

Question ID 109d5bbb

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
SAT	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Boundaries	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: 109d5bbb

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: 109d5bbb 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 6d4b2e1e

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
SAT	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Boundaries	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: 6d4b2e1e

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: 6d4b2e1e 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 f868d438

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
SAT	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Boundaries	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: f868d438

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: f868d438 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 7ce4ee13

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
SAT	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Boundaries	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: 7ce4ee13

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: 7ce4ee13 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 fdb16e20

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
SAT	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Boundaries	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: fdb16e20

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: fdb16e20 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 594b4a94

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
SAT	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Boundaries	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: 594b4a94

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: 594b4a94 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 ba8ebf49

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
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ID: ba8ebf49

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: ba8ebf49 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 0fa289a7

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
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ID: 0fa289a7

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: 0fa289a7 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 2bb7416a

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
SAT	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Boundaries	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: 2bb7416a

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: 2bb7416a 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 59094d87

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
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ID: 59094d87

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: 59094d87 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 790fc366

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
SAT	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Boundaries	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: 790fc366

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: 790fc366 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 73a6603c

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
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ID: 73a6603c

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: 73a6603c 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 a9e5b788

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
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ID: a9e5b788

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: a9e5b788 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 aab74a3b

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
SAT	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Boundaries	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: aab74a3b

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: aab74a3b 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 6ea8c23f

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
SAT	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Boundaries	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: 6ea8c23f

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: 6ea8c23f 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 83898524

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
SAT	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Boundaries	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: 83898524

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: 83898524 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 fba5d8d1

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
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ID: fba5d8d1

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: fba5d8d1 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 aaa1907f

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
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ID: aaa1907f

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: aaa1907f 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 adf210e7

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
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ID: adf210e7

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: adf210e7 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 960dec02

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
SAT	Reading and Writing	Standard English Conventions	Boundaries	<div><div></div><div></div><div></div></div>

ID: 960dec02

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: 960dec02 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