Usage and mechanics

Punctuation:

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| **Sentence** | **Question/ Answer Choices** | **Answer/ Explanation** |
| When I was asleep I dreamed I was a Gryffindor student at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardy. | 1. NO CHANGE 2. When I was asleep – I dreamed 3. When I was asleep; I dreamed 4. When I was asleep, I dreamed | D. The comma is needed to separate the dependent clause at the beginning of the sentence from the rest of the sentence. |
| The beach was characterized by the soothing sounds of crashing waves and chirping seagulls. | Which of the following alternatives to the underlined portion would NOT be acceptable?   1. by soothing sounds: crashing waves 2. by the soothing sounds of: crashing waves 3. by many soothing sounds, including crashing waves 4. by soothing sounds like crashing waves | B. Semicolons must be between two complete sentences. “The beach was characterized by the soothing sounds of” could not be a complete sentence on its own. |
| Germany is bordered by eight different countries; these are Poland, Denmark, the Netherlands, Belgium, France, Switzerland, Austria, and the Czech Republic. | What is an additional acceptable alternative to the underlined portion?   1. countries: Poland, 2. countries. Poland, 3. countries Poland, 4. countries; Poland, | A. This option is correct because the colon separates an independent clause from a dependent clause in that order. |
| Before going on vacation, the mother of the family walked around the house, making sure all the kids rooms were clean. | 1. making sure all the kids rooms 2. making sure all the kid’s rooms 3. making sure all the kids’ rooms 4. making sure all the kids, the rooms | C. The apostrophe is needed to identify the rooms as possessions of the kids. The apostrophe follows the ‘s,’ using the plural form, because the question stem uses the word ‘all,’ implying that there is more than one kid. |
| It was a warm, but sunny day. | 1. NO CHANGE 2. warm yet sunny, day. 3. warm, sunny, day. 4. warm, sunny day | D. “warm” and “sunny” are complementing, rather than opposing, adjectives, so the conjunctions “but” and “yet” should not be used, ruling out A. and B. Further, commas with conjunctions separate two independent clauses, ruling out A. for another reason. Commas can separate adjectives but not the adjective and the noun it is describing, ruling out C. |
| Caffeine, usually in the form of coffee, is the world’s most widely consumed psychoactive drug. | 1. NO CHANGE 2. Caffeine: usually in the form of coffee; is 3. Caffeine, usually in the form of coffee: 4. Caffeine usually in the form of coffee; is | A. Complete sentences must come before semicolons and colons. |

Word Usage and Grammar:

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| **Sentence** | **Question/ Answer Choices** | **Answer/ Explanation** |
| Amina sat down at the piano and begun a beautiful performance that took the breath of the audience away. | 1. NO CHANGE 2. begin 3. began 4. had begun | C. The sentence occurs in the past, indicated by the first verb, “sat.” The second verb should match this tense. The correct answer is “began,” as it is the past-tense of the verb “begin.” “Begun” is the past participle of “begin” and should be used with helping or auxiliary verbs, eliminating A. |
| Sarah took a selfie with her best friend, whom was dressed very nicely that day for her graduation ceremony. | 1. NO CHANGE 2. whom 3. who have 4. who was | D. If the underlined word is replaced, the correct pronoun would be she or he, not her or him, so the word “who” should be used. |
| Adam was in awe of his younger brother, Ryan, which I learned during our last conversation. He described Ryan as the family comedian, a generous soul, loving to all of his friends, and highly precocious. | 1. NO CHANGE 2. He describes 3. Describing 4. Because he described | A. The verb should maintain the tense of the paragraph and assume the past tense, ruling out B. Answer choice C. and D. yield an incomplete sentence. |
| Our geography teacher told Moe and I that Mount Everest has the highest elevation above sea level compared to all other mountains in the world. | 1. NO CHANGE 2. Moe and myself 3. Moe and me 4. us, that is, Moe and I | C. Take out the name “Moe” to see if it should be “I” or “me”. Does “teacher told me” or “teacher told I” sound right? Therefore, it should be “teacher told Moe and me” |
| The teachers created study guides, so they would have an exam review to help them assess their preparedness for the test. | 1. NO CHANGE 2. which 3. so the students 4. for it | C. The antecedent of the word ‘they’ cannot be the teachers, since the teachers did not create the study guides for themselves. It must clarify *who* would have an exam review. This rules out A and leaves C. as the only correct option. |
| Lena is both very bold and comical, so Nora and her classmate makes sure to watch her Snapchat Story every day. | 1. NO CHANGE 2. making 3. is making 4. make | D. The subject of the verb in the second phrase of the sentence is plural. Using the rules of subject-and-verb agreement, it can be determined that the verb should also be in the plural form, “make.” |
| Each of the ingredients listed on the recipe are already in Suzie’s pantry at home. | 1. NO CHANGE 2. Many of the ingredients 3. One of the ingredients 4. The ingredient | B. This question test subject-and-verb agreement. The verb of the sentence is “are,” so the subject must be plural. The subjects “each, ingredient, one” are all singular so they don’t match. |
| When Emma spotted a fin in the water, she swam quick to shore. | 1. NO CHANGE 2. swam quickly 3. swam in quick 4. swam of quickness | B. “quick” is characterizing the way in which Emma swam, making it an adverb. |

Sentence Structure

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| **Sentence** | **Question/ Answer Choices** | **Answer/ Explanation** |
| Craving something buttery to munch on during the movie, popcorn was the solution for Jubel. | 1. NO CHANGE 2. the movie, the solution for Jubel was popcorn. 3. the movie, Jubel purchased some popcorn. 4. the movie, the theater sold popcorn for Jubel to purchase. | C. the subject of the sentence doing the craving is Jubel, not the popcorn (answer choice A), the solution (answer choice B), or the theater (answer choice D). |
| After four months of having his dog, Sri finally named his dog. | 1. NO CHANGE 2. months of having his pet, Sri 3. months of having, Sri 4. months, Sri | D. The portion of the sentence, “of having his dog,” provides information that the latter half of the sentence already provides. This information becomes redundant and should be removed. |
| Because there is no gravity in outer space tears, will not flow, so astronauts cannot cry. | 1. NO CHANGE 2. space tears will, not 3. space, tears will not 4. space, tears, will not | C. The dependent clause must be separated from the independent clause using a comma. |
| Over their summer vacation, the Lucien family went sight-seeing in Colorado, horseback-riding in the forest, tubing on the river, and hiked in the Rocky Mountains. | 1. NO CHANGE 2. hiked 3. hiking 4. and hiking | D. The phrases in this sentence should be parallel. The verb tense should remain the same, ruling out A. and B. Without the conjunction after the comma, there is a comma splice, ruling out C. |
| When Hassan returned home, he told his mother, “I saw a few deer driving to school today.” | 1. NO CHANGE 2. a few deer while I was driving to school today.” 3. driving to school a few deer. 4. a few deer driving to school.” | B. The phrase “driving to school today” is a modifier. Found next to the noun “deer,” the sentence as is implies the deer were the ones driving to school. Option B. resolves this issue. |
| Upon entering the first grade in Germany, children receive toys and candy. | 1. NO CHANGE 2. Upon entering, the first grade in Germany, children 3. Upon entering the first grade in Germany children 4. Upon entering the first grade, in Germany children | A. The dependent clause must be separated from the independent clause using a comma. |