

# COMPANION WITH FAITH

## READING GUIDE



## TEXT STRUCTURE & PURPOSE

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# Companion with Faith Reading Guide

## 6 TEXT STRUCTURE & PURPOSE

On the Reading and Writing section of your SAT, some questions will present a short text for you to read. The question will then ask you to identify the **main purpose** or **overall structure** of the text.

Text structure and purpose questions will look like this:

1

The following text is from Charlotte Perkins Gilman's 1910 poem "The Earth's Entail".

No matter how we cultivate the land,  
Taming the forest and the prairie free;  
No matter how we irrigate the sand,  
Making the desert blossom at command,  
We must always leave the borders of the sea;  
The immeasurable reaches  
Of the windy wave-wet beaches,  
The million-mile-long margin of the sea.

despite the fact that  
We can control the land  
We can't control  
the sea.

① Which choice best describes the overall structure of the text?

- ☒ A. The speaker provides examples of an admirable way of approaching nature and then challenges that approach.
- ☒ B. The speaker describes attempts to control nature and then offers a reminder that not all nature is controllable.
- ☒ C. The speaker argues against interfering with nature and then gives evidence supporting this interference.
- ☒ D. The speaker presents an account of efforts to dominate nature and then cautions that such efforts are only temporary.

warns

General

goodly  
baes

so/so

control

## **How should we think about questions involving text structure and purpose?**

Text structure and purpose questions are all about seeing past the surface of a passage. Instead of just what a text says, these questions dig into why and how the text says it.

Since these questions might ask about **purpose** or **structure**, let's look at each in turn.

### **Purpose**

Purpose is the why behind the passage. Why did the author write it? What did they want to accomplish? What's the point?

A text's purpose can often be framed using active verbs that demonstrate the goals of the author. Some examples include:

- ✓ to explain \_\_\_\_\_
- ✓ to illustrate \_\_\_\_\_
- ✓ to criticize \_\_\_\_\_
- ✓ to argue \_\_\_\_\_
- ✓ to introduce \_\_\_\_\_

The author wants you to have a particular experience when you read their writing. Maybe they want to help you understand a new concept, or maybe they want to convince you of something. What were your takeaways from reading the text? Chances are, those takeaways are closely related to the text's purpose.

### **• Structure**

Structure is how a passage works to achieve its purpose. How does the text flow from one idea to the next? Where does the author place particular emphasis?

A text's structure can often be described as a sort of motion, following the focus as it shifts from one place to another.

Separating a text's structure from its content can be difficult, but it often helps to consider how the ideas within the text relate to one another. Do they disagree? Does one idea cause or build upon another? These relationships create a shape for the text which serves to support the goals of the author.

## **How should you handle questions involving text structure and purpose?**

Consider using the following steps to answer a text structure and purpose question:

### **Step 1: *Identify the task***

The first thing you should do is glance at the question to see if it asks about "overall structure" or "main purpose". While structure and purpose are closely linked, you may find it helpful to read the passage while focusing on just the one the question asks about.

### **Step 2: *Summarize the text***

Read the passage carefully, then list the key concepts you find. Try to reduce the entire text to one or two straightforward points. Keep in mind that you already know if the question is asking about structure or purpose when you write your summary.

You can better understand the topic of the paragraph by rephrasing it in your own words. This is the first step to comprehending the why and how the text is written.

### **Step 3: *Test the choices***

Compare your summary to each of the choices. While a summary isn't exactly the same as a structure or purpose, you should find a significant resemblance.

A text's purpose will include reference to the main ideas in the passage. A text's structure will often be made obvious by a straightforward summary.

One of the choices should jump out as the most clearly linked to your summary. You can select this choice with confidence!

Back to the question, Let's start by paraphrasing the poem. By putting the text into our own words, we should start to see the shape and structure behind it.

The first four lines follow a consistent pattern, which shows us that they're linked. However, those lines don't really form a complete thought. Instead, they use the transition phrase "no matter" to introduce some sort of contrast with whatever idea will follow in the next part of the poem.

Together the first four lines say something like:

- **Despite the fact that we can control and shape the land...**

So what's the follow up? Let's look at the next four lines. They work to emphasize the size and power of the ocean. Taken together, they last four lines say something like:

- **We can't control the sea.**

Put these parts together, and we have the following summary:

- **Despite the fact that we can control and shape the land, we can't control the sea.**

This is the story the poem is trying to tell. It's the shape and structure of the text behind the flowery language.

Choice A says the speaker is focused on whether an approach to nature is "admirable", but the poem doesn't focus on good or bad. Instead, it focuses on possible or impossible. **We can eliminate this choice.**

Choice C says the speaker argues against interfering with nature, but the poem doesn't say that it's bad to interfere with nature. Also, notice that the second half of the poem doesn't "[give] evidence supporting" interference with nature; the second half of the poem argues that interfering with the sea is impossible. **We can eliminate this choice.**

Choice D is tempting. The first half of the poem does indeed "[present] an account of efforts to dominate nature". However, the second half of the poem doesn't say those efforts are "temporary". Instead, it argues that in some cases it's simply impossible to dominate nature. **We can eliminate this choice.**

Only choice B accurately reflects both parts of the poem:

- **While some nature can be controlled, some nature can't.**

Notice how this choice very closely resembles the summary we created. Choice B is the answer.



