

Question ID accc2b85

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
SAT	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Boundaries	Hard

ID: accc2b85

Consider the mechanics of the pinhole camera: light passes through a small hole, resulting in a focused projected image. A ray diagram reveals how this _____ the hole’s small size restricts light to a single ray, all light passing through the hole can only arrive at a single destination, eliminating diffraction and ensuring a clear image.

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

- A. works because
- B. works. Because
- C. works, it’s because
- D. works: it’s because

ID: accc2b85 Answer

Correct Answer: B

Rationale

Choice B is the best answer. The convention being tested is punctuation use between sentences. In this choice, the period is used to correctly mark the boundary between one sentence ("A ray...works") and another ("Because...image").

Choice A is incorrect because it results in a run-on sentence. The two sentences ("A ray...works" and "Because...image") are fused without punctuation and/or a conjunction. Choice C is incorrect because it results in a comma splice. A comma can’t be used in this way to mark the boundary between sentences. Choice D is incorrect because it results in a comma splice. Since the contraction "it’s" creates a main clause, the comma after "single ray" can’t be used in this way to mark the boundary between two main clauses ("it’s...ray" and "all light...image").

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID df8ef92f

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
SAT	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Boundaries	Hard

ID: df8ef92f

On March 23, 2021, a gust of wind wreaked havoc on global trade. *Ever Given*, an international shipping container vessel, became lodged in Egypt’s Suez Canal, a major shipping route between Europe and Asia. The vessel took six days to _____ it’s as heavy as two thousand blue whales when fully loaded.

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

- A. dislodge in part due to its sheer size,
- B. dislodge, in part due to its sheer size:
- C. dislodge, in part due to its sheer size,
- D. dislodge, in part, due to its sheer size

ID: df8ef92f Answer

Correct Answer: B

Rationale

Choice B is the best answer. The convention being tested is punctuation between main clauses and a supplementary element. This choice correctly uses a comma to mark the boundary between the main clause ("The vessel took six days to dislodge") and the supplementary element ("in part due to its sheer size") that provides additional information on why the vessel was difficult to dislodge. Additionally, this choice correctly uses a colon to introduce another main clause that describes the vessel’s size ("it’s as heavy as two thousand blue whales when fully loaded").

Choice A is incorrect because it results in a comma splice. A comma can’t be used in this way to mark the boundary between two main clauses ("The vessel...size" and "it’s...loaded"). Additionally, it fails to mark the boundary between the main clause ("The vessel took six days to dislodge") and the supplementary element ("in part due to its sheer size"). Choice C is incorrect because it results in a comma splice. A comma can’t be used in this way to mark the boundary between two main clauses ("The vessel...size" and "it’s...loaded"). Choice D is incorrect because it results in a run-on sentence. The two main clauses ("The vessel...size" and "it’s...loaded") are fused without punctuation and/or a conjunction.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID 6f873e68

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
SAT	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Boundaries	Hard

ID: 6f873e68

In crafting her fantasy fiction, Nigerian-born British author Helen Oyeyemi has drawn inspiration from the classic nineteenth-century fairy tales of the Brothers Grimm. Her 2014 novel *Boy, Snow, Bird*, for instance, is a complex retelling of the story of Snow White, while her 2019 novel _____ offers a delicious twist on the classic tale of Hansel and Gretel.

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

- A. *Gingerbread*—
- B. *Gingerbread*,
- C. *Gingerbread*
- D. *Gingerbread*:

ID: 6f873e68 Answer

Correct Answer: C

Rationale

Choice C is the best answer. The convention being tested is punctuation between a subject and a verb. When, as in this case, a subject ("her 2019 novel *Gingerbread*") is immediately followed by a verb ("offers"), no punctuation is needed.

Choice A is incorrect because no punctuation is needed between the subject and the verb. Choice B is incorrect because no punctuation is needed between the subject and the verb. Choice D is incorrect because no punctuation is needed between the subject and the verb.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID af66cc2b

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
SAT	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Boundaries	Hard

ID: af66cc2b

Jamaican British artist Willard Wigan is known for his remarkable _____ so small that they are best viewed through a microscope, Wigan’s sculptures are made from tiny natural materials, such as spiderweb strands.

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

- A. microsculptures creations
- B. microsculptures, creations
- C. microsculptures. Creations
- D. microsculptures and creations

ID: af66cc2b Answer

Correct Answer: C

Rationale

Choice C is the best answer. The convention being tested is punctuation between sentences. In this choice, the period is used to correctly mark the boundary between one sentence ("Jamaican...microsculptures") and another ("Creations...strands"). The noun phrase beginning with "creations" modifies the subject of the next sentence, "Wigan’s sculptures."

Choice A is incorrect because it results in a run-on sentence. The sentences ("Jamaican...microsculptures" and "Creations...strands") are fused without punctuation and/or a conjunction. Choice B is incorrect because it results in a comma splice. A comma can’t be used in this way to mark the boundary between sentences. Choice D is incorrect. Without a comma preceding it, the conjunction "and" can’t be used in this way to join sentences.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID 82aaffb8

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
SAT	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Boundaries	Hard

ID: 82aaffb8

Jetties—long, narrow structures that extend from a landmass into the water—are often constructed to protect coastlines from erosion. Jetties can sometimes have the opposite _____ obstructing the natural flow of sand along the shore can lead to increased erosion in some areas.

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

- A. effect, though;
- B. effect, though
- C. effect; though
- D. effect, though,

ID: 82aaffb8 Answer

Correct Answer: A

Rationale

Choice A is the best answer. The convention being tested is the use of punctuation within a sentence. This choice correctly uses a comma to separate the supplementary adverb "though" from the preceding main clause ("Jetties can sometimes have the opposite effect") and uses a semicolon to join the next main clause ("obstructing...areas") to the rest of the sentence. Further, placing the semicolon after "though" logically indicates that the information earlier in this sentence (that jetties can sometimes cause erosion) is contrary to what might be assumed from the information in the previous sentence (that jetties are often constructed for the purpose of protecting coastlines from erosion).

Choice B is incorrect because it fails to mark the boundary between the two main clauses with appropriate punctuation. With "though...areas" functioning as a subordinate clause following the comma, this choice illogically indicates that the following information (that obstructing the natural flow of sand along the shore can sometimes lead to erosion) is contrary to the information earlier in the sentence (that jetties can sometimes cause erosion). Instead, the information following "though" supports the previous claim about the erosive effects of jetties. Choice C is incorrect because it's not conventional to use a semicolon in this way to separate a main clause from a dependent clause. Further, it illogically indicates that the following information (that obstructing the natural flow of sand along the shore can sometimes lead to erosion) is contrary to the information earlier in the sentence (that jetties can sometimes cause erosion). Instead, the information following "though" supports the previous claim about the erosive effects of jetties. Choice D is incorrect because it results in a comma splice. Commas can't be used in this way to set off a supplementary word or phrase between two main clauses.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID a778e64f

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
SAT	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Boundaries	Hard

ID: a778e64f

Using natural debris, such as dried _____ such as plastic bags; and more traditional art supplies, such as tree glue, Ghanaian artist Ed Franklin Gavua creates his striking Yiiiiikakaii African masks, which he hopes can help viewers rethink how waste is used in their communities.

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

- A. leaves, man-made trash:
- B. leaves; man-made trash,
- C. leaves, man-made trash,
- D. leaves; man-made trash;

ID: a778e64f Answer

Correct Answer: B

Rationale

Choice B is the best answer. The convention being tested is the punctuation of elements in a complex series. It’s conventional to use a semicolon to separate items in a complex series with internal punctuation, and in this choice, the semicolon after "leaves" is conventionally used to separate the first item ("natural debris, such as dried leaves") and the second item ("man-made trash, such as plastic bags") in the series of materials used by Gavua. Further, the comma after "trash" correctly separates the noun phrase "man-made trash" from the supplementary phrase ("such as plastic bags") that describes it.

Choice A is incorrect because a comma after "leaves" doesn’t match the semicolon used later to separate the second and third items in the series ("man-made...bags" and "and...glue"). Additionally, it’s not conventional to use a colon in this way to separate a supplementary phrase ("such as plastic bags") from the noun phrase it modifies ("man-made trash"). Choice C is incorrect because a comma after "leaves" doesn’t match the semicolon used later to separate the second and third items in the series ("man-made...bags" and "and...glue"). Choice D is incorrect because it’s not conventional to use a semicolon in this way to separate a supplementary phrase ("such as plastic bags") from the noun phrase it modifies ("man-made trash").

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID f8ac582e

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
SAT	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Boundaries	Hard

ID: f8ac582e

Chondrites are stony meteorites that are undifferentiated—that is, their contents have not melted and separated into distinct layers. They are hardly _____ many chondrites experience aqueous alteration as a result of exposure to fluids, as well as fracturing, veining, and localized melting due to collisions with other objects.

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

- A. pristine, though
- B. pristine, though;
- C. pristine; though
- D. pristine, though,

ID: f8ac582e Answer

Correct Answer: B

Rationale

Choice B is the best answer. The convention being tested is the use of punctuation within a sentence. This choice correctly uses a comma to separate the supplementary adverb "though" from the preceding main clause ("They are hardly pristine") and uses a semicolon to join the two main clauses ("They...though" and "many...objects"). Further, placing the semicolon after "though" indicates that the information in the preceding main clause (chondrites are far from pristine) is contrary to what might be assumed from the information in the previous sentence (chondrites have been generally unaltered by their environment).

Choice A is incorrect because placing the comma after "pristine" and using "though" as a subordinating conjunction illogically indicates that the information in the next main clause (many chondrites have experienced damage) is contrary to the information in the previous clause (chondrites are far from pristine). Choice C is incorrect because placing the semicolon after "pristine" illogically indicates that the information in the next main clause (many chondrites have experienced damage) is contrary to the information in the previous clause (chondrites are far from pristine). Choice D is incorrect because it results in a comma splice. Without a conjunction following it, the comma after "though" can't be used in this way to join two main clauses.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID 618d94c4

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
SAT	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Boundaries	Hard

ID: 618d94c4

In 2018, a team of researchers led by Dr. Caitlin Whalen compiled every available measurement of ocean mixing rates from the past two decades. With this novel data set, the team was able to determine how current-driven mixing varies across _____ and what impact it has on the distribution of heat and nutrients in the ocean.

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

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

ID: 618d94c4 Answer

Correct Answer: D

Rationale

Choice D is the best answer. The convention being tested is punctuation between coordinates in a sentence. The two elements "how...regions" and "what...ocean" work together as coordinates to complete the description of what the team was able to determine. Because there are only two coordinates in this case (as opposed to a series of three or more), no punctuation is needed between them.

Choice A is incorrect because no punctuation is needed between the coordinates "how...regions" and "what...ocean." Choice B is incorrect because no punctuation is needed between the coordinates "how...regions" and "what...ocean." Choice C is incorrect because no punctuation is needed between the coordinates "how...regions" and "what...ocean."

