

SAT Practice Test 3: Answers & Explanations

Writing and Language Test



1. (D)	5. (A)	9. (B)	13. (A)	17. (B)	21. (C)	25. (A)	29. (C)	33. (A)	37. (D)	41. (C)
2. (B)	6. (A)	10. (B)	14. (C)	18. (C)	22. (C)	26. (D)	30. (C)	34. (C)	38. (B)	42. (C)
3. (C)	7. (D)	11. (C)	15. (B)	19. (D)	23. (D)	27. (B)	31. (A)	35. (A)	39. (D)	43. (B)
4. (A)	8. (D)	12. (B)	16. (D)	20. (B)	24. (C)	28. (A)	32. (B)	36. (B)	40. (A)	44. (A)

1) D

Concept(s) Tested: Pronoun Use/Case

“Multilingual professionals” immediately precedes the pronoun “which” in the sentence. Since “multilingual professionals” refers to a group of *people*, it is necessary to use the relative pronoun “who,” so (D) is the answer. Choice (B) is not a relative pronoun; it is incorrect because “they” does not properly connect the definition to the term it defines, and it would confuse the reader. Choice (C), “whom,” uses the objective case of “who,” making it incorrect in the context of the sentence.

2) B

Concept(s) Tested: Concision

Although (A) and (D) are grammatically correct, they repeat the subject of the sentence, making the sentence unnecessarily lengthy. (B) is the answer because it is concise and grammatically correct. (C) is incorrect because it sounds as if the “person who speaks” also does the repeating.

3) C

Concept(s) Tested: Correlative Conjunction Use

Choices (A) and (B) both incorrectly use the adjective “precise.” Choice (C) is correct because “precise” functions as an adverb that modifies “rewrite,” so it needs to be written with an “-ly” ending. (D) uses “precisely,” but the words “it is” are superfluous, making (D) incorrect.

4) A

Concept(s) Tested: Passage Development

The underlined phrase provides a meaningful example to illustrate the author’s point. It should be kept, so (A) is correct. (B) is incorrect because the sentence does not transition to the topic of idiomatic phrases; they are not discussed in the following material. (C) is incorrect because, while the example is applied to translators, it does not necessarily exclude interpreters. And we can

eliminate (D) because the underlined phrase does not distract the reader from the paragraph’s focus on written material. In contrast, it provides an example of the very challenges translators face when writing.

5) A

Concept(s) Tested: Precise Diction

Choice (A) is correct because “to adapt” means to change something to make it more suitable for a context, situation, or circumstance. The word is correct within this context because companies are adapting their products and services to fit local environments. Choice (B) is incorrect because “to restore” something means to bring it back to a prior or original state, which would not make sense in the sentence. (C) is incorrect because “to transform” indicates a more significant and thorough change than an adaptation. But the passage does not indicate the change is as significant as a transformation. (D) is incorrect because “to recalibrate” means to check an instrument or gauge for accuracy, so the word is not appropriate in this context.

6) A

Concept(s) Tested: In-Sentence Punctuation, Possession

No change is necessary, so (A) is the best answer choice. “Consumers” should have an apostrophe after the “s” because it is referring to more than one consumer, so we can eliminate (B) and (D) on this account. (C) is incorrect because a comma is not necessary between “language” and “preferences,” as it would be were the author citing three or more items in a list.

7) D

Concept(s) Tested: Passage Development

The first sentence of paragraph 4 states that translators and interpreters’ work settings “range from the very humble to the highly prestigious,”

suggesting that they work in a diversity of settings. Because (D) sets up this same focus, it is the correct choice. (A) is incorrect because the paragraph emphasizes the diversity of scenarios in which translators and interpreters work, so it would not be appropriate to begin with a blanket statement that the jobs are “always exciting.” (B) can be eliminated because it implies that the focus of the paragraph is “fluent bilingualism” rather than language-related professions. (C) is incorrect because it makes an inappropriate shift to a more informal style by addressing the reader.