## Necessary Key Notes:

- **Stay specific**

Don't stray beyond the focus of the text. Eliminate choices that describe a purpose or structure that introduces information not directly addressed in the passage. Likewise, avoid choices that shift or blur the purpose of a text by emphasizing details that aren't a central focus.

Let's look at the choices in our example question:

- ✓ Choice A introduces the word "admirable", which makes a judgment about whether these attempts to control nature are good or bad. But the poem doesn't discuss whether things are good or bad. **We can eliminate this choice.**

- **Be strict**

Choices in structure questions often break the text into two parts. Make sure the description of both parts of the text is accurate. If a choice correctly describes the first part of the text, but doesn't feel quite as accurate for the second part, eliminate that choice. Every part of the answer needs to accurately describe the text.

Let's look at the choices in our example question:

- ✓ Choice D describes the first part of the text pretty well. The first four lines of the poem do discuss "efforts to dominate nature". However, the second half of choice D disqualifies the whole choice; the poem never claims that anything is "temporary". **We can eliminate this choice.**

- **Lean on transitions**

Transitions like "however" and "therefore" contribute significantly to the structure of a text by showing how one idea flows into the next. Take note of any transition words you encounter while reading; these can be very helpful when trying to map out the structure of the text.

Let's look at the text in our example question:

- ✓ The text uses the subordinating conjunction "no matter" to link the first half of the poem to the second half. "No matter" is very similar to "despite" or "regardless", and it very clearly signals that there will be a contrast between the first half of the poem and the second half. This contrast is reflected in the correct answer.

## Part-To-Whole Relationships

On the Reading and Writing section of your SAT, some questions will require you to read a short text with one underlined sentence. The question will then ask you to identify the function of the underlined sentence within the text as a whole.

Part-to-whole relationships questions will look like this:

2

The following text is from Herman Melville's 1854 novel *The Lightning-rod Man*.

The stranger still stood in the exact middle of the cottage, where he had first planted himself. His singularity impelled a closer scrutiny. A lean, gloomy figure. Hair dark and lank, mattedly streaked over his brow. His sunken pitfalls of eyes were ringed by indigo halos, and played with an innocuous sort of lightning: the gleam without the bolt. The whole man was dripping. He stood in a puddle on the bare oak floor: his strange walking-stick vertically resting at his side.

Which choice best states the function of the underlined sentence in the overall structure of the text?

- A. It sets up the character description presented in the sentences that follow.
- B. It establishes a contrast with the description in the previous sentence.
- C. It elaborates on the previous sentence's description of the character.
- D. It introduces the setting that is described in the sentences that follow.

## **How should we think about questions involving part-to-whole relationships?**

Part-to-whole relationships questions are a type of text structure and purpose questions. To succeed on these questions, we need to understand what the author is trying to achieve in the text, as well as how the text works to achieve that purpose.

But while other text structure and purpose questions focus on the entire passage, part-to-whole relationships questions require us to focus on one specific part of the text: the underlined portion.

- **What information does the underlined portion contain?**
- **How does that information relate to the rest of the text? What is its function? In other words, what does it do?**

Answering these questions will allow us to determine what role the underlined portion plays in the flow of the text.



## **How should we approach questions involving part-to-whole relationships?**

Consider using the following steps to answer a part-to-whole relationships question:

### **Step 1: *Summarize the text***

Read the passage closely and summarize the ideas you encounter. Try to boil the whole text down to one or two simple points. Give some extra attention to the underlined portion: you know the question will focus on it!

Rephrasing things in your own words will give you a strong understanding of the "whole" of the passage. This will make it much easier to identify how the "part" functions within that whole.

### **Step 2: *Make a prediction***

Once you have a firm understanding of the entire passage, you should try to state the function of the underlined portion in your own words.

- **How does the underlined portion fit into the text?**
- **Does it introduce what comes next?**
- **Does it contradict what came before?**

Comparing the information in the underlined portion with what comes immediately before and immediately after will often reveal how that information contributes to the flow of the text.

### **Step 3: *Test the choices***

Compare your prediction to each of the choices. Which choice most closely matches your prediction? You can select that choice with confidence!

Back to the question, rephrasing things in our own words should help us determine how the underlined sentence contributes to the text.

The first sentence introduces a mysterious "stranger". Then we get our underlined sentence:

*"His singularity impelled a closer scrutiny."*

The rest of the passage then describes the physical appearance of the stranger. We could summarize the passage in the following way:

- **There's a mysterious stranger.**
- **He's "gloomy" and dirty, and maybe a little scary.**
- **He looks tired, and he is soaked with water. Maybe he just came in from the rain?**

Essentially, this passage is just describing an unknown character: the mysterious "stranger". If the text is working to describe the stranger, what purpose does the underlined sentence serve?

The sentence uses some fancy words that might be hard to decipher. Let's break those down:

- **"singularity" suggests the stranger's appearance is unusual**
- **"impelled" means that something is urging you to do something**
- **"scrutiny" refers to close and careful observation**

Taken together, the underlined sentence basically says:

- **You've got to take a closer look at this guy!**

So in this case, the underlined sentence seems pretty literal. If we were to predict its function, we might say that **it draws attention to the stranger's appearance, which is the subject of the rest of the passage.**

Let's look at the answer choices and see if any match the function we identified above:

Choice B claims a contrast that isn't there. The previous sentence just says the stranger is standing in a room. The underlined sentence doesn't contradict that.