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID 98baf1ee

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
SAT	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Boundaries	Hard

ID: 98baf1ee

Stomata, tiny pore structures in a leaf that absorb gases needed for plant growth, open when guard cells surrounding each pore swell with water. In a pivotal 2007 article, plant cell _____ showed that lipid molecules called phosphatidylinositol phosphates are responsible for signaling guard cells to open stomata.

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

- A. biologist, Yuree Lee
- B. biologist Yuree Lee,
- C. biologist Yuree Lee
- D. biologist, Yuree Lee,

ID: 98baf1ee Answer

Correct Answer: C

Rationale

Choice C is the best answer. The convention being tested is the use of punctuation between titles and proper nouns. No punctuation is needed to offset the proper noun "Yuree Lee" from the title "plant cell biologist" that describes Lee.

Choice A is incorrect because no punctuation is needed. Choice B is incorrect because no punctuation is needed. Choice D is incorrect because no punctuation is needed around the proper noun "Yuree Lee." Setting the phrase off with punctuation suggests that it could be removed without affecting the coherence of the sentence, which isn't the case.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID e598da1c

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
SAT	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Boundaries	Hard

ID: e598da1c

Roughly 300 nights a year, when the cold air descending from the Andes Mountains meets the warm air rising from Venezuela’s coastal Lake Maracaibo, the result is a spectacular lightning storm, its strikes so bright, so localized, and so _____ that it has become known as “Maracaibo’s Lighthouse.”

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

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

ID: e598da1c Answer

Correct Answer: C

Rationale

Choice C is the best answer. The convention being tested is the punctuation of an integrated relative clause. No punctuation is needed before the relative clause beginning with "that" because the content of the relative clause ("that...Lighthouse") is integral to the meaning of the coordinated adjectival phrase ("so bright, so localized, and so dependable") that it modifies.

Choice A is incorrect because no punctuation is needed between the coordinated adjectival phrase ("so bright...dependable") and the integrated relative clause that modifies it. Choice B is incorrect because no punctuation is needed between the coordinated adjectival phrase ("so bright...dependable") and the integrated relative clause that modifies it. Choice D is incorrect because no punctuation is needed between the coordinated adjectival phrase ("so bright...dependable") and the integrated relative clause that modifies it.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID a1a0066e

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
SAT	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Boundaries	Hard

ID: a1a0066e

In paleontology, the term “Elvis taxon” gets applied to a newly identified living species that was once presumed to be extinct. Like an Elvis impersonator who might bear a striking resemblance to the late musical icon Elvis Presley himself, an Elvis taxon is not the real thing, _____ is a misidentified look-alike.

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

- A. however but it
- B. however it
- C. however, it
- D. however. It

ID: a1a0066e Answer

Correct Answer: D

Rationale

Choice D is the best answer. The clause “Like an Elvis impersonator...real thing” and the clause “it is...look-alike” are both independent clauses, so making them into two separate sentences is grammatically correct.

Choice A is incorrect. This choice creates a run-on sentence error. The clause “Like an Elvis impersonator...real thing” and the clause “it is...look-alike” are both independent clauses, so they need to be separated with at least a comma + a coordinating conjunction. This choice provides the coordinating conjunction “but,” but it’s missing a comma. Choice B is incorrect. This choice creates a run-on sentence error. The clause “Like an Elvis impersonator...real thing” and the clause “it is...look-alike” are both independent clauses, so they need to be separated with a semicolon, a colon, a dash, a period, or a comma + a coordinating conjunction. Choice C is incorrect. This choice creates a run-on sentence error. The clause “Like an Elvis impersonator...real thing” and the clause “it is...look-alike” are both independent clauses, so they need to be separated with at least a comma + a coordinating conjunction. This choice provides a comma, but it’s missing a coordinating conjunction.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID 0b330819

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
SAT	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Boundaries	Hard

ID: 0b330819

The term “retroflex” derives from Latin and means “bent back,” an apt descriptor for the branch of consonants—retroflex consonants—pronounced with the tongue curling up and back in the mouth. In many languages, including English, these consonants are _____ in some dialects of Mandarin, however, four such consonants (“ch,” “sh,” “zh,” and “r”) are relatively common.

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

- A. rare and
- B. rare,
- C. rare
- D. rare;

ID: 0b330819 Answer

Correct Answer: D

Rationale

Choice D is the best answer. The convention being tested is the use of punctuation within a sentence. This choice uses a semicolon in a conventional way to join the first main clause ("In many...rare") and the second main clause ("in some...common") in this sentence.

Choice A is incorrect. Joining the first main clause ("In many...rare") and the second main clause ("in some...common") with the conjunction "and" conflicts with the use of "however" later in the sentence, resulting in a confusing and illogical sentence. Choice B 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 C is incorrect because it results in a run-on sentence. The two main clauses are fused without punctuation and/or a conjunction.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID 22030ce1

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
SAT	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Boundaries	Hard

ID: 22030ce1

In 1955, Indian Bengali filmmaker Satyajit Ray released his first movie, *Pather* _____ quiet black-and-white drama about a family in rural India, Ray’s film was quite different from the loud, colorful action-romance movies that were popular at the time.

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

- A. *Panchali* a
- B. *Panchali*, which was a
- C. *Panchali*, a
- D. *Panchali*. A

ID: 22030ce1 Answer

Correct Answer: D

Rationale

Choice D is the best answer. The convention being tested is punctuation use between sentences. In this choice, the period is used correctly to mark the boundary between one sentence ("In...*Panchali*") and another ("A quiet...time"). The phrase beginning with "a quiet" modifies the subject of the next sentence, "Ray’s film."

Choice A is incorrect because it results in a run-on sentence. The sentences are fused without punctuation and/or a conjunction. Choice B is incorrect because it results in a comma splice. A comma can’t be used in this way to mark the boundary between sentences. Choice C is incorrect because it results in a comma splice. A comma can’t be used in this way to mark the boundary between sentences.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID 971ed23e

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
SAT	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Boundaries	Hard

ID: 971ed23e

Joshua Hinson, director of the language revitalization program of the Chickasaw Nation in Oklahoma, helped produce the world’s first Indigenous-language instructional app, Chickasaw _____ Chickasaw TV, in 2010; and a Rosetta Stone language course in Chickasaw, in 2015.

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

- A. Basic; in 2009, an online television network;
- B. Basic; in 2009, an online television network,
- C. Basic, in 2009; an online television network,
- D. Basic, in 2009, an online television network,

ID: 971ed23e Answer

Correct Answer: C

Rationale

Choice C is the best answer. The convention being tested is the punctuation of items in a complex series. It’s conventional to use a semicolon to separate items in a complex series with internal punctuation, and in this choice, the semicolon after “2009” is conventionally used to separate the first item (“the world’s...2009”) and the second item (“an online...2010”) in the series of things that Hinson helped create. Further, the comma after “Basic” correctly pairs with the comma after “app,” and the comma after “network” correctly pairs with the comma after “TV” to set off the supplemental elements (“Chickasaw Basic” and “Chickasaw TV”) that provide the names of the app and the TV network, respectively. Altogether, the punctuation in this choice results in a sentence that clearly indicates that Hinson helped make a language app in 2009, an online TV network in 2010, and a language course in 2015.

Choice A is incorrect because it fails to punctuate the complex series in a way that makes clear that Hinson helped make a language app in 2009, an online TV network in 2010, and a language course in 2015. Choice B is incorrect because it fails to punctuate the complex series in a way that makes clear that Hinson helped make a language app in 2009, an online TV network in 2010, and a language course in 2015. Choice D is incorrect because the comma after “2009” doesn’t match the semicolon used to separate the second and third items in the complex series.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID 1c2fc2d3

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
SAT	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Boundaries	Hard

ID: 1c2fc2d3

Digital artist Jung (Lulu) Chen primarily uses a suite of software tools to create illustrations for children’s books. To manifest the warm and welcoming atmospheres that are a signature of her _____ she occasionally relies on more traditional art techniques, such as painting with watercolors.

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

- A. work, though,
- B. work, though
- C. work; though,
- D. work, though;

ID: 1c2fc2d3 Answer

Correct Answer: A

Rationale

Choice A is the best answer. The convention being tested is the use of punctuation within a sentence. The comma after "work" pairs with the comma after "though" to separate the supplementary element "though" from the rest of the sentence. This supplementary element signals that what follows is an exception to Chen using software tools to create illustrations, and the pair of commas indicates that this element could be removed without affecting the grammatical coherence of the sentence.

Choice B is incorrect because the comma after "work" must be paired with a comma after "though" to separate the supplementary element from the rest of the sentence. Choice C is incorrect because a semicolon can’t be paired with a comma in this way to separate the supplementary element from the rest of the sentence. Choice D is incorrect because a semicolon can’t be paired with a comma in this way to separate the supplementary element from the rest of the sentence.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID 26287f55

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
SAT	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Boundaries	Hard

ID: 26287f55

A study published by Rice University geoscientist Ming Tang in 2019 offers a new explanation for the origin of Earth’s _____ structures called arcs, towering ridges that form when a dense oceanic plate subducts under a less dense continental plate, melts in the mantle below, and then rises and bursts through the continental crust above.

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

- A. continents geological
- B. continents: geological
- C. continents; geological
- D. continents. Geological

ID: 26287f55 Answer

Correct Answer: B

Rationale

Choice B is the best answer. The convention being tested is punctuation use between a main clause and a supplementary phrase. In this choice, a colon is correctly used to mark the boundary between the main clause (“A study...continents”) and the supplementary phrase (“geological...above”) and to introduce the following explanation of the origin of Earth’s continents.

Choice A is incorrect because it fails to mark the boundary between the main clause (“A study...continents”) and the supplementary phrase (“geological...above”) with appropriate punctuation. Choice C is incorrect because a semicolon can’t be used in this way to join the main clause (“A study...continents”) and the supplementary phrase (“geological...above”). A semicolon is conventionally used to join two main clauses, whereas a colon is conventionally used to introduce an element that explains or amplifies the information in the preceding clause, making it the better choice in this context. Choice D is incorrect because it results in a rhetorically unacceptable sentence fragment beginning with “geological.”

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID be7e3f1e

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
SAT	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Boundaries	Hard

ID: be7e3f1e

Sociologist Todd Gitlin co-opted the term “recombinant,” normally used in reference to genetic engineering, to describe serialized television shows of the 1980s. Gitlin’s use of the term referenced TV studios’ practice of repackaging successful narrative formulas as new _____ even shows that varied only slightly from other shows still attracted sizeable audiences.

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

- A. content, in that era
- B. content; in that era,
- C. content in that era,
- D. content, in that era,

ID: be7e3f1e Answer

Correct Answer: B

Rationale

Choice B is the best answer. The convention being tested is the use of punctuation within a sentence. This choice uses a semicolon in a conventional way to join the first main clause ("Gitlin’s...content") and the second main clause beginning with a supplementary phrase ("in...audiences"). Further, placing a comma after "era" separates the supplementary phrase "in that era" from the rest of the main clause that follows ("even...audiences").

