

Writing and Language Practice Test

Questions 1–11 are based on the following passage.

Adventures in Cooking

“Turn off the stove!” I told my sister in a panicked voice, lifting the overflowing pot of water off the hot stove. I had never cooked dinner before, and it was much more difficult than I thought it would be. Already I had burned the dinner [1] rolls dropped an egg, on the floor, and now [2] I had let the water boil over. Cooking was not the first household chore I struggled to do.

When I began high [3] school, my parents gave me a choice, I could cook dinner every evening after school, or I could do the laundry. I tried to do the laundry, with disastrous results. Somehow a red sock ended up in a load of white clothes, and as a result my entire family had to contend with blotchy, stained pink shirts. [4]

[5] [1] The evidence was clear; it appeared that I did not speak this cryptic language called “cooking.” [2] After that catastrophic first dinner, [6] when I decided that I needed to learn more about cooking. [3] First, I read my grandmother’s cookbooks, but the recipes directed me to do mysterious things such as “blanch” and “sauté.” [4] Additionally, I could not identify many ingredients: What are shallots and navy beans?

1

- A) NO CHANGE
- B) rolls, dropped an egg, on the floor and
- C) rolls, dropped an egg on the floor, and
- D) rolls, dropped an egg on the floor and,

2

- A) NO CHANGE
- B) this.
- C) the water boils over.
- D) I made another mistake.

3

- A) NO CHANGE
- B) school, my parents gave me a choice
- C) school, my parents gave me a choice:
- D) school my parents gave me a choice.

4

Which of the following sentences would best provide a logical transition from paragraph 2 to Paragraph 3?

- A) Pink is my favorite color, so I was not too upset.
- B) Following that debacle, I was reassigned to the kitchen.
- C) I decided to stop doing laundry.
- D) I cannot do yard work properly, either.

5

For the sake of the unity and coherence of this paragraph, Sentence 1 should be placed:

- A) where it is now.
- B) after sentence 2.
- C) after sentence 3.
- D) after sentence 4.

6

- A) NO CHANGE
- B) at which
- C) then
- D) DELETE the underlined portion.

For a few weeks, my family suffered through my unsuccessful attempts at spaghetti, tacos, 7 and hamburgers. 8 "I hope you don't aspire to be a chef!" my older brother joked.

Then one evening, I began watching a television show called "Iron Chef." The show was from Japan, 9 which is an island country, but the voices were dubbed over in English. "Iron Chef" portrayed a contest between two skilled chefs.

10 He was given one hour to create multiple dishes, all of which had to contain the "ingredient of the day." Sometimes the ingredient was a common food, such as chicken. More often, however, the ingredient was something unusual, like yams, eggplant, or kiwi. Each chef was 11 also allowed to use other ingredients, but had to include the ingredient of the day.

The announcers on "Iron Chef" could have been sports commentators because their remarks were enthusiastic, well-informed, and interesting. "Iron Chef" was amusing, and it taught me how to cook. Never again did I serve burned, bland pasta.

7

- A) NO CHANGE
- B) and I burned the
- C) after that
- D) and making

8

The writer wants to add a sentence in this spot to further describe the way in which the meals were badly prepared. Which of the following sentences would most successfully achieve this effect?

- A) Hamburgers are not healthy.
- B) I do not think I will attend cooking school.
- C) Everything I cooked was burned and tasteless.
- D) It is difficult to cook hamburgers properly, but I needed to learn.

9

- A) NO CHANGE
- B) which I learned is an island country,
- C) which is a country composed of islands,
- D) DELETE the underlined portion.

10

- A) NO CHANGE
- B) Each was
- C) Each were
- D) The chef was

11

Which of the following placements for the underlined portion would be LEAST acceptable?

- A) Where it is now
- B) After the word "chef"
- C) After the word "allowed"
- D) After the word "other"

Questions 12–22 are based on the following passage.

Getting Dirty

A woman staggers into the classroom and, with evident relief, drops a bulging box onto a stool **12** standing inside the room. Without a word, she reaches inside and pulls out a handful of moist terracotta clay and tosses it onto the table in front of you. **13** As you eye her grubby hands, she doles out the remaining **14** clay that she instructs the class to “get to know.”

