

Question ID 736488bc

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT 8/9	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Form, Structure, and Sense	

ID: 736488bc

In 2019, New Zealand produced 88,465 hectograms per hectare (hg/ha) of wheat, and Portugal produced 23,298 hg/ha. This is the type of information on global food production that the United Nations’ Food and Agriculture Organization _____ since 1945.

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

- A. is collecting
- B. has collected
- C. will collect
- D. collects

ID: 736488bc Answer

Correct Answer: B

Rationale

Choice B is the best answer. The convention being tested is the use of verbs to express tense in a sentence. In this choice, the present perfect tense verb “has collected,” used in conjunction with the phrase “since 1945,” correctly indicates that the Food and Agriculture Organization has collected this type of information in the past and continues to do so in the present.

Choice A is incorrect because the present progressive tense verb “is collecting” is inconsistent with the phrase “since 1945,” which indicates that the action occurred in the past and continues into the present. Choice C is incorrect because the future tense verb “will collect” is inconsistent with the phrase “since 1945,” which indicates that the action occurred in the past and continues into the present. Choice D is incorrect because the present tense verb “collects” is inconsistent with the phrase “since 1945,” which indicates that the action occurred in the past and continues into the present.

Question Difficulty: Easy

Question ID 117a7c39

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT 8/9	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Form, Structure, and Sense	

ID: 117a7c39

Why are Rome’s famous concrete structures, such as the Colosseum, still standing after 2,000-plus years, when modern concrete may not even last for fifty? Scientists _____ that the secret to Roman concrete’s durability was its unique blend of ingredients, which included volcanic ash and seawater.

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

- A. explain
- B. having explained
- C. explaining
- D. to explain

ID: 117a7c39 Answer

Correct Answer: A

Rationale

Choice A is the best answer. The convention being tested is the use of verb forms within a sentence. The main clause of a sentence requires a finite (tensed) verb, and this choice supplies the finite present tense verb “explain” to indicate what the scientists do.

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

Question Difficulty: Easy

Question ID 200585ec

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT 8/9	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Form, Structure, and Sense	

ID: 200585ec

During World War II, codebreakers played an essential role in deciphering coded messages. In the US military, more than 10,000 women _____ as codebreakers, making up nearly half of all US codebreakers.

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

- A. having served
- B. to serve
- C. served
- D. serving

ID: 200585ec Answer

Correct Answer: C

Rationale

Choice C is the best answer. The convention being tested is the use of verb forms within a sentence. A main clause requires a finite (tensed) verb to perform the action of the subject (in this case, “more than 10,000 women”), and this choice supplies the finite past tense verb “served” to state what the women did.

Choice A is incorrect because it results in an ungrammatical sentence. The nonfinite participle “having served” doesn’t supply the main clause with a finite verb. Choice B is incorrect because it results in an ungrammatical sentence. The nonfinite to-infinitive “to serve” doesn’t supply the main clause with a finite verb. Choice D is incorrect because it results in an ungrammatical sentence. The nonfinite participle “serving” doesn’t supply the main clause with a finite verb.

Question Difficulty: Easy

Question ID 96ecbaf5

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT 8/9	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Form, Structure, and Sense	

ID: 96ecbaf5

On March 27, 2004, after nine years as a professional boxer, Isra Girgrah retired. The Yemeni American athlete _____ her career with a record of twenty-eight wins, three losses, and two ties.

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

- A. finish
- B. has been finishing
- C. finished
- D. will be finishing

ID: 96ecbaf5 Answer

Correct Answer: C

Rationale

Choice C is the best answer. The convention being tested is the use of a verb to express tense in a sentence. In this choice, the past tense verb “finished” is consistent with the other past tense verb (“retired”) used to refer to Girgrah’s retirement in 2004.

Choice A is incorrect because the present tense verb “finish” isn’t consistent with the other past tense verb (“retired”) used to refer to Girgrah’s retirement in 2004. Furthermore, the plural verb “finish” doesn’t agree in number with the sentence’s singular subject “The Yemeni American athlete.” Choice B is incorrect because the present perfect progressive tense verb “has been finishing” isn’t consistent with the other past tense verb (“retired”) used to refer to Girgrah’s retirement in 2004. Choice D is incorrect because the future progressive tense verb “will be finishing” isn’t consistent with the other past tense verb (“retired”) used to refer to Girgrah’s retirement in 2004.

Question Difficulty: Easy

Question ID ba5666cb

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT 8/9	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Form, Structure, and Sense	

ID: ba5666cb

Nowadays, tug-of-war is usually seen as an informal game one might play at a picnic or in gym class. Surprisingly, the Olympic committee once decided _____ tug-of-war as an official Olympic event! Nations competed in the event at the Olympic Games from 1900 to 1920.