Choice A 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. Further, this choice fails to mark the boundary between the supplementary phrase "in that era" and the rest of the main clause that follows ("even...audiences"). Choice C is incorrect because it results in a run-on sentence. The two main clauses ("Gitlin’s...content" and "in...audiences") are fused without punctuation and/or a conjunction. Choice D 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: Hard

Question ID 6a2df221

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
SAT	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Boundaries	Hard

ID: 6a2df221

To serve local families during the Great Depression, innovative New York City librarian Pura Belpré offered storytelling in both English and Spanish, an uncommon _____ celebrated *el Día de los Tres Reyes Magos*, an important community holiday; and put on puppet shows dramatizing Puerto Rican folktales.

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

- A. practice, at the time
- B. practice at the time;
- C. practice, at the time,
- D. practice at the time,

ID: 6a2df221 Answer

Correct Answer: B

Rationale

Choice B is the best answer. The convention being tested is the punctuation of elements in a complex series. It’s conventional to use a semicolon to separate items in a complex series with internal punctuation, and in this choice, the semicolon after "time" is conventionally used to separate the first item ("offered...time") and the second ("celebrated... holiday") in the series of activities that librarian Pura Belpré offered. Moreover, the semicolon after "time" matches the semicolon used later to separate the second item ("celebrated...holiday") and the third ("and...folktales") in the series.

Choice A is incorrect because it fails to use appropriate punctuation to separate the first item and the second item in the complex series. Furthermore, a comma isn’t needed between the noun "practice" and the prepositional phrase "at the time" because the prepositional phrase is essential to the full meaning of the phrase "an uncommon practice at the time." Choice C is incorrect because a comma after "time" doesn’t match the semicolon used later to separate the second ("celebrated...holiday") and third ("and...folktales") items in the series. Furthermore, a comma isn’t needed between the noun "practice" and the prepositional phrase "at the time" because the prepositional phrase is essential to the full meaning of the phrase "an uncommon practice at the time." Choice D is incorrect because a comma after "time" doesn’t match the semicolon used later to separate the second ("celebrated...holiday") and third ("and...folktales") items in the series.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID e97999ac

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
SAT	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Boundaries	Hard

ID: e97999ac

In a 2016 study, Eastern Washington University psychologist Amani El-Alayli found that, among the study participants who experienced frisson (a physiological response akin to goosebumps or getting the chills) while listening to music, there was one personality trait that they scored particularly _____ openness to experience.

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

- A. high. On
- B. high on;
- C. high on
- D. high on:

ID: e97999ac Answer

Correct Answer: D

Rationale

Choice D is the best answer. The convention being tested is punctuation use between a main clause and a supplementary phrase. In this choice, a colon is correctly used to mark the boundary between the main clause ("there...on") and the supplementary phrase ("openness to experience") and to introduce the information that identifies which personality trait participants scored especially high on.

Choice A is incorrect because it results in a rhetorically unacceptable sentence fragment beginning with "on" and separates a necessary preposition from the clause beginning with "there." Choice B is incorrect because a semicolon can't be used in this way to join the main clause ("there...on") and the supplementary phrase ("openness to experience"). A semicolon is conventionally used to join two main clauses, whereas a colon is conventionally used to introduce an element that explains or amplifies the information in the preceding clause, making the colon the better choice in this context. Choice C is incorrect because it fails to mark the boundary between the main clause ("there...on") and the supplementary phrase ("openness to experience").

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID 57a2e87f

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
SAT	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Boundaries	Hard

ID: 57a2e87f

Over twenty years ago, in a landmark experiment in the psychology of choice, professor Sheena Iyengar set up a jam-tasting booth at a grocery store. The number of jams available for tasting _____ some shoppers had twenty-four different options, others only six. Interestingly, the shoppers with fewer jams to choose from purchased more jam.

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

- A. varied:
- B. varied,
- C. varied, while
- D. varied while

ID: 57a2e87f Answer

Correct Answer: A

Rationale

Choice A is the best answer. The convention being tested is the use of a colon within a sentence. In this choice, the colon is used in a conventional way to introduce the following description of how the number of jams available varied.

Choice B is incorrect because it creates a comma splice. A comma can't be used in this way to join two main clauses ("the number...varied" and "some...six"). Choice C is incorrect because it results in an illogical and confusing sentence. Using the conjunction "while" to join the main clause ("the number...varied") with the following clause's description of the number of jams available suggests that the variation in the number of jams is in contrast to some shoppers having twenty-four options. Choice D is incorrect because it results in an illogical and confusing sentence. Using "while" in this way suggests that the number of jams available varied during the time in which some shoppers had twenty-four options and others had six. The sentence makes clear, however, that what follows "varied" is a description of the variation, not a separate, simultaneous occurrence.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID c02b765d

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
SAT	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Boundaries	Hard

ID: c02b765d

That the geographic center of North America lay in the state of North Dakota was conceded by all _____ establishing its precise coordinates proved more divisive.

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

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

ID: c02b765d Answer

Correct Answer: D

Rationale

Choice D is the best answer. The convention being tested is the use of punctuation within a sentence. This choice uses a semicolon in a conventional way to join the first main clause ("That the...involved") and the second main clause ("establishing...divisive"). Further, the semicolon is the most appropriate choice when joining two separate, parallel statements, such as here, where the information following the semicolon contrasts with the information before.

Choice A is incorrect because placing a colon after "involved" illogically indicates that the information in the second main clause (the precise location was the subject of disagreement) explains or amplifies the information in the previous main clause (the general location was agreed upon by all). Instead, the information in the second clause contrasts with the previous information. Choice B 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 C is incorrect because it results in a run-on sentence. The two main clauses are fused without punctuation and/or a conjunction.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID 537fd30f

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
SAT	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Boundaries	Hard

ID: 537fd30f

The city of Amsterdam partnered with consultants to develop Public Eye—an ethical AI-powered crowd-monitoring _____ video streamed from cameras in heavily touristed areas, the AI algorithm determines crowd sizes without, in the interest of protecting individuals’ privacy, retaining the footage.

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

- A. system—analyzing
- B. system, analyzing
- C. system. Analyzing
- D. system analyzing

ID: 537fd30f Answer

Correct Answer: C

Rationale

Choice C is the best answer. The convention being tested is punctuation use between sentences. In this choice, the period is used correctly to mark the boundary between one sentence ("The city...system") and another ("Analyzing...footage"). The participial phrase beginning with "analyzing" modifies the subject of the second sentence, "the AI algorithm."

Choice A is incorrect. Placing a dash before "analyzing" creates a confusing and ambiguous modifying element ("analyzing...areas") and a comma splice between "areas" and "the AI algorithm." (A comma can't be used in this way to mark the boundary between sentences.) Choice B is incorrect because it results in a comma splice. A comma can't be used in this way to mark the boundary between sentences. Choice D is incorrect because it results in a run-on sentence. The sentences ("The city...system" and "analyzing...footage") are fused without punctuation and/or a conjunction.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID af67b6ca

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
SAT	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Boundaries	Hard

ID: af67b6ca

Butterfly is a 1988 painting by the Japanese artist Ay-O. Like many of Ay-O’s paintings, *Butterfly*, which portrays a swimmer performing the butterfly stroke, attempts to make use of the entire visual light _____ sporting rainbow-striped goggles, the rainbow-hued swimmer splashes through a wavy rainbow of water.

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

- A. spectrum
- B. spectrum:
- C. spectrum while
- D. spectrum, while

ID: af67b6ca Answer

Correct Answer: B

Rationale

Choice B is the best answer. The convention being tested is the use of a colon within a sentence. In this choice, the colon correctly introduces the following description of how the painting makes use of the entire visual light spectrum by depicting a rainbow-hued swimmer.

Choice A is incorrect because it results in a run-on sentence. The main clauses ("Like...spectrum" and "sporting...water") are fused without punctuation and/or a conjunction. Choice C is incorrect because it results in a run-on sentence. The main clauses ("Like...spectrum" and "while...water") are fused without punctuation. Furthermore, the conjunction "while" fails to indicate that what follows is a description of how the painting makes use of the entire visual light spectrum. Choice D is incorrect because it results in a logically confusing sentence. The conjunction "while," which suggests that what follows is occurring at the same time as or despite what came before, fails to indicate that what follows is a description of how the painting makes use of the entire visual light spectrum.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID c5db164e

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
SAT	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Boundaries	Hard

ID: c5db164e

Recently unearthed Neronian tools in France dating to 54,000 years ago and attributed to *Homo sapiens* may provide evidence that interactions between Neanderthals and modern humans occurred 10,000 years earlier than was previously ____ finding that, if true, would overturn current theories about *H. sapiens* migration during the Upper Paleolithic.

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

- A. supposed; a
- B. supposed. A
- C. supposed a
- D. supposed, a

ID: c5db164e Answer

Correct Answer: D

Rationale

Choice D is the best answer. The convention being tested is the use of punctuation within a sentence. This choice correctly uses a comma to mark the boundary between the main clause ("Recently...supposed") and the supplementary element ("a finding...Paleolithic") that provides additional information about the implications of the Neronian tool discovery.

Choice A is incorrect because a semicolon can't be used in this way to join the main clause ("Recently...supposed") and the supplementary element ("a finding...Paleolithic"). Choice B is incorrect because it results in a rhetorically unacceptable sentence fragment beginning with "a finding." Choice C is incorrect because it results in a run-on sentence. The main clause ("Recently...supposed") and the supplementary element ("a finding...Paleolithic") are fused without punctuation and/or a conjunction.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID 430b2a03

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
SAT	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Boundaries	Hard

ID: 430b2a03

For thousands of years, humans have used domesticated goats (*Capra hircus*) to clear land of unwanted vegetation. When it comes to their diets, goats are notoriously _____ they will devour all kinds of shrubs and weeds, leaving virtually no part of any plant unconsumed.

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

- A. indiscriminate and
- B. indiscriminate,
- C. indiscriminate
- D. indiscriminate:

ID: 430b2a03 Answer

Correct Answer: D

Rationale

Choice D is the best answer. The convention being tested is punctuation use between two main clauses. In this choice, a colon is correctly used to mark the boundary between one main clause ("goats are notoriously indiscriminate") and another main clause ("they will devour all kinds of shrubs and weeds") and to introduce the following explanation of goats' nondiscriminatory behavior when it comes to what they eat.

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. Furthermore, the conjunction "and" fails to indicate that what follows is an explanation of goats' nondiscriminatory behavior when it comes to their diets. Choice B is incorrect because it results in a comma splice. A comma can't be used in this way to join two main clauses ("goats...indiscriminate" and "they...weeds"). Choice C is incorrect because it results in a run-on sentence. The two main clauses ("goats...indiscriminate" and "they...weeds") are fused without punctuation and/or a conjunction.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID 18ec7707

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
SAT	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Boundaries	Hard

ID: 18ec7707

Along with carbon dioxide concentration and temperature, light intensity affects the chemical reaction rate of _____ as light intensity increases, so does the rate at which the reactants (water and carbon dioxide) are converted into their products (glucose and oxygen).

