Questions 34-44 are based on the following passage.

Gold into Silver: The "Reverse Alchemy" of Superhero Comics History

[34] Popular film franchises are often "rebooted" in an effort to make their characters and stories fresh and relevant for new audiences. Superhero comic books are periodically reworked to try to increase their appeal to contemporary readers. This practice is almost as [35] elderly as the medium itself and has in large part established the "ages" that compose comic book history. The shift from the Golden to the Silver Age is probably the most successful [36] example: of publishers responding to changing times and tastes.

34

Which choice most effectively combines the underlined sentences?

A) In an effort to make their characters and stories fresh and relevant for new audiences, popular film franchises, which are often "rebooted," are similar to superhero comic books, which are periodically reworked to try to increase their appeal to contemporary readers.

B) Just as popular film franchises are often "rebooted" in an effort to make their characters and stories fresh and relevant for new audiences, superhero comic books are periodically reworked to try to increase their appeal to contemporary readers.

C) Superhero comic books are periodically reworked to try to increase their appeal to contemporary readers, while popular film franchises are often "rebooted" in an effort to make their characters and stories fresh and relevant for new audiences.

D) Superhero comic books are much like popular film franchises in being often "rebooted" in an effort to make their characters and stories fresh and relevant for new audiences and periodically reworked to try to increase their appeal to contemporary readers.

35

A) NO CHANGE
B) old
C) mature
D) geriatric

36

A) NO CHANGE
B) example, of publishers
C) example of publishers,
D) example of publishers

The start of the first ("Golden") age of comic books is often dated to 1938 with the debut of Superman in *Action Comics* #1. Besides beginning the age, Superman in many respects defined it, becoming the model on which many later superheroes were based. His characterization, as established in *Superman* #1 (1939), was relatively simple. He could "hurdle skyscrapers" and "leap an eighth of a mile"; "run faster than a streamline train"; withstand anything less than a "bursting shell"; and **37** lift a car over his head. Sent to Earth from the "doomed planet" Krypton, he was raised by human foster parents, whose love helped infuse him with an unapologetic desire to "benefit mankind." Admirable but aloof, the Golden Age Superman was arguably more paragon than character, a problem only partially solved by giving him a human alter ego. Other Golden Age superheroes were similarly archetypal: Batman was a crime-fighting millionaire, Wonder Woman a warrior princess from a mythical island.

37

Which choice is most consistent with the previous examples in the sentence?

A) NO CHANGE

B) hold down a regular job as a newspaper reporter.

C) wear a bright blue costume with a flowing red cape.

D) live in the big city of Metropolis instead of the small town where he grew up.

By contrast, the second ("Silver") age of comics was marked by characters that, though somewhat simplistic by today's standards, **38** were provided with origin stories often involving scientific experiments gone wrong. In addition to super villains, the new, soon-to-be-iconic characters of the **39** age: Spider-Man, the Fantastic Four, and the Hulk among them—had to cope with mundane, real-life problems, including paying the rent, dealing with family squabbles, and facing anger, loneliness, and ostracism. Their interior lives were richer and their motivations more complex. Although sales remained strong for Golden Age stalwarts Superman and, to a lesser extent, Batman, **40** subsequent decades would show the enduring appeal of these characters.

38

Which choice most effectively sets up the main idea of the following two sentences?

A) NO CHANGE
B) reflected the increasing conservatism of the United States in the 1950s.
C) engaged in bizarre adventures frequently inspired by science fiction.
D) were more "realistic" than their Golden Age counterparts.

39

A) NO CHANGE
B) age;
C) age,
D) age—

40

The writer wants a conclusion to the sentence and paragraph that logically completes the discussion of the Silver Age and provides an effective transition into the next paragraph. Which choice best accomplishes these goals?

A) NO CHANGE
B) the distinctions between later stages of comic book history are less well defined than the one between the Golden and Silver Ages.
C) readers increasingly gravitated to the upstarts as the 1960s and the Silver Age drew to a close.
D) these characters themselves underwent significant changes over the course of the Silver Age.

More transformations would take place in the medium as the Silver Age gave way to the Bronze and Modern (and possibly Postmodern) Ages. Such efforts **41** have yielded diminishing returns, as even the complete relaunch of DC **42** Comics' superhero's, line in 2011 has failed to arrest the steep two-decade decline of comic book sales. For both commercial and, arguably, creative reasons, **43** then, no transition was more successful than **44** those from the Golden to Silver Age.

41

A) NO CHANGE
B) would have yielded
C) were yielding
D) will yield

42

A) NO CHANGE
B) Comic's superhero's
C) Comics superhero's
D) Comics' superhero

43

A) NO CHANGE
B) however,
C) nevertheless,
D) yet,

44

A) NO CHANGE
B) these
C) that
D) DELETE the underlined portion.

STOP

If you finish before time is called, you may check your work on this section only.
Do not turn to any other section.