8)  D

Concept(s) Tested: Combining Sentences

The punctuation at the underlined portion must connect two independent clauses (clauses that can act as complete sentences). Only (D) does so correctly; a semicolon can replace a period when the clauses to either side of the semicolon contain closely related information, as is the case here. (A) is incorrect because a comma cannot separate two independent clauses unless the comma is followed by a coordinating conjunction. (B) is incorrect for the same reason, as “also” is not a coordinating conjunction such as “and.” (C) can be eliminated because, like a comma, an em dash alone cannot separate two independent clauses.

9)  B

Concept(s) Tested: Precise Diction

In English when a writer or speaker wishes to state that a person will eventually attain a professional level or position, the word “prospective” is most often used. “Prospective” most clearly indicates that a person is working toward attaining a certain professional stature or position. Thus, (B) is correct. Choice (A), “eventual,” is awkward because it usually indicates something that will happen in the distant future. (C) and (D) are incorrect because it would not make sense to use “attainable” or “feasible” for people, only for goals, plans, and targets.

10)  B

Concept(s) Tested: Transition Words and Phrases

The answer will be the word or phrase that is most logical. (B) is correct because it is “natural” that the highest volume of work for interpreters and translators would involve the most commonly spoken languages. (A) is incorrect because “paradoxically” would imply a contradiction; yet there is no apparent contradiction in the idea that the biggest market for language interpretation and translation would involve the most widely spoken languages, and no such contradiction is elaborated

upon in the paragraph. (C) is incorrect because “as a result” would refer to the preceding sentence and would imply that the biggest need being for the most commonly spoken languages is the result of the US Bureau of Labor Statistics predicting a rise in job opportunities, which does not make sense. Similarly, (D) implies a contrast with the preceding sentence, which is also incorrect.

11)  C

Concept(s) Tested: Pronoun Use

Choice (A) is incorrect because “their” describes ownership whereas the sentence indicates something happening in the future. Therefore, the answer is (C) because the homonym “there” is an existential pronoun showing that something simply exists, or in this case, will exist. Choices (B) and (D) are incorrect because they are pronouns that refer to specific entities.

12)  B

Concept(s) Tested: In-Sentence Punctuation

Choice (B) is correct because a pause or break is needed to separate off the part of the sentence that mentions human life. The information is not essential to the sentence; it is simply an elaboration of the previous statement. Moreover, a natural pause occurs on either side of the phrases beginning with “including” as in “(x), including (y),” so they always take a pair of commas. (A) is incorrect because the second comma is missing. (C) is incorrect because a colon can introduce items or lists of items or an independent clause elaborating on the concept; neither applies here. (D) is incorrect because it creates a run-on sentence.

13)  A

Concept(s) Tested: Passage Development

As the two sentences on either side of 13 stand now, there is a gap between the discussion of floodplains and governments building dams to prevent flooding. A connecting sentence is needed to reveal that people often settle in floodplains, making the building of dams necessary. (A) makes this connection most clearly. (B) is incorrect because it is not as important that people settle in the specific floodplains mentioned, only that they generally tend to settle in floodplains, wherever they are located. (C) presents a historical fact that does not fit the context of the present discussion. (D) is incorrect because it raises topics that are not discussed further in the passage.

14)  C**Concept(s) Tested: Passage Development**

Choice (C) is correct because it provides the most relevant information to further the author's purpose. The clause connects the idea of people trying to control flooding to the "dilemma" that flooding is beneficial *from a very long-term perspective*. (A) is incorrect because the clause becomes sidetracked into an explanation of the term "geomorphology." (B) and (D) are incorrect because they do not add any relevant information to the sentence.

15)  B**Concept(s) Tested: Passage Tone**

Choice (B) is correct because "sediment" is the most precise word for geological material deposited by water. (A) is incorrect because "all the stuff" is an informal phrase, which does not fit the academic tone of the passage. (C) is incorrect because it is unnecessarily vague. (D) is incorrect because its meaning is unclear from the context.