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

- A. photosynthesis and
- B. photosynthesis,
- C. photosynthesis:
- D. photosynthesis

ID: 18ec7707 Answer

Correct Answer: C

Rationale

Choice C is the best answer. The convention being tested is the use of punctuation in a sentence. In this choice, a colon is correctly used to mark the boundary between one main clause ("Along with...photosynthesis") and another main clause ("as light...oxygen") and to introduce the following explanation of how light intensity affects photosynthesis.

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 ("and"). Choice B is incorrect because it results in a comma splice. Without a coordinating conjunction following it, a comma can't be used in this way to join two main clauses ("Along with...photosynthesis" and "as light...oxygen"). Choice D is incorrect because it results in a run-on sentence. The two main clauses ("Along with...photosynthesis" and "as light...oxygen") are fused without punctuation and/or a conjunction.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID 80b2b9da

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
SAT	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Boundaries	Hard

ID: 80b2b9da

With a blend of traditional design elements, such as arched Gothic ceilings, and modern ones, such as floor-to-ceiling _____ design splits the difference between old and new, a mixture that is increasingly seen in home interiors in the US.

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

- A. windows; transitional
- B. windows—transitional
- C. windows. Transitional
- D. windows, transitional

ID: 80b2b9da Answer

Correct Answer: D

Rationale

Choice D is the best answer. The convention being tested is the use of punctuation within a sentence. This choice correctly uses a comma to mark the boundary between the introductory subordinate clause ("With...windows") and the main clause ("transitional design splits the difference between old and new").

Choice A is incorrect because a semicolon can't be used in this way to separate the subordinate clause ("With...windows") from the main clause ("transitional...new"). Choice B is incorrect because a dash can't be used in this way to separate the subordinate clause ("With...windows") from the main clause ("transitional...new"). Choice C is incorrect because it results in a rhetorically unacceptable sentence fragment beginning with "with."

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID bb64d88a

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
SAT	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Boundaries	Hard

ID: bb64d88a

In 1986, conceptual artist Sophie Calle asked twenty-three people, all of whom had been born without sight, to describe “their image of beauty” in rich detail. Calle paired excerpts of these conversations with photographs—both of interviewees and the items they _____ to powerful effect in her exhibition *The Blind*.

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

- A. described, from hair to grass to sculptures
- B. described, from hair to grass to sculptures—
- C. described—from hair to grass to sculptures,
- D. described: from hair to grass to sculptures

ID: bb64d88a Answer

Correct Answer: B

Rationale

Choice B is the best answer. The convention being tested is the punctuation of supplementary elements within a sentence. The comma after "described" separates the first supplementary element ("both of interviewees and the items they described") from the second supplementary element ("from hair to grass to sculptures"). Furthermore, the dash after "sculptures" pairs with the dash after "photographs" to separate these two supplementary elements from the rest of the sentence. The pair of dashes, which operate at a higher organizing level than the comma, indicates that the elements between the dashes function together—in this case, the second supplement ("from...sculptures") describes the range of items mentioned in the first supplement—and could be removed without affecting the grammatical coherence of the sentence.

Choice A is incorrect because it fails to appropriately punctuate the supplementary elements in the sentence. A dash is needed after "sculptures" to separate the supplementary elements ("both...sculptures") from the rest of the sentence. Choice C is incorrect because it fails to appropriately punctuate the supplementary elements in the sentence. The two supplementary elements "both...described" and "from...sculptures" function together to describe the photographs, and placing a dash between them would make this relationship less clear, suggesting that the supplement "both...described" is a standalone element that could be removed without affecting the grammatical coherence of the sentence, which isn't the case. Choice D is incorrect because it fails to appropriately punctuate the supplementary elements in the sentence. A colon isn't conventionally used in this way to separate a supplementary element ("from hair to grass to sculptures") from the noun phrase it is modifying ("items they described"). Additionally, a dash is needed after "sculptures" to separate the supplementary elements ("both...sculptures") from the rest of the sentence.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID 4cff8c23

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
SAT	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Boundaries	Hard

ID: 4cff8c23

Paintings by the renowned twentieth-century US _____ were featured in *Artist to Artist*, an exhibition at the Smithsonian Art Museum that paired the works of artists whose career trajectories intersected in meaningful ways.

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

- A. artists: Thomas Hart Benton and Jackson Pollock,
- B. artists Thomas Hart Benton and Jackson Pollock
- C. artists Thomas Hart Benton, and Jackson Pollock,
- D. artists, Thomas Hart Benton and Jackson Pollock

ID: 4cff8c23 Answer

Correct Answer: B

Rationale

Choice B is the best answer. The convention being tested is the use of punctuation around noun phrases. No punctuation is needed because the coordinated noun phrase "Thomas Hart Benton and Jackson Pollock" is a restrictive appositive, meaning that it provides essential identifying information about the noun phrase before it, "the renowned twentieth-century US artists."

Choice A is incorrect because no punctuation is needed between the noun phrase "the renowned twentieth-century US artists" and the restrictive appositive "Thomas Hart Benton and Jackson Pollock." Additionally, no punctuation is needed between the sentence's subject ("paintings by the renowned twentieth-century US artists Thomas Hart Benton and Jackson Pollock") and the main verb ("were featured"). Choice C is incorrect because no punctuation is needed between the coordinated elements "Thomas Hart Benton" and "Jackson Pollock." Additionally, no punctuation is needed between the sentence's subject ("paintings by the renowned twentieth-century US artists Thomas Hart Benton and Jackson Pollock") and the main verb ("were featured"). Choice D is incorrect because no punctuation is needed between the noun phrase "the renowned twentieth-century US artists" and the restrictive appositive "Thomas Hart Benton and Jackson Pollock."

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID f2e0c354

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
SAT	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Boundaries	Hard

ID: f2e0c354

Researchers studying magnetosensation have determined why some soil-dwelling roundworms in the Southern Hemisphere move in the opposite direction of Earth’s magnetic field when searching for _____ in the Northern Hemisphere, the magnetic field points down, into the ground, but in the Southern Hemisphere, it points up, toward the surface and away from worms’ food sources.

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

- A. food:
- B. food,
- C. food while
- D. food

ID: f2e0c354 Answer

Correct Answer: A

Rationale

Choice A is the best answer. The convention being tested is colon use within a sentence. A colon used in this way introduces information that illustrates or explains information that has come before it. In this case, the colon introduces the following explanation of why some roundworms in the Southern Hemisphere move in the opposite direction of Earth’s magnetic field.

Choice B is incorrect because it results in a comma splice. A comma can’t be used in this way to join two long independent clauses (“Researchers...food” and “in...sources”) such as these. Choice C is incorrect because it results in a run-on sentence. The two clauses (“Researchers...food” and “in...sources”) are fused without punctuation. Furthermore, the conjunction “while” fails to indicate that what follows is an explanation of why some roundworms in the Southern Hemisphere move in the opposite direction of Earth’s magnetic field. Choice D is incorrect because it results in a run-on sentence. The two clauses (“Researchers...food” and “in...sources”) are fused without punctuation and/or a conjunction.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID 1b496066

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
SAT	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Boundaries	Hard

ID: 1b496066

In 1937, Chinese American screen actor Anna May Wong, who had portrayed numerous villains and secondary characters but never a heroine, finally got a starring role in Paramount Pictures’ *Daughter of Shanghai*, a film that _____ “expanded the range of possibilities for Asian images on screen.”

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

- A. critic, Stina Chyn, claims
- B. critic, Stina Chyn, claims,
- C. critic Stina Chyn claims
- D. critic Stina Chyn, claims,

ID: 1b496066 Answer

Correct Answer: C

Rationale

Choice C is the best answer. The conventions being tested are punctuation use between titles and proper nouns and between verbs and integrated quotations. No punctuation is needed to set off the proper noun “Stina Chyn” from the title that describes Chyn, “critic.” Because “Stina Chyn” is essential information identifying the “critic,” no punctuation is necessary. Further, no punctuation is needed between the verb “claims” and the following quotation because the quotation is integrated into the structure of the sentence.

Choice A is incorrect because no punctuation is needed before or after the proper noun “Stina Chyn.” Setting the critic’s name off with commas suggests that it could be removed without affecting the coherence of the sentence, which isn’t the case. Choice B is incorrect because no punctuation is needed before or after the proper noun “Stina Chyn.” Setting the critic’s name off with commas suggests that it could be removed without affecting the coherence of the sentence, which isn’t the case. Additionally, no punctuation is needed between “claims” and the integrated quotation. Choice D is incorrect because no punctuation is needed between the verb “claims” and its subject, “critic Stina Chyn.” Additionally, no punctuation is needed between the verb “claims” and the integrated quotation.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID 5df45c4a

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
SAT	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Boundaries	Hard

ID: 5df45c4a

The poem *Beowulf* begins with the word “hwæt,” which is an Old English _____ as “hark!” or “listen!” in some versions, the word was playfully rendered as “bro!” by Maria Dahvana Headley in her 2020 translation of the poem.

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

- A. exclamation, translated
- B. exclamation and translated
- C. exclamation translated
- D. exclamation. Translated

ID: 5df45c4a Answer

Correct Answer: D

Rationale

Choice D is the best answer. The convention being tested is punctuation use between sentences. In this choice, the period is used correctly to mark the boundary between one sentence ("The poem...exclamation") and another sentence that begins with a supplementary element ("Translated...poem"). The supplementary element "translated as ‘hark!’ or ‘listen!’ in some versions" modifies the subject of the second sentence, "the word" (referring to hwæt).

Choice A is incorrect because it results in a comma splice after "exclamation." A comma can't be used in this way to mark the boundary between sentences. Choice B is incorrect. Without a comma preceding it, the conjunction "and" can't be used in this way to join sentences. Choice C is incorrect because it results in a comma splice after "versions." A comma can't be used in this way to mark the boundary between sentences.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID da3a871d

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
SAT	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Boundaries	Hard

ID: da3a871d

Hegra is an archaeological site in present-day Saudi Arabia and was the second largest city of the Nabataean Kingdom (fourth century BCE to first century CE). Archaeologist Laila Nehmé recently traveled to Hegra to study its ancient _____. Into the rocky outcrops of a vast desert, these burial chambers seem to blend seamlessly with nature.

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

- A. tombs. Built
- B. tombs, built
- C. tombs and built
- D. tombs built

ID: da3a871d Answer

Correct Answer: A

Rationale

Choice A is the best answer. The convention being tested is punctuation use between sentences. In this choice, the period after “tombs” is used correctly to mark the boundary between one sentence (“Archaeologist...tombs”) and another (“Built...nature”).

Choice B is incorrect because it results in a comma splice. A comma can’t be used in this way to mark the boundary between sentences. Choice C is incorrect. Without a comma preceding it, the conjunction “and” can’t be used in this way to join the two sentences. Choice D is incorrect because it results in a run-on sentence. The sentences (“Archaeologist...tombs” and “Built...nature”) are fused without punctuation and/or a conjunction.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID 79cfe2cc

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
SAT	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Boundaries	Hard

ID: 79cfe2cc

During the English neoclassical period (1660–1789), many writers imitated the epic poetry and satires of ancient Greece and Rome. They were not the first in England to adopt the literary modes of classical _____ some of the most prominent figures of the earlier Renaissance period were also influenced by ancient Greek and Roman literature.