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

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

ID: ba5666cb Answer

Correct Answer: D

Rationale

Choice D is the best answer. The convention being tested is the use of verb forms within a sentence. The nonfinite to-infinitive verb "to include" is correctly used to form a subordinate clause that indicates what the Olympic committee decided (to include tug-of-war as an Olympic event).

Choice A is incorrect because it results in an ungrammatical sentence. The finite verb "included" can't be used in this way to form a subordinate clause that indicates what the Olympic committee decided. Choice B is incorrect because it results in an ungrammatical sentence. The nonfinite participle "including" can't be used in this way to form a subordinate clause that indicates what the Olympic committee decided. Choice C is incorrect because it results in an ungrammatical sentence. The finite verb "include" can't be used in this way to form a subordinate clause that indicates what the Olympic committee decided.

Question Difficulty: Easy

Question ID c41dd4d9

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT 8/9	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Form, Structure, and Sense	

ID: c41dd4d9

Obsidian is a kind of volcanic glass formed when lava cools so quickly that the atoms inside it cannot arrange themselves in a crystalline structure. You _____ more about obsidian’s structure, which is classified as amorphous, in a later chapter.

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

- A. had learned
- B. had been learning
- C. will learn
- D. have learned

ID: c41dd4d9 Answer

Correct Answer: C

Rationale

Choice C is the best answer. The convention being tested is the use of verbs to express tense in a sentence. In this choice, the future tense verb “will learn,” used in conjunction with the phrase “in a later chapter,” correctly indicates that “you” (the reader) are going to learn about obsidian’s structure at some point in the future.

Choice A is incorrect because the past perfect verb “had learned” doesn’t indicate that the subject is going to learn about obsidian’s structure in the future. Choice B is incorrect because the past perfect progressive verb “had been learning” doesn’t indicate that the subject is going to learn about obsidian’s structure in the future. Choice D is incorrect because the present perfect verb “have learned” doesn’t indicate that the subject is going to learn about obsidian’s structure in the future.

Question Difficulty: Easy

Question ID fc83ef9d

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT 8/9	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Form, Structure, and Sense	

ID: fc83ef9d

If you try on one of artist Nick Cave’s signature Soundsuits, you can expect to swish, rustle, or clang every time you move. Cave makes his suits out of found objects, everything from ceramic birds to broken record players. He carefully considers the sound an object makes before using _____ in a suit.

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

- A. this
- B. that
- C. these
- D. it

ID: fc83ef9d Answer

Correct Answer: D

Rationale

Choice D is the best answer. The convention being tested here is pronoun-antecedent agreement. The singular pronoun "it" agrees in number with the singular antecedent "object."

Choice A is incorrect. The singular pronoun "this" is used to refer to a specific thing, but here there is no specific object being referred to. Instead, the sentence is referring back to a hypothetical object that Cave might use in a Soundsuit. Choice B is incorrect. The singular pronoun "that" is used to refer to a specific thing, but here there is no specific object being referred to. Instead, the sentence is referring back to a hypothetical object that Cave might use in a Soundsuit. Choice C is incorrect because the plural pronoun "these" doesn’t agree in number with the singular antecedent "object."

Question Difficulty: Easy

Question ID 4749fb25

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT 8/9	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Form, Structure, and Sense	

ID: 4749fb25

American poet Emily Dickinson wrote many of her poems on scraps of paper, but she also took steps to collect these works. From 1858 to around 1864, for example, she copied more than 800 of _____ into forty homemade booklets (known as fascicles).

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

- A. them
- B. this
- C. that
- D. it

ID: 4749fb25 Answer

Correct Answer: A

Rationale

Choice A is the best answer. The pronoun "them" agrees with the plural antecedents "poems" and "works."

Choice B is incorrect. "This" is a singular pronoun, but its antecedents, "poems" and "works," are plural. Choice C is incorrect. "That" is a singular pronoun, but its antecedents, "poems" and "works," are plural. Choice D is incorrect. "It" is a singular pronoun, but its antecedents, "poems" and "works," are plural.

Question Difficulty: Easy

Question ID 4af0b15a

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT 8/9	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Form, Structure, and Sense	

ID: 4af0b15a

One of the earliest known maps is a Babylonian clay tablet thought to be almost 4,500 years old. The map _____ the area of a plot of land, shows a river valley, and includes the cardinal directions.

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

- A. describes
- B. describe
- C. have described
- D. are describing

ID: 4af0b15a Answer

Correct Answer: A

Rationale

Choice A is the best answer. The convention being tested is the use of verb forms within a sentence. The singular verb "describes" agrees in number with the singular subject "map."

Choice B is incorrect because the plural verb "describe" doesn't agree in number with the singular subject "map." Choice C is incorrect because the plural verb "have described" doesn't agree in number with the singular subject "map." Choice D is incorrect because the plural verb "are describing" doesn't agree in number with the singular subject "map."