Choice C doesn't really pertain to the underlined sentence. The elaborate descriptions of the stranger come in the following sentences. The underlined sentence itself doesn't actually provide any literal description.

Choice D focuses on "setting". But the passage doesn't describe the setting besides briefly mentioning that we're in a cottage. Instead, the text is focused on describing the stranger.

Only choice A matches the function we identified. The underlined sentence draws attention to the stranger's appearance, which is then described in detail in the following sentences. **Choice A is the answer.**

## Necessary Key Notes:

- **Stay within the underline!**

Make sure the choice you select applies directly and specifically to the underlined portion. Other choices may correctly identify the function of other sentences within the text, so make sure you're looking in the right place!

Let's look at the choices from our example question:

- ✓ Choice B is interesting. It accurately describes the function of a number of sentences in the text (pretty much every sentence after the underlined one). However, the underlined portion doesn't "elaborate" on the description of the stranger: it initiates the description of the stranger. The sentences that follow do all the elaboration. **We can eliminate this choice.**

- **Be strict**

Choices on part-to-whole relationships may often seem partly correct. Maybe they describe the "part" accurately, but not the "whole". Eliminate any choices that feel kind of correct, but that contain a detail or two that doesn't match the text. A choice must be entirely accurate to be the answer.

Let's look at the choices from our example question:

- ✓ Choice C is very nearly accurate. The underlined portion does indeed introduce the description that comes in the following sentences. However, choice C says that description is focused on "setting". But the text describes the appearance of the stranger, not the setting of the story. **We can eliminate this choice.**

## CLASSWORK

### TEXT STRUCTURE & PURPOSE AND PART-TO-WHOLE QUESTIONNAIRE

1

2. The following text is from Srimati Svarna Kumari Devi's 1894 novel *The Fatal Garland* (translated by A. Christina Albers in 1910). Shakti is walking near a riverbank that she visited frequently during her childhood.

She crossed the woods she knew so well. The trees seemed to extend their branches like welcoming arms. They greeted her as an old friend. Soon she reached the river-side.

1. Which choice best describes the function of the underlined portion in the text as a whole?

- ☒ A. It suggests that Shakti feels uncomfortable near the river.
- ☒ B. It indicates that Shakti has lost her sense of direction in the woods.
- ☒ C. It emphasizes Shakti's sense of belonging in the landscape.
- ☒ D. It conveys Shakti's appreciation for her long-term friendships.

Additional Notes

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## CLASSWORK

2

The following text is adapted from Herman Melville's 1857 novel The Confidence-Man. Humphry Davy was a prominent British chemist and inventor.

Years ago, a grave American savant, being in London, observed at an evening party there, a certain coxcombical fellow, as he thought, an absurd ribbon in his lapel, and full of smart [banter], whisking about to the admiration of as many as were disposed to admire. Great was the savant's disdain; but, chancing ere long to find himself in a corner with the jackanapes, got into conversation with him, when he was somewhat ill-prepared for the good sense of the jackanapes, but was altogether thrown aback, upon subsequently being [informed that he was] no less a personage than Sir Humphry Davy.

① Which choice best states the main purpose of the text?

- ☒ A. It explains why one character dislikes another. *too specific*
- ☒ B. It portrays the thoughts of a character who is embarrassed about his own behavior. *too specific*
- ☒ C. It offers a short history of how a person came to be famous.
- ☒ D. It presents an account of a misunderstanding.

Savant → learned scholar  
grave → important  
coxcombical = conceited

Additional Notes

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## CLASSWORK

3

② Horizontal gene transfer occurs when an organism of one species acquires genetic material from an organism of another species through nonreproductive means. The genetic material can then be transferred "vertically" in the second species—that is, through reproductive inheritance. Scientist Atma Ivancevic and her team have hypothesized infection by invertebrate parasites as a mechanism of horizontal gene transfer between vertebrate species: while feeding, a parasite could acquire a gene from one host, then relocate to a host from a different vertebrate species and transfer the gene to it in turn.

① Which choice best describes the function of the underlined portion in the text as a whole?

- ③
- A. It explains why parasites are less susceptible to horizontal gene transfer than their hosts are.
- B. It clarifies why some genes are more likely to be transferred horizontally than others are.
- C. It contrasts how horizontal gene transfer occurs among vertebrates with how it occurs among invertebrates.
- D. It describes a means by which horizontal gene transfer might occur among vertebrates.
- Way
- Purpose
- open to

Additional Notes

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## CLASSWORK

4

Many films from the early 1900s have been lost. These losses include several films by the first wave of Black women filmmakers. We know about these lost movies only from small pieces of evidence. For example, an advertisement for Jennie Louise Touissant Welcome's documentary Doing Their Bit still exists. There's a reference in a magazine to Tressie Souders's film A Woman's Error. And Maria P. Williams's The Flames of Wrath is mentioned in a letter and a newspaper article, and one image from the movie was discovered in the 1990s.

Which choice best describes the overall structure of the text?