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

- A. antiquity, however
- B. antiquity, however,
- C. antiquity, however;
- D. antiquity; however,

ID: 79cfe2cc Answer

Correct Answer: C

Rationale

Choice C is the best answer. The convention being tested is the punctuation of a supplementary phrase following a clause. This choice uses a comma to separate the supplementary adverb phrase "however" from the independent clause it modifies ("They...antiquity") and uses a semicolon to join the first independent clause ("They...antiquity") and the second independent clause ("some...literature"). Further, placing the semicolon after "however" indicates that the information in the clause that this is part of (that neoclassical writers were not the first to adopt classical literary modes) is contrary to what might be assumed from the information in the previous sentence (that the neoclassical writers were unique in imitating classical epic poetry and satires).

Choice A is incorrect because it fails to mark the boundary after "however" between the two independent clauses with appropriate punctuation. Choice B is incorrect because the comma after "however" can't be used in this way to mark the boundary between the two independent clauses. Choice D is incorrect because placing the semicolon after "antiquity" illogically indicates that the information in the clause that this is part of (that prominent Renaissance figures were also influenced by classical literature) is contrary to the information in the previous clause (that neoclassical writers were not the first to adopt classical literary modes).

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID d5e08dce

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
SAT	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Boundaries	Hard

ID: d5e08dce

Latin America is known to have dozens, if not hundreds, of popular dance forms. Only five of these dances are included in international ballroom dance _____ rumba, samba, cha-cha-cha, paso doble, and jive—the last of which is grouped with the other Latin dances despite not having Latin roots.

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

- A. competitions, however:
- B. competitions, however,
- C. competitions, however;
- D. competitions; however,

ID: d5e08dce Answer

Correct Answer: A

Rationale

Choice A is the best answer. The convention being tested is the punctuation of supplementary elements within a sentence. This choice correctly uses a comma to separate the supplementary adverb "however" from the preceding main clause ("only...competitions"), and it uses a colon to introduce the list of dances that follows ("rumba...jive"). Further, placing the colon after "however" rather than before indicates that the information in the preceding main clause (only...competitions) is contrary to what might be assumed from the information in the previous sentence (Latin America has many more dance forms).

Choice B is incorrect. The comma after "however" can't be used in this way to introduce a series ("rumba...jive"). Choice C is incorrect because it isn't conventional to use a semicolon in this way to introduce a series of items, such as the list of dances. Choice D is incorrect because placing the semicolon after "competitions" illogically indicates that the following list of five Latin American dances ("rumba...jive") is contrary to the information in the previous clause (only five Latin American dances are included in international ballroom dance competitions).

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID 84225518

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
SAT	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Boundaries	Hard

ID: 84225518

With some 16,000 in attendance, the Second World Black and African Festival of Arts and _____ or FESTAC ‘77, as the event was more commonly known—became the largest pan-African event on record. FESTAC drew people from around the world to Lagos, Nigeria, for a monthlong celebration of Black and African art, scholarship, and activism.

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

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

ID: 84225518 Answer

Correct Answer: B

Rationale

Choice B is the best answer. The text uses a dash to introduce a nonessential element that explains the acronym FESTAC. The dash matches the dash that comes after “known,” ending the descriptive aside.

Choice A is incorrect. A colon can only come after an independent clause, which isn’t the case here. Choice C is incorrect. While punctuation is required to set off “or FESTAC...known” from the rest of the sentence, nonessential elements must be separated from the sentence with matching punctuation. Since a dash appears on the other side of the element, we can’t use a comma here. Choice D is incorrect. The descriptive aside “or FESTAC...known” is a nonessential element that must be separated with punctuation from the rest of the sentence. This choice fails to add the necessary punctuation before the nonessential element.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID 306ada66

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
SAT	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Boundaries	Hard

ID: 306ada66

A group of ecologists led by Axel Mithöfer at the Max Planck Institute for Chemical Ecology in Germany examined the defensive responses of two varieties of the sweet potato _____ TN57, which is known for its insect resistance, and TN66, which is much more susceptible to pests.

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

- A. plant.
- B. plant;
- C. plant
- D. plant:

ID: 306ada66 Answer

Correct Answer: D

Rationale

Choice D is the best answer. The convention being tested is punctuation use between a main clause and a supplementary phrase. In this choice, a colon is correctly used to mark the boundary between the main clause (“A group...plant”) and the supplementary element (“TN57...pests”) and to introduce the following elaboration on the specific varieties of sweet potato plants that were examined.

Choice A is incorrect because it results in a rhetorically unacceptable sentence fragment beginning with “TN57.” Choice B is incorrect because a semicolon can’t be used in this way to join the main clause (“A group...plant”) and the supplementary element (“TN57...pests”). A semicolon is conventionally used to join two main clauses, whereas a colon is conventionally used to introduce an element that explains or amplifies the information in the preceding clause. Choice C is incorrect because it fails to mark the boundary between the main clause (“A group...plant”) and the supplementary element (“TN57...pests”) with appropriate punctuation.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID 3839f96c

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
SAT	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Boundaries	Hard

ID: 3839f96c

On July 23, 1854, a clipper ship called the *Flying Cloud* entered San Francisco _____. left New York Harbor under the guidance of Captain Josiah Perkins Creesy and his wife, navigator Eleanor Creesy, a mere 89 days and 8 hours earlier, the celebrated ship set a record that would stand for 135 years.

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

- A. Bay and having
- B. Bay. Having
- C. Bay, having
- D. Bay having

ID: 3839f96c Answer

Correct Answer: B

Rationale

Choice B is the best answer. The convention being tested is punctuation use between sentences. In this choice, the period after “Bay” is used correctly to mark the boundary between one sentence (“On...Bay”) and another sentence that begins with a supplementary phrase (“Having...years”). Here, the supplementary phrase beginning with “having” modifies the subject of the second sentence, “the celebrated ship.”

Choice A is incorrect. Without a comma preceding it, the conjunction “and” can’t be used in this way to join sentences. Choice C is incorrect because it results in a comma splice. A comma can’t be used in this way to join two sentences. Choice D is incorrect because it results in a run-on sentence. The sentences (“On...Bay” and “having...years”) are fused without punctuation and/or a conjunction.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID 4800f3d3

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
SAT	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Boundaries	Hard

ID: 4800f3d3

From afar, African American fiber artist Bisa Butler’s portraits look like paintings, their depictions of human faces, bodies, and clothing so intricate that it seems only a fine brush could have rendered them. When viewed up close, however, the portraits reveal themselves to be _____ stitching barely visible among the thousands of pieces of printed, microcut fabric.

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

- A. quilts, and the
- B. quilts, the
- C. quilts; the
- D. quilts. The

ID: 4800f3d3 Answer

Correct Answer: B

Rationale

Choice B is the best answer. The convention being tested is punctuation use between a main clause and a supplementary phrase. This choice correctly uses a comma to mark the boundary between the main clause (“the portraits...quilts”) and the supplementary noun phrase (“the stitching...fabric”) that provides a further description of how the portraits can be identified as quilts.

Choice A is incorrect. A comma and the conjunction “and” can’t be used in this way to join a main clause and a supplementary noun phrase. Choice C is incorrect because a semicolon can’t be used in this way to join a main clause and a supplementary noun phrase. Choice D is incorrect because it results in a rhetorically unacceptable sentence fragment beginning with “the stitching.”

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID fdb98f0e

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
SAT	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Boundaries	Hard

ID: fdb98f0e

In modern plays, actors typically won't acknowledge the _____ do so breaks the fourth wall, a metaphorical barrier between actors and audiences that allows viewers to suspend the knowledge that they're watching a staged performance.

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

- A. audience. As to
- B. audience to
- C. audience. To
- D. audience, to

ID: fdb98f0e Answer

Correct Answer: C

Rationale

Choice C is the best answer. The convention being tested is punctuation use between sentences. In this choice, the period is used correctly to mark the boundary between one sentence ("In modern...audience") and another ("To do...performance").

Choice A is incorrect because it results in a rhetorically unacceptable sentence fragment beginning with "as." Choice B is incorrect because it results in a run-on sentence. The sentences ("In modern...audience" and "To do...performance") are fused without punctuation and/or a conjunction. Choice D is incorrect because it results in a comma splice. A comma can't be used in this way to mark the boundary between sentences.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID aa21be9a

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
SAT	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Boundaries	Hard

ID: aa21be9a

In 2018, the innovative works of Congolese sculptor and architect Bodys Isek _____ were featured in *City Dreams*, a solo exhibition at New York’s Museum of Modern Art.

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

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

ID: aa21be9a Answer

Correct Answer: C

Rationale

Choice C is the best answer. The convention being tested is punctuation between a subject and a verb. No punctuation is needed when the subject of a sentence is immediately followed by a main verb. In this case, the sentence’s subject (“the innovative works of Congolese sculptor and architect Bodys Isek Kingelez”) is followed by the main verb “were featured,” and no punctuation should come between them.

Choice A is incorrect because no punctuation is needed between the subject and the verb. Choice B is incorrect because no punctuation is needed between the subject and the verb. Choice D is incorrect because no punctuation is needed between the subject and the verb.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID a5f7262f

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
SAT	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Boundaries	Hard

ID: a5f7262f

In addition to advocating for South America’s independence in two political treatises, the *Cartagena Manifesto* and the *Letter from Jamaica*, Simón Bolívar personally led armies against the Spanish, liberating three South American territories—New Granada (present-day Colombia and Panama), Venezuela, and Quito (present-day _____ from colonial rule.

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

- A. Ecuador,)
- B. Ecuador)
- C. Ecuador),
- D. Ecuador)—

ID: a5f7262f Answer

Correct Answer: D

Rationale

Choice D is the best answer. The convention being tested is the punctuation of a supplementary element within a sentence. The dash after “Ecuador” and the closing parenthesis pairs with the dash after “territories” to separate the supplementary element (“New...Ecuador”) from the rest of the sentence. The supplementary element specifies the three South American territories that Simón Bolívar liberated, and the pair of dashes indicates that this element could be removed without affecting the grammatical coherence of the sentence.

Choice A is incorrect because it fails to use appropriate punctuation to separate the supplementary element from the rest of the sentence. Furthermore, punctuation isn’t needed between “Ecuador” and the closing parenthesis. Choice B is incorrect because it fails to use appropriate punctuation to separate the supplementary element from the rest of the sentence. Choice C is incorrect because a comma can’t be paired with a dash to separate the supplementary element from the rest of the sentence.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID 8f2d7e11

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
SAT	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Boundaries	Hard

ID: 8f2d7e11

Quantum particles of light—photons—provide an unhackable means of transmitting encryption keys over networks, as attempts to observe particles in quantum states will invariably alter the particles _____ dismantle any information they transmit.