16)  D**Concept(s) Tested: In-Sentence Punctuation**

As written, the sentence incorrectly introduces a pause by using a comma. Generally, when two verbs connected by "and" refer to the same subject, no comma is needed between them, so (A) is incorrect. (D) removes the comma while effectively preserving the rest of the sentence, making it the correct choice. (C) incorrectly states that sediment creates vegetation rather than that it supports the growth of such vegetation. (B) incorrectly implies that the author is about to list several things that sediment does. A comma is not needed to separate a list of two things, only three or more.

17)  B**Concept(s) Tested: Graph Analysis**

Choice (A) is incorrect because the diagram indicates that the river flows below the terraces, not above. (B) is the correct choice because it explains that the river is flanked by terraces, which, based on the diagram, are both "inclined" and "step-like." (C) is incorrect because the diagram illustrates newly formed floodplains as being level with the river, not below it. (D) can be eliminated because the diagram does not suggest any relationship between terraces and mountains.

18)  C**Concept(s) Tested: Passage Development**

Choice (C) is correct because it is the best topic sentence for the paragraph. It describes floodplains

as "catch-basins," which sets up the paragraph's explanations about floodplains diffusing and absorbing flood water. (A) incorrectly implies that the paragraph that follows will list many reasons that floodplains are important. (B) incorrectly implies that the paragraph will focus on how floodplains are maintained. (D) is incorrect because the paragraph does not support a general statement that floods do not cause damage to floodplains.

19)  D**Concept(s) Tested: Verb Tense/Mood**

Choice (D) is correct because the subject of the verb is "deep layers," which is plural and requires a plural verb. Choice (A) is incorrect because "is" requires a singular subject; while "aquifer" is singular, it is not the subject of the phrase (and it determines the verb "consists"). The clause "that *are* saturated with drops of water" describes the "deep layers," not the aquifer or the "rock, sand, and soil." Choices (B) and (C) incorrectly change the meaning of the phrase, so the saturation with water becomes dependent on some factor that is not stated.

20)  B**Concept(s) Tested: Passage Development**

Choice (B) is correct because the sentence at 20 provides information that helps explain the significance of underground aquifers. (A) is incorrect because the sentence focuses on underground aquifers, which are the main topic of the paragraph but not the main topic of the passage. (C) is incorrect because the data cited is clear, simple, and relevant to the point made in the previous sentence. (D) is likewise incorrect because the sentence at 21 rightly keeps the focus on aquifers and does not take the paragraph in another direction.

21)  C**Concept(s) Tested: Transition Words and Phrases**

Choice (A) is incorrect because it wrongly indicates consequence—one thing following from another—when it should indicate an explanation: the reason that floodplains are able to reduce the amount of nitrates in water. Thus, (C) is the correct answer. (B) and (D) are both incorrect because they indicate that the sentence at 21 is explained by the previous sentence. As in (A), they wrongly indicate consequence.

22)  C**Concept(s) Tested: Passage Development**

An effective concluding sentence will state in a

general way that floodplains are valuable. (C) most clearly and effectively accomplishes this task by suggesting the relationship between communities and floodplains, which is implied by the passage's focus on flood prevention, rich soil, and clean water. Thus, the sentence sums up the passage by referring to "natural resources." (A) is incorrect because it is vague and wordy; the phrase "it is clear to see" is unnecessary. (B) limits the value of floodplains to richness in biodiversity, and does not include a reference to floodplains supporting human life, as mentioned in paragraph 1. (D) requires further argumentation and support. It is clear from the passage that floodplains are important, but it is not clear that communities should thereby begin dismantling their dams and levees.

23)  D

Concept(s) Tested: Passage Organization

Sentence 3 includes the word "however," which is usually used to indicate a contrast with something that was said previously. Since sentence 3 talks about the ability of the Bedu to survive in the harsh desert climate, it most appropriately goes after sentence 5, which mentions that most Bedu now live in towns. Thus, (D) is correct. Choices (A), (B), and (C) place the sentence in awkward and incohesive positions, so they are incorrect.