12

- A) NO CHANGE
- B) resting inside the room
- C) inside the room
- D) DELETE the underlined portion and end the sentence with a period.

13

- A) NO CHANGE
- B) Next you
- C) At that time you
- D) You now

14

- A) NO CHANGE
- B) clay she
- C) clay, which she
- D) clay, whom she

You stare suspiciously at the brown lump sitting on the table in front of you. You could handle watercolors, but you have no intention of risking your fresh manicure playing with glorified dirt. **15** However, you are repulsed by your neighbors' animated squishing of their own balls of clay, which reminds you of your cousins' frequent mud fights. **16**

[1] Crossing your arms, you sink back into your chair.

17 [2] For better or for worse, you're stuck in Art 1B.

[3] You **18** wish, you had signed up for Journalism or even **19** chosen Band instead. [4] Is it too late to request a schedule change? [5] You imagine pleading your case before the harried guidance counselor and immediately reject the idea.

15

- A) NO CHANGE
- B) Moreover,
- C) Although
- D) Nevertheless,

16

The writer wants to end this paragraph with a sentence that emphasizes the narrator's growing squeamishness about the clay. Which of the following sentences would best achieve this effect?

- A) You never did get along very well with your cousins.
- B) Several years ago, your cousin managed to grind a handful of mud into your hair.
- C) You cringe at this disgusting association.
- D) You manage to rationalize that artists have been sculpting with clay for ages.

17

For the sake of unity and coherence, Sentence 2 should be placed:

- A) where it is now.
- B) after Sentence 3.
- C) after Sentence 4.
- D) after Sentence 5.

18

- A) NO CHANGE
- B) wish you
- C) wish, and you
- D) wish, that you

19

- A) NO CHANGE
- B) choose
- C) have chosen
- D) chose

CONTINUE 

20 You touch the mass gently. It's pleasantly firm and cool, not sludgy like you had expected. You pick up the clay and begin to knead it between your two palms. With every turn it becomes softer and warmer. You don't even mind the reddish stain that appears on your skin. Not really, anyway.

Growing more adventurous, you begin to shape the ball into an oval. You carefully push the clay around with your fingertips, forming soft indentations and mounds until the clay takes on a vaguely human form. You continue to tweak the growing sculpture, adding in more detail with the point of a pencil until it takes on a recognizable shape.

You prop the clay head up on your desk and gaze into **21** its lopsided eyes. The sculpture is certainly an improvement over the cold clod of earth it once was. **22** Though your fingernails are now encrusted with drying clay, an overwhelming feeling of creativity more than makes up for such a minor inconvenience.

20

The writer wishes to indicate the narrator's reluctance to handle the clay at this point in the essay. Which of the following choices would most successfully achieve this effect?

- A) NO CHANGE
- B) You prod the mass with a single finger.
- C) You hurriedly press down on the mass.
- D) You touch the mass with your outstretched hand.

21

- A) NO CHANGE
- B) its
- C) it is
- D) its'

22

The writer wants to insert a sentence that indicates that the narrator is pleased with her creation. Which of the following sentences would most successfully achieve this effect?

- A) Your neighbor's clay has never really progressed beyond this clod stage.
- B) You laugh at the thought of your initial reaction to the clay.
- C) A small smile escapes your lips as you lean back in your chair.
- D) Your teacher glances over and gives you thumbs up.

Questions 23–33 are based on the following passage.

Esperanto: a Communications Solution?

Is world peace an unobtainable ideal? Since thousands of languages are **23** spoken aloud across the globe, communication among different populations is often strained. **24** While English is growing as an international language, non-native **25** speakers, who feel that they are at a linguistic or cultural disadvantage, often resent its status as a *lingua franca*.