- ☒ A. The text discusses several notable individuals, then explains commonly overlooked differences between those individuals.
- ☒ B. The text describes a general situation, then illustrates that situation with specific examples.
- ☒ C. The text identifies a complex problem, then presents examples of unsuccessful attempts to solve that problem.
- ☒ D. The text summarizes a debate among researchers, then gives reasons for supporting one side in that debate.

Additional Notes

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## CLASSWORK

5

Michelene Pesantubbee, a historian and citizen of the Choctaw Nation, has identified a dilemma inherent to research on the status of women in her tribe during the 1600s and 1700s: the primary sources from that era, travel narratives and other accounts by male European colonizers, underestimate the degree of power conferred on Choctaw women by their traditional roles in political, civic, and ceremonial life. Pesantubbee argues that the Choctaw oral tradition and findings from archaeological sites in the tribe's homeland supplement the written record by providing crucial insights into those roles.

Which choice best describes the overall structure of the text?

- A. It details the shortcomings of certain historical sources, then argues that research should avoid those sources altogether.
- ☒ B. It describes a problem that arises in research on a particular topic, then sketches a historian's approach to addressing that problem.
- C. It lists the advantages of a particular research method, then acknowledges a historian's criticism of that method.
- D. It characterizes a particular topic as especially challenging to research, then suggests a related topic for historians to pursue instead.

Additional Notes

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## CLASSWORK

6

② In many agricultural environments, the banks of streams are kept forested to protect water quality, but it's been unclear what effects these forests may have on stream biodiversity. To investigate the issue, biologist Xingli Giam and colleagues studied an Indonesian oil palm plantation, comparing the species richness of forested streams with that of nonforested streams. Giam and colleagues found that species richness was significantly higher in forested streams, a finding the researchers attribute to the role leaf litter plays in sheltering fish from predators and providing food resources.

① Which choice best states the main purpose of the text?

- ③
- A. It explains the differences between stream-protection strategies used in oil palm plantations and stream-protection strategies used in other kinds of agricultural environments. X
  - ✓ B. It presents a study that addresses an unresolved question about the presence of forests along streams in agricultural environments. Solves deals with
  - C. It discusses research intended to settle a debate about how agricultural yields can be increased without negative effects on water quality.
  - D. It describes findings that challenge a previously held view about how fish that inhabit streams in agricultural environments attempt to avoid predators.

Additional Notes

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## CLASSWORK

7

Works of moral philosophy, such as Plato's Republic or Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics, are partly concerned with how to live a morally good life. But philosopher Jonathan Barnes argues that works that present a method of living such a life without also supplying a motive are inherently useful only to those already wishing to be morally good — those with no desire for moral goodness will not choose to follow their rules. However, some works of moral philosophy attempt to describe what constitutes a morally good life while also proposing reasons for living one.

Which choice best describes the overall structure of the text?

- ☒ A. It mentions two renowned works and then claims that despite their popularity it is impossible for these works to serve the purpose their authors intended.
- ☒ B. It summarizes the history of a field of thought by discussing two works and then proposes a topic of further research for specialists in that field.
- ☒ C. It describes two influential works and then explains why one is more widely read than the other.
- ☒ D. It provides a characterization about a field of thought by noting two works in it and then details a way in which some works in that field are more comprehensive than others.

Additional Notes

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## **CLASSWORK**

8

Researchers have found a nearly 164,000-year-old molar from a member of the archaic human species known as Denisovans in a cave in Laos, suggesting that Denisovans lived in a wider range of environments than indicated by earlier evidence. Before the discovery, Denisovans were thought to have lived only at high altitudes in relatively cold climates in what are now Russia and China, but the discovery of the tooth in Laos suggests that they may have lived at low altitudes in relatively warm climates in Southeast Asia as well.

Which choice best states the function of the underlined portion in the text as a whole?

- A. It defines a term used in the description that follows in the rest of the sentence.
- B. It emphasizes the main goal of the research introduced in the previous sentence.
- C. It provides context that clarifies the significance of the information that follows in the rest of the sentence.
- D. It dismisses as untrue the research presented in the previous sentence.

Additional Notes

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## CLASSWORK

9

In 2007, computer scientist Luis von Ahn was working on converting printed books into a digital format. He found that some words were distorted enough that digital scanners couldn't recognize them, but most humans could easily read them. Based on that finding, von Ahn invented a simple security test to keep automated "bots" out of websites. The first version of the reCAPTCHA test asked users to type one known word and one of the many words scanners couldn't recognize. Correct answers proved the users were humans and added data to the book-digitizing project.

Which choice best states the main purpose of the text?

- ✓ ☒ A. To discuss von Ahn's invention of reCAPTCHA
- ☐ B. To explain how digital scanners work
- ☐ C. To call attention to von Ahn's book-digitizing project
- ☐ D. To indicate how popular reCAPTCHA is

Additional Notes

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## CLASSWORK

10

- ② The following text is from Edith Wharton's 1905 novel *The House of Mirth*. Lily Bart and a companion are walking through a park.

Lily had no real intimacy with nature, but she had a passion for the appropriate and could be keenly sensitive to a scene which was the fitting background of her own sensations. The landscape outspread below her seemed an enlargement of her present mood, and she found something of herself in its calmness, its breadth, its long free reaches. On the nearer slopes the sugar-maples waved like pyres of light; lower down was a massing of grey orchards, and here and there the lingering green of an oak-grove.