Question Difficulty: Easy

Question ID 182ab139

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT 8/9	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Form, Structure, and Sense	

ID: 182ab139

With its towering, six-spired exterior of granitelike quartz monzonite, the Salt Lake Temple is one of the most instantly recognizable structures in the state of Utah. However, many people do not know that _____ built over the course of forty years, with construction beginning in 1853 and ending in 1893.

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

- A. it was
- B. one was
- C. they were
- D. both were

ID: 182ab139 Answer

Correct Answer: A

Rationale

Choice A is the best answer. The convention being tested is pronoun-antecedent agreement. The singular pronoun "it" agrees in number with the singular antecedent "the Salt Lake Temple."

Choice B is incorrect because the singular pronoun "one" is ambiguous in this context; the resulting sentence leaves unclear whether there is only one Salt Lake temple or multiple. Choice C is incorrect because the plural pronoun "they" doesn't agree in number with the singular antecedent "the Salt Lake Temple." Choice D is incorrect because the plural pronoun "both" doesn't agree in number with the singular antecedent "the Salt Lake Temple."

Question Difficulty: Easy

Question ID 926e6eb6

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT 8/9	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Form, Structure, and Sense	

ID: 926e6eb6

Cycads are palmlike plants with cones. _____ plants were abundant throughout the Mesozoic Era (66 to 252 million years ago).

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

- A. These
- B. That
- C. Each
- D. This

ID: 926e6eb6 Answer

Correct Answer: A

Rationale

Choice A is the best answer. The convention being tested is the use of determiners. The plural demonstrative determiner “these” agrees in number with the plural noun “plants” that it modifies. This choice clearly indicates that the plants, referring to cycads from the previous sentence, were abundant throughout the Mesozoic Era.

Choice B is incorrect because the singular demonstrative determiner “that” doesn’t agree in number with the plural noun “plants.” Choice C is incorrect because the singular determiner “each” doesn’t agree in number with the plural noun “plants.” Choice D is incorrect because the singular demonstrative determiner “this” doesn’t agree in number with the plural noun “plants.”

Question Difficulty: Easy

Question ID d90fda7b

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT 8/9	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Form, Structure, and Sense	

ID: d90fda7b

The Boston Saloon was one of the most popular African American–owned establishments in nineteenth-century Nevada. _____ by businessman William A.G. Brown, the saloon was known to offer elegant accommodations and an inclusive environment.

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

- A. Created
- B. Creates
- C. Creating
- D. Create

ID: d90fda7b Answer

Correct Answer: A

Rationale

Choice A is the best answer. The convention being tested is the use of verb forms within a sentence. The nonfinite past participle "created" is correctly used to form a supplementary element that modifies the noun phrase "the saloon," identifying who established the Boston Saloon.

Choice B is incorrect because it results in an ungrammatical sentence. The finite present tense verb "creates" can't be used in this way to form a supplementary element to modify the noun phrase "the saloon." Choice C is incorrect because it results in an ungrammatical sentence. The nonfinite present participle "creating" can't be used in this way to form a supplementary element to modify the noun phrase "the saloon." Choice D is incorrect because it results in an ungrammatical sentence. The finite present tense verb "create" can't be used in this way to form a supplementary element to modify the noun phrase "the saloon."

Question Difficulty: Easy

Question ID 41c9c427

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
PSAT 8/9	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Form, Structure, and Sense	

ID: 41c9c427

Dr. Rocío Paola Caballero-Gill is a paleoceanographer. This means that Dr. Caballero-Gill doesn’t just study oceans as they are today. She uses chemistry and fossil evidence _____ oceans as they were in the past.

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

- A. has studied
- B. to study
- C. studied
- D. studies

ID: 41c9c427 Answer

Correct Answer: B

Rationale

Choice B is the best answer. The convention being tested is the use of verb forms within a sentence. The nonfinite to-infinitive verb “to study” is correctly used to form a subordinate clause that indicates what Dr. Caballero-Gill uses chemistry and fossil evidence for (to study oceans as they were in the past).

Choice A is incorrect because it results in an ungrammatical sentence. The finite verb “has studied” can’t be used in this way to form a subordinate clause that indicates what Dr. Caballero-Gill uses the evidence for. Choice C is incorrect because it results in an ungrammatical sentence. The finite verb “studied” can’t be used in this way to form a subordinate clause that indicates what Dr. Caballero-Gill uses the evidence for. Choice D is incorrect because it results in an ungrammatical sentence. The finite verb “studies” can’t be used in this way to form a subordinate clause that indicates what Dr. Caballero-Gill uses the evidence for.

Question Difficulty: Easy