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

- A. and in the process,
- B. and, in the process,
- C. and in the process—
- D. and, in the process

ID: 8f2d7e11 Answer

Correct Answer: B

Rationale

Choice B is the best answer. This choice uses paired punctuation in the form of two commas to set off the nonessential phrase "in the process."

Choice A is incorrect. The phrase "in the process" is a nonessential element and needs to be set off with paired punctuation. We need a comma after "and" to match the one after "process." Choice C is incorrect. The phrase "in the process" is a nonessential element and needs to be set off with paired punctuation, so we would need a dash after "and" to match the one following "process." Choice D is incorrect. The phrase "in the process" is a nonessential element and needs to be set off with paired punctuation. We would need a comma after "process" to match the one following "and."

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID 22022bf7

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
SAT	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Boundaries	Hard

ID: 22022bf7

In the 1950s, novel audio technologies allowed the addition of another instrument to jazz and swing _____ relatively quiet instrument, its full range of sound was finally audible alongside the blaring brass instruments of the time, allowing flautists like Bennie Maupin and Bobbi Humphrey to perform with other jazz greats.

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

- A. music, the flute, a
- B. music. The flute, a
- C. music; the flute, a
- D. music: the flute. A

ID: 22022bf7 Answer

Correct Answer: D

Rationale

Choice D is the best answer. The convention being tested is the use of punctuation within and between sentences. In this choice, the colon correctly introduces the name of the instrument (the flute) that novel audio technologies allowed to be added to jazz and swing. In addition, the period is used to correctly mark the boundary between one sentence ("In...flute") and another ("A relatively...greats").

Choice A is incorrect because it results in a comma splice. A comma can't be used in this way to join two main clauses ("In... quiet instrument" and "its...greats"). Choice B is incorrect. In standard English, it's unconventional to form a sentence in this way with two uncoordinated subjects ("the flute" and "its full range of sound"), and the lack of a clear main subject results in an awkwardly constructed and confusing sentence. Choice C is incorrect. In standard English, it's unconventional to form an independent clause in this way with two uncoordinated subjects ("the flute" and "its full range of sound"), and the lack of a clear main subject results in an awkwardly constructed and confusing clause.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID 26cce062

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
SAT	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Boundaries	Hard

ID: 26cce062

As the fourteenth US librarian of Congress, Carla Hayden has many responsibilities. These include overseeing the Library of Congress’s collections, which boast more than 162 million _____ the US Copyright Office, which registers copyright claims and advises Congress on copyright law; and appointing the US poet laureate.

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

- A. items managing
- B. items, managing
- C. items; managing
- D. items. Managing

ID: 26cce062 Answer

Correct Answer: C

Rationale

Choice C is the best answer. The convention being tested is the punctuation of elements in a complex series. It’s conventional to use a semicolon to separate items in a complex series with internal punctuation, and in this choice, the semicolon after "items" is conventionally used to separate the first item ("overseeing...items") and the second item ("managing...law") in a list of Hayden’s responsibilities.

Choice A is incorrect because it fails to use appropriate punctuation to separate the first item and the second item in the complex series. Choice B is incorrect because a comma after "items" doesn’t match the semicolon used later to separate the second and third items in the series ("managing...law" and "and appointing the US poet laureate"). Choice D is incorrect because it results in a rhetorically unacceptable sentence fragment beginning with "Managing."

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID 7dbcbcdc

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
SAT	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Boundaries	Hard

ID: 7dbcbcdc

Journalists have dubbed Gil Scott-Heron the “godfather of rap,” a title that has appeared in hundreds of articles about him since the 1990s. Scott-Heron himself resisted the godfather _____ feeling that it didn’t encapsulate his devotion to the broader African American blues music tradition as well as “bluesologist,” the moniker he preferred.

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

- A. nickname, however
- B. nickname, however;
- C. nickname, however,
- D. nickname; however,

ID: 7dbcbcdc Answer

Correct Answer: C

Rationale

Choice C is the best answer. The convention being tested is punctuation use between a main clause and two supplementary elements. In this choice, the commas after “nickname” and “however” are correctly used to separate the supplementary adverb “however” from the main clause (“Scott-Heron...nickname”) on one side and the supplementary participial phrase (“feeling...bluesologist”) on the other.

Choice A is incorrect because it fails to mark the boundary between the supplementary adverb “however” and the supplementary phrase (“feeling...bluesologist”). Choice B is incorrect because a semicolon can’t be used in this way to join the supplementary adverb “however” and the supplementary phrase (“feeling...bluesologist”). Choice D is incorrect because a semicolon can’t be used in this way to join the main clause (“Scott-Heron...nickname”) and the supplementary word and phrase (“however” and “feeling...bluesologist”). Moreover, placing the semicolon after “nickname” illogically signals that the following information (Scott-Heron’s feeling that the nickname didn’t encapsulate his devotion to the blues tradition) is contrary to the information in the previous clause (Scott-Heron’s resistance to the nickname).

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID 2680b96d

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
SAT	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Boundaries	Hard

ID: 2680b96d

The Arctic-Alpine Botanic Garden in Norway and the Jardim Botânico of Rio de Janeiro in Brazil are two of many botanical gardens around the world dedicated to growing diverse plant _____ fostering scientific research; and educating the public about plant conservation.

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

- A. species, both native and nonnative,
- B. species, both native and nonnative;
- C. species; both native and nonnative,
- D. species both native and nonnative,

ID: 2680b96d Answer

Correct Answer: B

Rationale

Choice B is the best answer. The convention being tested is the punctuation of items in a complex series (a series including internal punctuation). The semicolon after “nonnative” is correctly used to separate the first item (“growing diverse plant species, both native and nonnative”) and the second item (“fostering scientific research”) in the series of things that botanical gardens are dedicated to. Further, the comma after “species” is correctly used to separate the noun phrase “diverse plant species” and the supplementary phrase “both native and nonnative” that modifies it.

Choice A is incorrect because a comma (specifically, the comma after “nonnative”) can’t be used in this way to separate items in a complex series. Choice C is incorrect because a semicolon can’t be used in this way to separate the noun phrase “diverse plant species” and the supplementary phrase “both native and nonnative” that modifies it. Further, a comma can’t be used in this way to separate items in a complex series. Choice D is incorrect because it fails to use appropriate punctuation to separate the noun phrase “diverse plant species” and the supplementary phrase “both native and nonnative” that modifies it. Further, a comma can’t be used in this way to separate items in a complex series.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID bd907188

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
SAT	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Boundaries	Hard

ID: bd907188

The field of geological oceanography owes much to American _____ Marie Tharp, a pioneering oceanographic cartographer whose detailed topographical maps of the ocean floor and its multiple rift valleys helped garner acceptance for the theories of plate tectonics and continental drift.

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

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

ID: bd907188 Answer

Correct Answer: B

Rationale

Choice B is the best answer. “Marie tharp” is essential information that completes the first clause — the first clause doesn’t function without it. So we don’t want to separate it with punctuation.

Choice A is incorrect. This choice creates a punctuation error. “The field of geological oceanography owes much to American geologist” is unclear: which geologist are we talking about? We need the “Marie Tharp” for clarity, which means it’s essential information and should not be separated by a comma. Choice C is incorrect. This choice creates a punctuation error. “The field of geological oceanography owes much to American geologist” is unclear: which geologist are we talking about? We need the “Marie Tharp” for clarity, which means it’s essential information and should not be separated by a semicolon. Choice D is incorrect. This choice creates a punctuation error. “The field of geological oceanography owes much to American geologist” is unclear: which geologist are we talking about? We need the “Marie Tharp” for clarity, which means it’s essential information and should not be separated by a colon.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID c876444f

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
SAT	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Boundaries	Hard

ID: c876444f

American writer Edwidge Danticat, who emigrated from Haiti in 1981, has won acclaim for her powerful short stories, novels, and _____ her lyrical yet unflinching depictions of her native country’s turbulent history, writer Robert Antoni has compared Danticat to Nobel Prize–winning novelist Toni Morrison.

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

- A. essays, praising
- B. essays and praising
- C. essays praising
- D. essays. Praising

ID: c876444f Answer

Correct Answer: D

Rationale

Choice D is the best answer. The convention being tested is punctuation use between sentences. In this choice, the period after “essays” is used correctly to mark the boundary between one sentence (“American...essays”) and another (“praising...Morrison”). The participial phrase beginning with “Praising” modifies the subject of the second sentence, “writer Robert Antoni.”

Choice A is incorrect because it results in a comma splice. A comma can’t be used in this way to mark the boundary between sentences. Choice B is incorrect. Without a comma preceding it, the conjunction “and” can’t be used in this way to join sentences. Choice C is incorrect because it results in a run-on sentence. The sentences (“American...essays” and “Praising...Morrison”) are fused without punctuation and/or a conjunction.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID 4fe1258f

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
SAT	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Boundaries	Hard

ID: 4fe1258f

The haiku-like poems of Tomas Tranströmer, which present nature- and dream-influenced images in crisp, spare language, have earned the Swedish poet praise from leading contemporary _____ them Nigerian American essayist and novelist Teju Cole, who has written that Tranströmer’s works “contain a luminous simplicity.”

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

- A. writers. Among
- B. writers among
- C. writers; among
- D. writers, among

ID: 4fe1258f Answer

Correct Answer: D

Rationale

Choice D is the best answer. The convention being tested is punctuation use between a main clause and a supplementary phrase. This choice correctly uses a comma to mark the boundary between the main clause (“The haiku-like...writers”) and the supplementary phrase (“among...Cole”) that specifies a contemporary writer who has praised Tomas Tranströmer’s haiku-like poems.

Choice A is incorrect because it results in a rhetorically unacceptable sentence fragment beginning with “among.” Choice B is incorrect because it fails to mark the boundary between the main clause and the supplementary phrase with appropriate punctuation. Choice C is incorrect because a semicolon can’t be used in this way to join the main clause (“The haiku-like...writers”) and the supplementary phrase (“among...Cole”).

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID 836e370c

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
SAT	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Boundaries	Hard

ID: 836e370c

When external forces are applied to common glass made from silicates, energy builds up around minuscule defects in the material, resulting in fractures. Recently, engineer Erkka Frankberg of Tampere University in Finland used the chemical _____ to make a glassy solid that can withstand higher strain than silicate glass can before fracturing.

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

- A. compound, aluminum oxide
- B. compound aluminum oxide,
- C. compound, aluminum oxide,
- D. compound aluminum oxide

ID: 836e370c Answer

Correct Answer: D

Rationale

Choice D is the best answer. The convention being tested is the use of punctuation around noun phrases. No punctuation is needed because the noun phrase “aluminum oxide” is a restrictive appositive, meaning that it provides essential identifying information about the noun phrase before it, “the chemical compound,” and thus doesn’t require punctuation around it.

Choice A is incorrect because no punctuation is needed. Choice B is incorrect because no punctuation is needed. Choice C is incorrect because the noun phrase “aluminum oxide” is a restrictive appositive. Setting the phrase off with punctuation suggests that it could be removed without affecting the coherence of the sentence, which isn’t the case.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID 36e0f3e2

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
SAT	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Boundaries	Hard

ID: 36e0f3e2

The Tantaquidgeon Museum in Uncasville, Connecticut, was founded in 1931 with the goal of showcasing the culture and history of the Mohegan _____. Today, nearly a century later, it is the oldest Native-owned and -operated museum in the country.