- ① Which choice best describes the function of the underlined sentence in the text as a whole?

- ☒ A. It creates a detailed image of the physical setting of the scene.  
☒ B. It establishes that a character is experiencing an internal conflict.  
☒ C. It makes an assertion that the next sentence then expands on.  
☒ D. It illustrates an idea that is introduced in the previous sentence.

Additional Notes

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## CLASSWORK

11

A study by a team including finance professor Madhu Veeraraghavan suggests that exposure to sunshine during the workday can lead to overly optimistic behavior. Using data spanning from 1994 to 2010 for a set of US companies, the team compared over 29,000 annual earnings forecasts to the actual earnings later reported by those companies. The team found that the greater the exposure to sunshine at work in the two weeks before a manager submitted an earnings forecast, the more the manager's forecast exceeded what the company actually earned that year.

Which choice best states the function of the underlined sentence in the overall structure of the text?

- A. To summarize the results of the team's analysis
- B. To present a specific example that illustrates the study's findings
- C. To explain part of the methodology used in the team's study
- D. To call out a challenge the team faced in conducting its analysis

a set of methods used for a study.

idea  
methodology  
finding  
yearly  
income

Additional Notes

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## HOMEWORK

12

The following text is from Maggie Pogue Johnson's 1910 poem "Poet of Our Race." In this poem, the speaker is addressing Paul Laurence Dunbar, a Black author.

*You have* Thou, with stroke of mighty pen,  
*high spirits* Hast told of joy and mirth,  
And read the hearts and souls of men  
As cradled from their birth.  
*You* The language of the flowers,  
Thou hast read them all,  
And e'en the little brook *rivers / streams*  
Responded to thy call. *your*

① Which choice best states the main purpose of the text? *Why*

- ③
- ☒ A. To praise a certain writer for being especially perceptive regarding people and nature
  - ☒ B. To establish that a certain writer has read extensively about a variety of topics
  - ☒ C. To call attention to a certain writer's careful and elaborately detailed writing process
  - ☒ D. To recount fond memories of an afternoon spent in nature with a certain writer *X*
- Understanding*

*- mirth I brook I thou thy Perceptive*

Additional Notes

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## HOMEWORK

13

The following text is from Charlotte Brontë's 1847 novel Jane Eyre. Jane works as a governess at Thornfield Hall.

I went on with my day's business tranquilly; but ever and anon vague suggestions kept wandering across my brain of reasons why I should quit Thornfield; and I kept involuntarily framing advertisements and pondering conjectures about new situations: these thoughts I did not think to check; they might germinate and bear fruit if they could.

① Which choice best states the main purpose of the text?

- ✓ A. To convey a contrast between Jane's outward calmness and internal restlessness (4) X
- X B. To emphasize Jane's loyalty to the people she works for at Thornfield Hall
- X C. To demonstrate that Jane finds her situation both challenging and deeply fulfilling Satisfied
- X D. To describe Jane's determination to secure employment outside of Thornfield Hall decision

Additional Notes

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## HOMEWORK

14

The following text is from Georgia Douglas Johnson's 1922 poem "Benediction."

Go forth, my son,  
Winged by my heart's desire!  
Great reaches, yet unknown,  
Await  
For your possession.  
I may not, if I would,  
Retrace the way with you,  
My pilgrimage is through,  
But life is calling you!

Tone

General

- ① Which choice best states the main purpose of the text?
- ☒ A. To express hope that a child will have the same accomplishments as his parent did
  - ☒ B. To suggest that raising a child involves many struggles
  - ☐ C. To warn a child that he will face many challenges throughout his life
  - ☒ D. To encourage a child to embrace the experiences life will offer

achievement  
difficulties

Additional Notes

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## HOMEWORK

15

The following text is adapted from *Indian Boyhood*, a 1902 memoir by Ohiyesa (Charles A. Eastman), a Santee Dakota writer. In the text, Ohiyesa recalls how the women in his tribe harvested maple syrup during his childhood.

- Now the women began to test the trees—moving leisurely among them, axe in hand, and striking a single quick blow, to see if the sap would appear. The trees, like people, have their individual characters; some were ready to yield up their life-blood, while others were more reluctant. Now one of the birchen basins was set under each tree, and a hardwood chip driven deep into the cut which the axe had made. From the corners of this chip—at first drop by drop, then more freely—the sap trickled into the little dishes.

Which choice best describes the function of the underlined sentence in the text as a whole?

- ☒ A. It portrays the range of personality traits displayed by the women as they work.
- ☒ B. It foregrounds the beneficial relationship between humans and maple trees.
- ☒ C. It demonstrates how human behavior can be influenced by the natural environment.
- ☐ D. It elaborates on an aspect of the maple trees that the women evaluate.

Portray = Show = explain  
foreground = emphasize

Additional Notes

elaborate = adorn / develop  
say in detail

## HOMEWORK

16

The following text is adapted from Gwendolyn Bennett's 1926 poem  
"Street Lamps in Early Spring."