The desire for an **26** affective, and neutral means of international communication struck Dr. L. L. Zamenhof, who in the late nineteenth century developed the language Esperanto

23

- A) NO CHANGE
- B) in verbal use
- C) communicated orally
- D) spoken

24

- A) NO CHANGE
- B) Nonetheless,
- C) However,
- D) In addition,

25

- A) NO CHANGE
- B) speakers who feel
- C) speakers, who feel,
- D) speakers who feel,

26

- A) NO CHANGE
- B) effective and
- C) affective and
- D) effective, and

27 over a hundred years ago. Zamenhof **28** has designed the language to be easily learned. Features of **29** Esperanto include: completely regular forms, simple grammar, and a rich root system. Much of the vocabulary is eerily familiar to those with some knowledge of Western European languages.

Though Esperanto is not currently widespread enough to be a realistic solution to world communication problems, it is potentially another step towards global harmony. Esperanto is the most successful constructed language to date. Estimates of the total number of speakers range from 100,000 to 1.6 million. **30** There are even as many as two thousand native speakers across the globe! There is no shortage of material in Esperanto for learners of the language to enjoy. Although most of the quarter million books published in Esperanto have been translated, there are hundreds of original works in print. Esperanto's reach has even penetrated the world of film: a 1965 movie starring William Shatner, *Incubus*, was filmed entirely in Esperanto. **31** Shatner is perhaps most famous for his role as Captain Kirk on "Star Trek."

27

- A) NO CHANGE
- B) over a century ago
- C) more than one hundred years ago
- D) DELETE the underlined portion and end the sentence with a period.

28

- A) NO CHANGE
- B) had designed
- C) designed
- D) was designing

29

- A) NO CHANGE
- B) Esperanto include,
- C) Esperanto include
- D) Esperanto:

30

- A) NO CHANGE
- B) (Do NOT begin new paragraph) There is
- C) (Begin new paragraph) There is
- D) (Begin new paragraph) There are

31

The writer is considering deleting the underlined sentence. Should the writer do this?

- A) Yes, because this information is already found in another paragraph.
- B) Yes, because it supplies unnecessary information.
- C) No, because it supports the main argument of the passage as introduced in the first paragraph.
- D) No, because it continues the explanation of how Esperanto has influenced film.

Though opponents have voiced their skepticism about the language, the community of Esperantists continues to grow. **32** Knowledge of the language provides a link for people who would otherwise have a difficult time speaking with one another. Hundreds of international conferences and other get-togethers are held each year. In fact, one of the perks of learning Esperanto is access to the publication *Pasporta Servo*, which lists the addresses of those willing to host traveling Esperanto speakers for free.

This promise of international cooperation is what keeps many Esperantists motivated. Only time will tell, however, whether Esperanto will help achieve this goal.

33

32

The writer is considering deleting the first clause of the preceding sentence and beginning the sentence with the word "The." If the writer did this, the paragraph would primarily lose

- A) an acknowledgement that there are critics of the Esperanto movement.
- B) an effective transition from the preceding paragraph.
- C) an example of how the Esperanto community is growing.
- D) a detail that undermines the predominant argument of the essay.

33

The writer wishes to conclude the essay with a sentence that refers to the main theme of the essay. Which of the following choices would best accomplish this goal?

- A) With any luck it won't fail!
- B) As of now, however, its prospects are dismal.
- C) So grab your copy of *Incubus* and make a toast to Esperanto's creator, Dr. Zamenhof!
- D) Until then, pacon! Peace!

Questions 34–44 are based on the following passage.

International Politics and the Birth of the Atomic Bomb

The history of the atomic bomb is marked by strange intersections of international politics **34** yet astounding science. Marie Curie was born in Poland at a time when it was **35** under Russian occupation. She earned her advanced physics and math degrees in France, where she coined the word “radioactivity.”

36 Nevertheless, thirty years later, in 1938, German scientists Otto Hahn and Fritz Strassman **37** discovered that they could split the nucleus of a uranium atom. This “fission,” as it was named a year later, released extra neutrons that could in turn split other radioactive atoms.

38 With war looming on the horizon, some members of the worldwide scientific community began to suspect that the energy released in this chain reaction could, in theory, be harnessed to create a bomb with unprecedented power.