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

- A. Tribe, and
- B. Tribe
- C. Tribe and
- D. Tribe,

ID: 36e0f3e2 Answer

Correct Answer: A

Rationale

Choice A is the best answer. This choice uses a comma and a coordinating conjunction (“and”) to join two independent clauses (“The Tantaquidgeon...Tribe” and “Today...country”).

Choice B is incorrect. This choice results in a grammar error known as a run-on sentence. The clauses before and after “Tribe” are both independent, so they need to be separated with some sort of punctuation. Choice C is incorrect. This choice results in a grammar error known as a run-on sentence. The clauses before and after “and” are both independent, so they can’t be linked with just a conjunction. A comma would also be required. Choice D is incorrect. This choice results in a grammar error called a comma splice. The clauses before and after “Tribe” are both independent, so they can’t be linked with just a comma. A coordinating conjunction like “and” or “but” would also be required.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID bff3cf74

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
SAT	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Boundaries	Hard

ID: bff3cf74

Sociologist Alton Okinaka sits on the review board tasked with adding new sites to the Hawai’i Register of Historic Places, which includes Pi’ilanihale Heiau and the ‘Ōpaeka’a Road Bridge. Okinaka doesn’t make such decisions _____ all historical designations must be approved by a group of nine other experts from the fields of architecture, archaeology, history, and Hawaiian culture.

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

- A. single-handedly, however;
- B. single-handedly; however,
- C. single-handedly, however,
- D. single-handedly however

ID: bff3cf74 Answer

Correct Answer: A

Rationale

Choice A is the best answer. The convention being tested is the punctuation of a supplementary word or phrase between two main clauses. This choice correctly uses a comma to separate the supplementary adverb “however” from the preceding main clause (“Okinaka doesn’t...single-handedly”) and a semicolon to join the next main clause (“all...culture”) to the rest of the sentence. Further, placing the semicolon after “however” correctly indicates that the information in the preceding main clause (Okinaka doesn’t make such decisions single-handedly) is contrary to what might be assumed from the information in the previous sentence (Okinaka sits on the review board that adds new sites to the Hawaii Register of Historic Places).

Choice B is incorrect because placing the semicolon after “single-handedly” and the comma after “however” illogically indicates that the information in the next main clause (all historical designations must be approved by a group of experts) is contrary to the information in the previous clause (Okinaka doesn’t make such decisions single-handedly). Choice C is incorrect because it results in a comma splice. Commas can’t be used in this way to punctuate a supplementary word or phrase between 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: Hard

Question ID 1020223f

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
SAT	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Boundaries	Hard

ID: 1020223f

Long attributed to Jacques-Louis David, the preeminent Neoclassical painter of his day, the 1801 painting *Marie Joséphine Charlotte du Val d’Ognes* gained fresh attention in the 1990s when art historians discovered that the painting—which depicts a solitary young woman sketching—was actually the work of little-known French portrait _____ Marie-Denise Villers (1774–1821).

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

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

ID: 1020223f Answer

Correct Answer: B

Rationale

Choice B is the best answer. The convention being tested is the use of punctuation between titles and proper nouns. No punctuation is needed to set off the proper noun "Marie-Denise Villers" from the title that describes Villers, "little-known French portrait artist."

Choice A is incorrect because no punctuation is needed. Choice C is incorrect because no punctuation is needed. Choice D is incorrect because no punctuation is needed.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID 11db42e0

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
SAT	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Boundaries	Hard

ID: 11db42e0

On sunny days, dark rooftops absorb solar energy and convert it to unwanted heat, raising the surrounding air _____ a light-colored covering to an existing dark roof, either by attaching prefabricated reflective sheets or spraying on a paint-like coating, helps combat this effect.

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

- A. temperature; by adding
- B. temperature, adding
- C. temperature. Adding
- D. temperature by adding

ID: 11db42e0 Answer

Correct Answer: C

Rationale

Choice C is the best answer. The convention being tested is punctuation use between sentences. In this choice, the period is used correctly to mark the boundary between the first sentence (“On...temperature”) and the second sentence (“Adding...effect”). The gerund phrase beginning with “adding” is the subject of the second sentence, and the verb phrase “helps combat this effect” describes what adding a light-colored covering can do.

Choice A is incorrect because a semicolon can’t be used in this way to join the sentence “On...temperature” and the supplementary phrases that follow. Doing so leaves the verb phrase “helps combat” without a subject and thus results in a grammatically unconventional sentence. Choice B is incorrect because it results in a comma splice. A comma can’t be used in this way to mark the boundary between sentences. Choice D is incorrect. This choice results in a confusing and illogical sentence that suggests that adding a light-colored covering to an existing dark roof raises the temperature of the surrounding air. Furthermore, it creates ambiguity by leaving the verb phrase “helps combat” without a subject (so it isn’t clear what helps combat the effect).

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID 3233279a

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
SAT	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Boundaries	Hard

ID: 3233279a

Nigerian author Buchi Emecheta’s celebrated literary oeuvre includes *The Joys of Motherhood*, a novel about the changing roles of women in 1950s _____ a television play about the private struggles of a newlywed couple in Nigeria; and *Head Above Water*, her autobiography.

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

- A. Lagos, *A Kind of Marriage*,
- B. Lagos; *A Kind of Marriage*,
- C. Lagos, *A Kind of Marriage*:
- D. Lagos; *A Kind of Marriage*

ID: 3233279a Answer

Correct Answer: B

Rationale

Choice B is the best answer. The convention being tested is the punctuation of items in a complex series (a series including internal punctuation). In this choice, the semicolon after “Lagos” is conventionally used to separate the first item (“*The Joys... Lagos*”) and the second item (“*A Kind...Nigeria*”) in the series. Further, the comma after “*Marriage*” correctly separates the title “*A Kind of Marriage*” from the supplementary phrase (“a television...Nigeria”) that describes it.

Choice A is incorrect because the comma after “Lagos” doesn’t match the semicolon used later in the series to separate the second item (“*A Kind...Nigeria*”) from the third item (“and...autobiography”). Choice C is incorrect because the comma after “Lagos” doesn’t match the semicolon used later in the series to separate the second item (“*A Kind...Nigeria*”) from the third item (“and...autobiography”). Additionally, a colon can’t be used in this way to separate the title “*A Kind of Marriage*” from the supplementary phrase (“a television...Nigeria”) that describes it. Choice D is incorrect because it fails to use appropriate punctuation to separate the title “*A Kind of Marriage*” from the supplementary phrase (“a television...Nigeria”) that describes it.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID 9ab4d6ff

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
SAT	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Boundaries	Hard

ID: 9ab4d6ff

On November 2, 1772, amid rising tensions with Great Britain, Boston colonists formed the Boston Committee of Correspondence. By 1774, what had started as a local means of mobilizing support for the Patriot cause had grown into something far more _____ network of such committees that, facilitating communication among the colonies, helped lay the groundwork for the Continental Congress.

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

- A. extensive: a
- B. extensive; a
- C. extensive, it was a
- D. extensive. A

ID: 9ab4d6ff Answer

Correct Answer: A

Rationale

Choice A is the best answer. The convention being tested is the use of a colon within a sentence. In this choice, the colon is correctly used to introduce the following explanation of what the Patriot cause had grown into by 1774.

Choice B is incorrect because a semicolon can't be used in this way to join the main clause ("what...extensive") and the supplementary element ("a network...Congress"). A semicolon is conventionally used to join two main clauses, whereas a colon is conventionally used to introduce an element that explains or amplifies the information in the preceding clause, making the colon the better choice in this context. Choice C is incorrect because it results in a comma splice. The addition of the pronoun and verb "it was" forms the start of a new main clause in the sentence, and a comma can't be used in this way to mark the boundary between two main clauses. Choice D is incorrect because it results in a rhetorically unacceptable sentence fragment beginning with "a network."

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID ae88a59f

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
SAT	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Boundaries	Hard

ID: ae88a59f

Using satellite remote sensing, Dr. Catherine Nakalembe, director of NASA’s Harvest Africa initiative, gathers important data on crop health. Nakalembe doesn’t just compile the _____ she also shares her findings with African farmers, enabling them to make data-driven decisions about managing critical food crops.

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

- A. information, though;
- B. information, though,
- C. information; though
- D. information though,

ID: ae88a59f Answer

Correct Answer: A

Rationale

Choice A is the best answer. This choice uses a semicolon to join two independent clauses ("Nakalembe doesn’t just... though" and "she also shares..."). This choice also appropriately includes "though" in the first clause, where it logically belongs.

Choice B is incorrect. This choice results in a grammar error called a comma splice. It incorrectly joins two independent clauses with only a comma instead of a comma and a coordinating conjunction like "and" or "but." "Though" is a transition word, but it’s not a coordinating conjunction. Choice C is incorrect. This choice results in a punctuation error. A semicolon can only be used to link two independent clauses. However, if "though" is included in the second clause, it turns the second clause into a dependent clause, so a semicolon can’t be used after "information." Choice D is incorrect. This choice results in a grammar error called a comma splice. It incorrectly joins two independent clauses with only a comma instead of a comma and a coordinating conjunction like "and" or "but."

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID 1e43d5ea

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
SAT	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Boundaries	Hard

ID: 1e43d5ea

A recent study tracked the number of bee species present in twenty-seven New York apple orchards over a ten-year period. _____ found that when wild growth near an orchard was cleared, the number of different bee species visiting the orchard decreased.

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

- A. Entomologist Heather Grab:
- B. Entomologist, Heather Grab,
- C. Entomologist Heather Grab
- D. Entomologist Heather Grab,

ID: 1e43d5ea Answer

Correct Answer: C

Rationale

Choice C is the best answer. The convention being tested is punctuation use between a name and title and between a subject and a verb. No punctuation is needed between the proper noun “Heather Grab” and “entomologist,” the title that describes Grab. Additionally, no punctuation is needed between the sentence’s subject (“Entomologist Heather Grab”) and the main verb (“found”) that indicates what Grab did.

Choice A is incorrect because no punctuation is needed between the subject and the verb. Choice B is incorrect because no punctuation is needed. Setting the entomologist’s name off with commas suggests that it could be removed without affecting the coherence of the sentence, which isn’t the case. Choice D is incorrect because no punctuation is needed between the subject and the verb.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID b5e68ea0

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
SAT	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Boundaries	Hard

ID: b5e68ea0

As cheesemaking practices spread throughout Europe and Asia during and after the Neolithic, divergent strategies for preserving milk _____ whereas rennet-coagulated cheesemaking became key to milk preservation in Europe and Southwest Asia, acid-heat coagulation methods became common among nomadic herding populations of the northeastern Eurasian steppe.