Night wears a garment  
All velvet soft, all violet blue...  
And over her face she draws a veil  
As shimmering fine as floating dew...  
And here and there  
In the black of her hair  
The subtle hands of Night  
Move slowly with their gem-starred light.

Which choice best describes the overall structure of the text?

- ☒ A. It presents alternating descriptions of night in a rural area and in a city.
- ☒ B. It sketches an image of nightfall, then an image of sunrise.
- ☒ C. It makes an extended comparison of night to a human being.
- ☐ D. It portrays how night changes from one season of the year to the next.

Additional Notes

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## HOMEWORK

17

impat  
According to historian Vicki L. Ruiz, Mexican American women made crucial contributions to the labor movement during World War II. At the time, food processing companies entered into contracts to supply United States armed forces with canned goods. Increased production quotas conferred greater bargaining power on the companies' employees, many of whom were Mexican American women: employees insisted on more favorable benefits, and employers, who were anxious to fulfill the contracts, complied. Thus, labor activism became a platform for Mexican American women to assert their agency.

✓ Which choice best describes the function of the underlined portion in the text as a whole?

- shaves  
Food Processing
- ☒ A. It elaborates on a claim about labor relations in a particular industry made earlier in the text.
  - ☒ B. It offers an example of a trend in the World War II-era economy discussed earlier in the text.
  - ☒ C. It notes a possible exception to the historical narrative of labor activism sketched earlier in the text.
  - ☐ D. It provides further details about the identities of the workers discussed earlier in the text.
- labor = work  
comply = agree = conform

Additional Notes

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## HOMEWORK

18

The following text is adapted from Zora Neale Hurston's 1921 short story "John Redding Goes to Sea." John is a child who lives in a town in the woods. Perhaps ten-year-old John was puzzling to the folk there in the Florida woods for he was an imaginative child and fond of day-dreams. The St. John River flowed a scarce three hundred feet from his back door.

On its banks at this point grow numerous palms, luxuriant magnolias and bay trees. On the bosom of the stream float millions of delicately colored hyacinths. [John Redding] loved to wander down to the water's edge, and, casting in dry twigs, watch them sail away down stream to Jacksonville, the sea, the wide world and [he] wanted to follow them.

- ② Which choice best describes the function of the underlined sentence in the text as a whole?
- ① X A. It provides an extended description of a location that John likes to visit.
- ③ X B. It reveals that some residents of John's town are confused by his behavior.
- X C. It illustrates the uniqueness of John's imagination compared to the imaginings of other children.
- ✓ D. It suggests that John longs to experience a larger life outside the Florida woods.

Scarce ⇒ short  
Wander ⇒ walk aimlessly

Additional Notes

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## HOMEWORK

19

The following text is adapted from Susan Glaspell's 1912 short story "Out There." An elderly shop owner is looking at a picture that he recently acquired and hopes to sell.

It did seem that the picture failed to fit in with the rest of the shop. A persuasive young fellow who claimed he was closing out his stock let the old man have it for what he called a song. It was only a little out-of-the-way store which subsisted chiefly on the framing of pictures. The old man looked around at his views of the city, his pictures of cats and dogs, his flaming bits of landscape. "Don't belong in here," he fumed.

And yet the old man was secretly proud of his acquisition. There was a hidden dignity in his scowling as he shuffled about pondering the least ridiculous place for the picture.

- ① Which choice best states the main purpose of the text?
- ②
- ③
- A. To reveal the shop owner's conflicted feelings about the new picture
  - B. To convey the shop owner's resentment of the person he got the new picture from
  - C. To describe the items that the shop owner most highly prizes
  - D. To explain differences between the new picture and other pictures in the shop

Additional Notes

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## HOMEWORK

20

The mimosa tree evolved in East Asia, where the beetle *Bruchidius terrenus* preys on its seeds. In 1785, mimosa trees were introduced to North America, far from any *B. terrenus*. But evolutionary links between predators and their prey can persist across centuries and continents.

- Around 2001, *B. terrenus* was introduced in southeastern North America near where botanist Shu-Mei Chang and colleagues had been monitoring mimosa trees. Within a year, 93 percent of the trees had been attacked by the beetles.

- ① Which choice best describes the function of the third sentence in the overall structure of the text?
- ~~X~~ A. It states the hypothesis that Chang and colleagues had set out to investigate using mimosa trees and *B. terrenus*.
- ✓ B. It presents a generalization that is exemplified by the discussion of the mimosa trees and *B. terrenus*.
- C. It offers an alternative explanation for the findings of Chang and colleagues.
- ~~X~~ D. It provides context that clarifies why the species mentioned spread to new locations.

Additional Notes

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## HOMEWORK

21

The following text is from Walt Whitman's 1860 poem "Calamus 24."

I HEAR it is charged against me that I seek to  
destroy institutions;

But really I am neither for nor against  
institutions

(What indeed have I in common with them?—

Or what with the destruction of them?),

Only I will establish in the Mannahatta

[Manhattan] and in every city of These States,  
inland and seaboard,

And in the fields and woods, and above every  
keel [ship] little or large, that dents the water,

Without edifices, or rules, or trustees, or any  
argument,

The institution of the dear love of comrades.

Which choice best describes the overall structure of the text?

☒ A. The speaker questions an increasingly prevalent attitude, then  
summarizes his worldview.