34

- A) NO CHANGE
- B) but
- C) as well as
- D) DELETE the underlined portion.

35

- A) NO CHANGE
- B) beneath
- C) below
- D) doomed to

36

- A) NO CHANGE
- B) Despite this, some thirty years later,
- C) A mere thirty years later,
- D) It then took almost thirty years

37

- A) NO CHANGE
- B) puzzled over
- C) tripped over
- D) had a lucky accident to know

38

- A) NO CHANGE
- B) War loomed on the horizon,
- C) As the war, which loomed on the horizon,
- D) The war that was looming on the horizon would make

Leo Szilard, the son of a Hungarian Jewish civil engineer, studied under Albert Einstein in Germany. After Hitler came to **39** power, he fled Germany for England, and there published his views on the possibility of a neutron chain reaction. **40** In anticipation of the outbreak of World War II, Szilard fled to New York City, where he became a professor at Columbia University **41** in 1938 in that same fateful year of Hahn and Strassman's discovery. Szilard studied Hahn and Strassman's results and the work of other German scientists, which **42** suggested that a few pounds of uranium could have the same explosive and destructive power as many thousands of pounds of dynamite. Szilard contacted Einstein about the potential threat this posed, and in August 1939 succeeded in encouraging Einstein to write to President Franklin D. Roosevelt with a warning that Germany was attempting to develop a nuclear weapon and that the United States should preempt the threat by developing one first.

39

- A) NO CHANGE
- B) power he fled
- C) power, Szilard fled
- D) power Szilard fled,

40

The writer is considering adding the following true statement in this place:

Szilard had left Germany in 1933 to escape Nazi persecution and continue his work in other parts of Europe.

Should the writer make the addition at this point?

- A) Yes, because it indicates that some scientists felt compelled to leave Germany for their safety as well as to avoid lending their knowledge to the Nazi's side.
- B) Yes, because it helps explain why Germany would not be pursuing nuclear weapons.
- C) No, because it detracts from the flow of the passage, and where Szilard fled is not as important as the fact that he left Nazi Germany.
- D) No, because Hitler did not win a majority vote and he was not able to challenge important scientists at this time.

41

- A) NO CHANGE
- B) around the same time as
- C) at about the time
- D) DELETE the underlined portion.

42

- A) NO CHANGE
- B) would suggest
- C) could have suggested
- D) suggests

In September 1941, two of the most knowledgeable atomic scientists met to discuss the recent attempts of making the theory of atomic power a militaristic reality **43** at a meeting in Nazi-occupied Copenhagen, Denmark. German physicist Werner Heisenberg, who had continued his work in Nazi Germany, sought out his former mentor, the Danish scientist Nils Bohr. Bohr had pioneered atomic theories but his work had been impeded by the persecution of the Nazi forces occupying his country. Although it was supposed to be secret, the meeting was almost certainly compromised due to the wartime surveillance Bohr endured, and thus, the men were exceedingly nervous. Unable to speak freely, Heisenberg talked in an indirect manner. Heisenberg spoke so vaguely because he feared charges of treason for giving up German secrets.

In 1943, Bohr made the momentous choice to refuse to work on the German atomic bomb, and he fled to Sweden, then to London, and eventually ended up in the United States.

43

- A) NO CHANGE
- B) while attending a meeting
- C) while in attendance at a meeting
- D) attending a meeting

This decision may have determined the course of the war. The most world-renowned physicists were gathered in the U.S. to work on the Manhattan Project, 44 which had begun in response to Einstein's letter to Roosevelt. These esteemed scientists considered Bohr the sage of the group: The side that had Bohr was the side that would have the bomb.

44

Which of the following statements, if substituted for the underlined portion, would most accurately and effectively represent the information in the graph?

- A) a project that has cost U.S. taxpayers more than any other in history.
- B) a project that cost more to administer than even the Apollo space program.
- C) a project that costs far less than comparable energy programs.
- D) a project that received annual funding from 1942 to 1946.

Annual Funding for Manhattan Project, Apollo Program, and DOE Energy Technology R&D Program