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

- A. emerged
- B. emerged and
- C. emerged:
- D. emerged,

ID: b5e68ea0 Answer

Correct Answer: C

Rationale

Choice C is the best answer. The convention being tested is punctuation use within a sentence. A colon can be used between two main clauses to signal that what follows is an elaboration of what came before. In this choice, the colon correctly introduces the following explanation of the divergent milk preservation strategies that emerged.

Choice A is incorrect because it results in a run-on sentence. The main clause ("As...emerged") and the subordinate clause followed by another main clause ("whereas...steppe") are fused without punctuation and/or a conjunction. Choice B is incorrect. Without a comma preceding it, the conjunction "and" can't be used in this way to join a main clause ("As...emerged") and a subordinate clause followed by another main clause ("whereas...steppe"). Choice D is incorrect because it results in a comma splice. A comma can't be used in this way to join a main clause ("As...emerged") and a subordinate clause followed by another main clause ("whereas...steppe").

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID dcc8a25e

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
SAT	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Boundaries	Hard

ID: dcc8a25e

In 1943, in the midst of World War II, mathematics professor Grace Hopper was recruited by the US military to help the war effort by solving complex equations. Hopper’s subsequent career would involve more than just _____ as a pioneering computer programmer, Hopper would help usher in the digital age.

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

- A. equations, though:
- B. equations, though,
- C. equations. Though,
- D. equations though

ID: dcc8a25e Answer

Correct Answer: A

Rationale

Choice A is the best answer. The convention being tested is the use of punctuation to mark boundaries between supplements and clauses. The comma after “equations” is used to separate the independent clause (“Hopper’s...equation”) from the supplementary adverb phrase “though.” The colon after “though” is used to mark the boundary between the clause ending with “though” and the following clause (“as...age”). A colon used in this way introduces information that illustrates or explains information that has come before it. In this case, the colon after “though” introduces the following explanation of how Hopper’s subsequent career would involve more than just solving equations: she would become a pioneering computer programmer.

Choice B is incorrect because it results in a comma splice. A comma can’t be used in this way to join two independent clauses (“Hopper’s...though” and “as...age”) such as these. Choice C is incorrect because it results in an illogical sequence of sentences. Placing the period after “equations” and beginning the next sentence with “Though” illogically suggests that the following information (that Hopper would help usher in the digital age) is contrary to the information in the previous sentence (Hopper’s subsequent career would involve more than just solving equations). Instead, the information that follows supports the information from the previous sentence by explaining how her work and influence extended beyond solely solving equations. Choice D is incorrect because it results in a run-on sentence. The two independent clauses (“Hopper’s... though” and “as...age”) are fused without punctuation.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID 3152fbb0

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
SAT	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Boundaries	Hard

ID: 3152fbb0

Researcher Lin Zhi developed a process for increasing the tensile strength—measured in gigapascals, or GPa—of silkworm ____ dissolving and reweaving the silk in a solution of iron metal ions, zinc, and sugar, Zhi increased the amount of force required to stretch it from approximately 0.5 GPa to 2 GPa.

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

- A. silk, by
- B. silk by
- C. silk and by
- D. silk. By

ID: 3152fbb0 Answer

Correct Answer: D

Rationale

Choice D is the best answer. The independent clauses "researcher Lin Zhi...silk" and "by dissolving...2 GPa" can be grammatically separated by a period. They can stand alone as sentences, and this is the only choice that lets them do that.

Choice A is incorrect. This choice results in a grammar error called a comma splice. "Researcher Lin Zhi...silk" and "by dissolving...2 GPa" are both independent clauses. They need to either be separated with punctuation like a period or a semicolon, or they need to be connected by a comma and a coordinating conjunction like "and." A comma alone isn't enough. Choice B is incorrect. This choice results in a grammar error called a run-on sentence. "Researcher Lin Zhi...silk" and "by dissolving...2 GPa" are both independent clauses. They need to either be separated with punctuation like a period or a semicolon, or they need to be connected by a comma and a coordinating conjunction like "and." Choice C is incorrect. This choice results in a grammar error called a run-on sentence. "Researcher Lin Zhi...silk" and "by dissolving...2 GPa" are both independent clauses. The coordinating conjunction "and" isn't enough to link them by itself. We need a comma, too.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID 6b4c8b42

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
SAT	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Boundaries	Hard

ID: 6b4c8b42

The 1977 play *And the Soul Shall Dance* depicts two Japanese American farming families in Depression-era Southern California. Critics have noted the way pioneering _____ compares the experiences of *issei* (Japanese nationals who emigrated to America) and *nisei* (their American-born children).

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

- A. playwright, Wakako Yamauchi,
- B. playwright, Wakako Yamauchi
- C. playwright Wakako Yamauchi,
- D. playwright Wakako Yamauchi

ID: 6b4c8b42 Answer

Correct Answer: D

Rationale

Choice D is the best answer. The convention being tested is the use of punctuation between titles and proper nouns. No punctuation is needed to set off the proper noun "Wakako Yamauchi" from the title that describes Yamauchi, "pioneering playwright." Because "Wakako Yamauchi" is essential information identifying the "pioneering playwright," no punctuation is necessary.

Choice A is incorrect because no punctuation is needed before or after the proper noun "Wakako Yamauchi." Setting the playwright’s name off with commas suggests that it could be removed without affecting the coherence of the sentence, which isn’t the case. Choice B is incorrect because no punctuation is needed between the title "pioneering playwright" and the proper noun "Wakako Yamauchi." Choice C is incorrect because no punctuation is needed between the proper noun "Wakako Yamauchi" and the verb "compares."

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID c6dd0280

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
SAT	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Boundaries	Hard

ID: c6dd0280

With the development of new technologies that use natural resources more efficiently, the overall consumption of those resources might be expected to decrease. Economists have observed that improvements in efficiency often correlate negatively with resource _____ efficiency gains, lowering the cost of use, may increase demand to the extent that resource consumption ultimately rises.

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

- A. conservation, though,
- B. conservation; though
- C. conservation, though;
- D. conservation, though

ID: c6dd0280 Answer

Correct Answer: C

Rationale

Choice C is the best answer. The convention being tested is the use of punctuation within a sentence. This choice correctly uses a comma to separate the supplementary adverb "though" from the preceding main clause ("Economists...conservation") and uses a semicolon to join the next main clause ("efficiency gains...rises") to the rest of the sentence. Further, placing the semicolon after "though" indicates that the information in the preceding main clause ("improvements in efficiency often correlate negatively with resource conservation") is contrary to what might be assumed from the information in the previous sentence (resource consumption would be expected to decrease with the development of new, more efficient technologies).

Choice A is incorrect because it results in a comma splice. Commas can't be used in this way to punctuate a supplementary word or phrase between two main clauses. Choice B is incorrect because it fails to mark the boundary between the two main clauses ("Economists...though" and "efficiency gains....rises") with appropriate punctuation. Moreover, placing the semicolon after "conservation" illogically indicates that the information in the next clause (gains in efficiency may lead to an increase in resource consumption) is contrary to the information in the previous clause ("improvements in efficiency often correlate negatively with resource conservation"). Choice D is incorrect because placing a comma after "conservation" illogically indicates that the information in the next clause (gains in efficiency may lead to an increase in resource consumption) is contrary to the information in the previous clause ("improvements in efficiency often correlate negatively with resource conservation").

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID 0d0e04ec

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
SAT	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Boundaries	Hard

ID: 0d0e04ec

After immigrating from Mexico and obtaining U.S. citizenship, Octaviano Ambrosio Larrazolo entered politics, earning a reputation for being a fervent defender of Hispanic civil rights. In 1919 Larrazolo was elected governor of _____ in 1928 he became the nation’s first Hispanic U.S. Senator.

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

- A. New Mexico and
- B. New Mexico,
- C. New Mexico, and
- D. New Mexico

ID: 0d0e04ec Answer

Correct Answer: C

Rationale

Choice C 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 "and" to join the first main clause ("In 1919 Larrazolo was elected governor of New Mexico") and the second main clause ("in 1928 he became the nation’s first Hispanic US Senator").

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 B 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: Hard

Question ID 4dc1b152

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
SAT	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Boundaries	Hard

ID: 4dc1b152

In discussing Mary Shelley’s 1818 epistolary novel *Frankenstein*, literary theorist Gayatri Spivak directs the reader’s attention to the character of Margaret Saville. As Spivak points out, Saville is not the protagonist of Shelley’s _____ as the recipient of the letters that frame the book’s narrative, she’s the “occasion” of it.

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

- A. novel
- B. novel,
- C. novel; rather,
- D. novel, rather,

ID: 4dc1b152 Answer

Correct Answer: C

Rationale

Choice C is the best answer. The convention being tested is the coordination of main clauses within a sentence. This choice correctly uses a semicolon to join a main clause (“Saville...novel”) and a second main clause (“she’s...it”) preceded by supplementary elements (“rather...narrative”).

Choice A is incorrect because it results in a run-on sentence. The two main clauses are fused without punctuation and/or a conjunction. Choice B 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 comma splice. Without a conjunction following it, the comma after “novel” can’t be used in this way to join the two main clauses.

Question Difficulty: Hard

Question ID 0447b140

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
SAT	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Boundaries	Hard

ID: 0447b140

The Limón technique, developed by Mexican-born dancer and choreographer Jose Limón, is known for its emphasis on breath control and its interplay of weight and _____ dancers may explore, for example, the moment of mid-air suspension at the top of a jump.

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

- A. weightlessness
- B. weightlessness which
- C. weightlessness,
- D. weightlessness;

ID: 0447b140 Answer

Correct Answer: D

Rationale

Choice D is the best answer. The convention being tested is the use of punctuation within a sentence. This choice uses a semicolon in a conventional way to join the first main clause ("The Limón...weightlessness") and the second main clause ("dancers...jump").

Choice A is incorrect because it results in a run-on sentence. The two main clauses are fused without punctuation and/or a conjunction. Choice B is incorrect. The relative pronoun "which" can't be used in this way to join two main clauses. 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: Hard

Question ID 30b2a7b8

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
SAT	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Boundaries	Hard

ID: 30b2a7b8

The relationship between genomes and epigenomes reveals how cells with identical DNA develop different _____ whereas the genome in each cell contains a complete DNA sequence, the epigenome consists of chemical compounds that determine which traits in the sequence will be expressed.

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

- A. functions
- B. functions,
- C. functions and,
- D. functions:

ID: 30b2a7b8 Answer

Correct Answer: D

Rationale

Choice D is the best answer. The convention being tested is the use of a colon within a sentence. In this choice, the colon correctly introduces the following explanation of the different functions of genomes and epigenomes.

Choice A is incorrect because it results in a run-on sentence. The two main clauses ("The relationship...functions" and "whereas...expressed") are fused without punctuation and/or a conjunction. Choice B is incorrect because it results in a comma splice. A comma can't be used in this way to join two main clauses ("The relationship...functions" and "whereas...expressed"). Choice C is incorrect. Without a comma preceding it, the conjunction "and" can't be used in this way to join two main clauses. Furthermore, "and" fails to indicate that what follows is an explanation of how cells with identical DNA develop different functions.

Question Difficulty: Hard