☒ B. The speaker regrets his isolation from others, then predicts a  
profound change in society.

☒ C. The speaker concedes his personal shortcomings, then boasts of  
his many achievements.

☒ D. The speaker addresses a criticism leveled against him, then  
announces a grand ambition of his.

Additional Notes

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## HOMEWORK

22

→ Some bird species don't raise their own chicks. Instead, adult females lay their eggs in other nests, next to another bird species' own eggs. Female cuckoos have been seen quickly laying eggs in the nests of other bird species when those birds are out looking for food. After the eggs hatch, the noncuckoo parents will typically raise the cuckoo chicks as if they were their own offspring, even if the cuckoos look very different from the other chicks.

① Which choice best describes the function of the underlined sentence in the text as a whole?

- ②
- X A. It introduces a physical feature of female cuckoos that is described later in the text.
- X B. It describes the appearance of the cuckoo nests mentioned earlier in the text.
- ✓ C. It offers a detail about how female cuckoos carry out the behavior discussed in the text.
- D. It explains how other birds react to the female cuckoo behavior discussed in the text.

Additional Notes

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## EXTRA PRACTICE

23

The following text is from the 1923 poem “Black Finger” by Angelina Weld Grimké, a Black American writer. A cypress is a type of evergreen tree.

② I have just seen a most beautiful thing,  
Slim and still,  
Against a gold, gold sky,  
A straight black cypress,  
Sensitive,  
Exquisite,  
A black finger  
Pointing upwards.  
Why, beautiful still finger, are you black?  
And why are you pointing upwards?

Transition  
Punctuation  
Tone

① Which choice best describes the overall structure of the text?

- ③
- ☒ A. The speaker assesses a natural phenomenon, then questions the accuracy of her assessment.
  - ☒ B. The speaker describes a distinctive sight in nature, then ponders what meaning to attribute to that sight.
  - C. The speaker presents an outdoor scene, then considers a human behavior occurring within that scene.
  - D. The speaker examines her surroundings, then speculates about their influence on her emotional state.

Sight

Additional Notes

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## EXTRA PRACTICE

24

The following text is from Sarah Orne Jewett's 1899 short story "Martha's Lady." Martha is employed by Miss Pyne as a maid.

Sub

Miss Pyne sat by the window watching, in her best dress, looking stately and calm; she seldom went out now, and it was almost time for the carriage. Martha was just coming in from the garden with the strawberries, and with more flowers in her apron. It was a bright cool evening in June, the golden robins sang in the elms, and the sun was going down behind the apple-trees at the foot of the garden. The beautiful old house stood wide open to the long-expected guest.

Which choice best states the main purpose of the text?

- ①
- ②
- ③
- A. To convey the worries brought about by a new guest
- B. To describe how the characters have changed over time
- C. To contrast the activity indoors with the stillness outside
- D. To depict the setting as the characters await a visitor's arrival

describe

Additional Notes

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## EXTRA PRACTICE

25

Astronomers are confident that the star Betelgeuse will eventually consume all the helium in its core and explode in a supernova. They are much less confident, however, about when this will happen, since that depends on internal characteristics of Betelgeuse that are largely unknown. Astrophysicist Sarafina El-Badry Nance and colleagues recently investigated whether acoustic waves in the star could be used to determine internal stellar states but concluded that this method could not sufficiently reveal Betelgeuse's internal characteristics to allow its evolutionary state to be firmly fixed.

① Which choice best describes the function of the second sentence in the overall structure of the text?

X A. It explains how the work of Nance and colleagues was received by others in the field.

③ X B. It presents the central finding reported by Nance and colleagues.

☒ C. It identifies the problem that Nance and colleagues attempted to solve but did not.

D. It describes a serious limitation of the method used by Nance and colleagues.

Watch for transitions

Additional Notes

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## EXTRA PRACTICE

26

The following text is from the 1924 poem "Cycle" by D'Arcy McNickle, who was a citizen of the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes.

There shall be new roads wending,  
A new beating of the drum—

Men's eyes shall have fresh seeing,  
Grey lives reprise their span—  
But under the new sun's being,  
Completing what night began,

There'll be the same backs bending,  
The same sad feet shall drum—  
When this night finds its ending  
And day shall have come....

Which choice best states the main purpose of the text?

- A. To consider how the repetitiveness inherent in human life can be both rewarding and challenging
- B. To question whether activities completed at one time of day are more memorable than those completed at another time of day
- X C. To refute the idea that joy is a more commonly experienced emotion than sadness is
- D. To demonstrate how the experiences of individuals relate to the experiences of their communities

Prove Wrong

Additional Notes

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## EXTRA PRACTICE

27

The following text is adapted from Jane Austen's 1814 novel Mansfield Park. The speaker, Tom, is considering staging a play at home with a group of his friends and family.

Plot

We mean nothing but a little amusement among ourselves, just to vary the scene, and exercise our powers in something new. We want no audience, no publicity. We may be trusted, I think, in choosing some play most perfectly unexceptionable; and I can conceive no greater harm or danger to any of us in conversing in the elegant written language of some respectable author than in chattering in words of our own.

2

1

Which choice best states the main purpose of the text?



