/9	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Boundaries	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: c7e787c6

After the printing press was introduced in 1440, handwritten manuscripts from Europe’s medieval period were often destroyed and the paper used for other purposes. In one instance, pages _____ a collection of Norse tales dating to 1270 were discovered lining a bishop’s miter (hat).

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

- A. from:
- B. from,
- C. from
- D. from—

ID: c7e787c6 Answer

Correct Answer: C

Rationale

Choice C is the best answer. The convention being tested is punctuation use within a sentence. No punctuation is needed between the preposition “from” and the noun phrase beginning with “a collection.” The word “from” introduces a prepositional phrase that modifies the noun “pages” and provides essential information about the pages’ origin.

Choice A is incorrect. No punctuation is needed within the prepositional phrase beginning with “from.” Choice B is incorrect. No punctuation is needed within the prepositional phrase beginning with “from.” Choice D is incorrect. No punctuation is needed within the prepositional phrase beginning with “from.”

Question Difficulty: Easy

Question ID d9c6c410

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT 8/9	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Boundaries	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: d9c6c410

Ganga is a folk singing tradition that originated in the Dinaric Alps in southern Europe. Ganga singers sing different melodies at the same time. The clashing notes can echo a long way across the mountains, which is why _____

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

- A. ganga has been used as a communication method?
- B. ganga has been used as a communication method.
- C. has ganga been used as a communication method.
- D. has ganga been used as a communication method?

ID: d9c6c410 Answer

Correct Answer: B

Rationale

Choice B is the best answer. The convention being tested is end-of-sentence punctuation. This choice correctly uses a period to punctuate a declarative sentence ending with a relative clause that presents an indirect question (“why ganga has been used as a communication method.”)

Choice A is incorrect. It’s unconventional to use a question mark to punctuate a declarative sentence that presents an indirect question. Choice C is incorrect. The structure requires a declarative clause at the end of the sentence, not an interrogative clause that asks a direct question, such as “has ganga been used as a communication method.” Choice D is incorrect. The structure requires a declarative clause at the end of the sentence, not an interrogative clause that asks a direct question, such as “has ganga been used as a communication method.”

Question Difficulty: Easy

Question ID a65bec29

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT 8/9	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Boundaries	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: a65bec29

The element carbon has the highest melting point _____ all the elements on the periodic table—3,500 degrees Celsius.

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

- A. of
- B. of—
- C. of,
- D. of:

ID: a65bec29 Answer

Correct Answer: A

Rationale

Choice A is the best answer. The convention being tested is punctuation use between a preposition and its complement. No punctuation is needed between the preposition "of" and its complement "all the elements on the periodic table." The complement completes the meaning of the preposition in the phrase "the highest melting point of all the elements on the periodic table," and using punctuation to separate the complement from the preposition results in an ungrammatical sentence.

Choice B is incorrect because no punctuation is needed between the preposition and its complement. Choice C is incorrect because no punctuation is needed between the preposition and its complement. Choice D is incorrect because no punctuation is needed between the preposition and its complement.

Question Difficulty: Easy

Question ID 5e21e5cd

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT 8/9	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Boundaries	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: 5e21e5cd

At 1,280 meters, the Golden Gate Bridge in the United States is one of the longest suspension bridges in the _____ the Tsing Ma Bridge in China, at 1,377 meters, is even longer.

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

- A. world but
- B. world, but,
- C. world,
- D. world, but

ID: 5e21e5cd Answer

Correct Answer: D

Rationale

Choice D is the best answer. The convention being tested is the coordination of main clauses within a sentence. This choice correctly uses a comma and the coordinating conjunction “but” to join the first main clause (“At...world”) and the second main clause (“the...longer”).

Choice A is incorrect because when coordinating two main clauses such as these, it’s conventional to use a comma before the coordinating conjunction. Choice B is incorrect because a comma isn’t needed after the conjunction “but.” Choice C is incorrect because it results in a comma splice. Without a conjunction following it, a comma can’t be used in this way to join two main clauses.

Question Difficulty: Easy

Question ID 2aabf964

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT 8/9	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Boundaries	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: 2aabf964

Fans of science fiction will _____ multiple references to classic sci-fi stories in Janelle Mon  e’s song lyrics, including her recurring nods to the plot of the 1927 sci-fi film *Metropolis*.

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

- A. appreciate the
- B. appreciate. The
- C. appreciate, the
- D. appreciate: the

ID: 2aabf964 Answer

Correct Answer: A

Rationale

Choice A is the best answer. The convention being tested here is punctuation between a verb and object. No punctuation is needed between the verb ("appreciate") and its object ("the multiple references..."). The object helps complete the idea of the verb—in this case, it explains what fans of science fiction will appreciate—and any punctuation between the two results in an ungrammatical sentence.

Choice B is incorrect because no punctuation is needed between the verb and its object. Choice C is incorrect because no punctuation is needed between the verb and its object. Choice D is incorrect because no punctuation is needed between the verb and its object.

Question Difficulty: Easy

Question ID e82860ff

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT 8/9	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Boundaries	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: e82860ff

The capital city of the Aztec empire, Tenochtitlan, was built on an island in a lake. Because of the marshy conditions, the Aztec people _____ floating farms called “chinampas.”

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

- A. created
- B. created:
- C. created,
- D. created;

ID: e82860ff Answer

Correct Answer: A

Rationale

Choice A is the best answer. The convention being tested is punctuation use between a verb and its object. No punctuation is needed between the verb “created” and its object “floating farms called ‘chinampas.’” The object helps complete the idea of the verb—in this case, it explains what the Aztec people created—and any punctuation between the two results in an ungrammatical sentence.

Choice B is incorrect because no punctuation is needed between the verb and its object. Choice C is incorrect because no punctuation is needed between the verb and its object. Choice D is incorrect because no punctuation is needed between the verb and its object.

Question Difficulty: Easy