A. To offer Tom's assurance that the play will be inoffensive and involve only a small number of people

3

B. To clarify that the play will not be performed in the manner Tom had originally intended

C. To elaborate on the idea that the people around Tom lack the skills to successfully stage a play

D. To assert that Tom believes the group performing the play will be able to successfully promote it

Additional Notes

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## EXTRA PRACTICE

28

Musician Joni Mitchell, who is also a painter, uses images she creates for her album covers to emphasize ideas expressed in her music. For the cover of her album *Turbulent Indigo* (1994), Mitchell painted a striking self-portrait that closely resembles Vincent van Gogh's *Self-Portrait with Bandaged Ear* (1889). The image calls attention to the album's title song, in which Mitchell sings about the legacy of the postimpressionist painter. In that song, Mitchell also hints that she feels a strong artistic connection to Van Gogh—an idea that is reinforced by her imagery on the cover.

- 1 Which choice best describes the overall structure of the text?
- A It presents a claim about Mitchell, then gives an example supporting that claim.
- 3 B. It discusses Van Gogh's influence on Mitchell, then considers Mitchell's influence on other artists.
- C. It describes a similarity between two artists, then notes a difference between them.
- D. It describes the songs on *Turbulent Indigo*, then explains how they relate to the album's cover.

Additional Notes

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## EXTRA PRACTICE

29

In 1973, poet Miguel Algarín started inviting other writers who, like him, were Nuyorican—a term for New Yorkers of Puerto Rican heritage—to gather in his apartment to present their work. The gatherings were so well attended that Algarín soon had to rent space in a cafe to accommodate them. Thus, the Nuyorican Poets Cafe was born. Moving to a permanent location in 1981, the Nuyorican Poets Cafe expanded its original scope beyond the written word, hosting art exhibitions and musical performances as well. Half a century since its inception, it continues to foster emerging Nuyorican talent.

- ① Which choice best describes the overall purpose of the text? *Why*
- A. To explain what motivated Algarín to found the Nuyorican Poets Cafe
  - B. To situate the Nuyorican Poets Cafe within the cultural life of New York as a whole
  - C. To discuss why the Nuyorican Poets Cafe expanded its scope to include art and music
  - ④ D. To provide an overview of the founding and mission of the Nuyorican Poets Café. *Specific*

Additional Notes

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## EXTRA PRACTICE

30

Mathematician Claude Shannon is widely regarded as a foundational figure in information theory. His most important paper, "A Mathematical Theory of Communication," published in 1948 when he was employed at Bell Labs, utilized a concept called a "binary digit" (shortened to "bit") to measure the amount of information in any signal and determine the fastest rate at which information could be transmitted while still being reliably decipherable. Robert Gallagher, one of Shannon's colleagues, said that the bit was "[Shannon's] discovery, and from it the whole communications revolution has sprung."

Which choice best describes the overall structure of the text?

- A. It introduces a respected researcher, describes an aspect of his work, and suggests why the work is historically significant.
- B. It names the company where an important mathematician worked, details the mathematician's career at the company, and provides an example of the recognition he received there.
- C. It mentions a paper, offers a summary of the paper's findings, and presents a researcher's commentary on the paper.
- D. It presents a theoretical concept, illustrates how the name of the concept has changed, and shows how the name has entered common usage.

Additional Notes

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## EXTRA PRACTICE

31

The 1967 release of Harold Cruse's book *The Crisis of the Negro Intellectual* isolated him from almost all other scholars and activists of the American Civil Rights Movement—though many of those thinkers disagreed with each other, he nonetheless found ways to disagree with them all. He thought that activists who believed that Black people such as himself should culturally assimilate were naïve. But he also sharply criticized Black nationalists such as Marcus Garvey who wanted to establish independent, self-contained Black economies and societies, even though Cruse himself identified as a Black nationalist.

Which choice best describes the function of the underlined sentence in the text as a whole?

- ☒ A. It indicates that Cruse's reputation as a persistent antagonist of other scholars is undeserved.
- ☒ B. It describes a controversy that Cruse's work caused within the Black nationalist movement.
- ☒ C. It describes a direction that Cruse felt the Civil Rights Movement ought to take.
- ☒ D. It helps explain Cruse's position with respect to the community of civil rights thinkers.

Additional Notes

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## EXTRA PRACTICE

32

The following text is adapted from Oscar Wilde's 1897 nonfiction work *De Profundis*.

② People whose desire is solely for self-realisation never know where they are going. They can't know. In one sense of the word it is of course necessary to know oneself: that is the first achievement of knowledge. But to recognise that the soul of a man is unknowable, is the ultimate achievement of wisdom. The final mystery is oneself. When one has weighed the sun in the balance, and measured the steps of the moon, and mapped out the seven heavens star by star, there still remains oneself. Who can calculate the orbit of his own soul?

① Which choice best describes the function of the underlined question in the text as a whole? *Warn*

- ☒ A. It cautions readers that the text's directions for how to achieve self-knowledge are hard to follow.
- ③ ☒ B. It concedes that the definition of self-knowledge advanced in the text is unpopular. *admits*
- ☒ C. It reinforces the text's skepticism about the possibility of truly achieving self-knowledge. *doubt*
- D. It speculates that some readers will share the doubts expressed in the text about the value of self-knowledge.

Additional Notes

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