24)  C

Concept(s) Tested: Possession

Choice (C) is correct because the noun "dwellers" must be plural and has no need for a possessive apostrophe. The noun serves as a substitute for "Bedu people" in the previous sentence. Choices (A), (B), and (D) are therefore incorrect.

25)  A

Concept(s) Tested: Transition Words and Phrases

The preceding sentence states that the Bedu were once known for violence and stealing. The next sentence describes positive aspects of their reputation, setting up a contrast with what was stated earlier. The term "Nonetheless" is appropriate because it clearly indicates a qualification of what was said in the previous sentence. Therefore (A) is correct. (B) is incorrect because "So far" is typically used to indicate progress up to a point in time, which is not being discussed here. (C), "In addition," is incorrect because it does not include the required element of contrast with what was said before. (D) is incorrect because the two sentences contrast with each other whereas "consequently" implies a cause and effect relationship.

26)  D

Concept(s) Tested: Passage Tone

The phrase should fit the formal tone of the rest of the passage. Therefore, (D) is correct because it appropriately and concisely conveys the information. (A) is incorrect because it uses "you," which reflects informal spoken English. (B) is incorrect because claiming "Europeans...wrote some on" is unclear and informal. (C) can be eliminated because the term "a lot" is generally avoided in formal written English.

27)  B

Concept(s) Tested: In-Sentence Punctuation

Choice (B) is correct because it does not have a comma separating the two essential phrases that identify Wilfried Thesiger. He is "a British photographer... who traveled with..." Choice (A), (C), and (D) add the unnecessary comma.

28)  A

Concept(s) Tested: Concision, Syntax

The phrase is appropriate as written, because it clearly indicates that resources are thinly spread in the given area. (B) is too choppy and includes the vague phrase "a place like that." (C) does not make sense, since it is not clear how resources could currently be "spreading." (D) incorrectly shifts the focus from the habitat onto the resources and makes the meaning of the sentence unclear.

29)  C

Concept(s) Tested: Concision, Syntax

Choice (C) is correct because it describes the traditional custom clearly and simply. (A) is incorrect because it contains awkward syntax; it separates the verb ("would signal") from the object of the sentence ("their friendly intentions") with a prepositional phrase ("from far away"). It also creates a redundancy, as the next sentence also mentions the visitors arriving. (B) is incorrect because its word order and its use of the passive voice ("could be seen") make it confusing. (D) is incorrect because it lacks a subject, so it is not clear who is signaling.

30)  C

Concept(s) Tested: Precise Diction

To "query" someone is to question them in an attempt to find out information. This is the most appropriate word to describe what the Bedu were doing when they spoke with their guests, so (C) is correct. Choice (A) is incorrect because to "investigate" someone is to scrutinize and research him or her, often in relation to a crime; it is more than simply asking questions and trying to gain information from people. (B)

is incorrect because the Bedu would only be "impugning" their visitors if they disputed the validity of what the visitors were telling them. But the context of the sentence seems to suggest the Bedu were more interested in simply acquiring whatever information they could from their guests. (D) is incorrect because to "divert" is to change course or change direction, or to entertain, neither of which makes sense in this sentence.

31)  A**Concept(s) Tested: Passage Development**

The concluding sentence of this paragraph should sum up the purpose and meaning of the encounters the Bedu had with visitors. (A) accomplishes this by stating what the Bedu gained from these encounters about their physical and social environment. (B) would be more appropriate to continue the paragraph, not to end it, because it includes details that elaborate on what was said previously. (C) is incorrect because it narrowly focuses on one aspect of social interaction with others—the need to find grazing areas for goats and camels—at the expense of the larger value and utility of such interaction. (D) is incorrect because it neglects to mention that the Bedu also learned about their own people through their interactions with visitors, and not just their desert surroundings.

32)  B**Concept(s) Tested: Concision**

As written, the phrase is an elaborate and slightly confusing way of referring to the literature of the Bedu. Thus, (A) is incorrect and (B) is correct. (C) will not work because it is not the traditions of the Bedu that allow them to socialize among a small group, but their literature, which serves as the basis for discussion and communication. For the same reasons, (D) will not work. In addition, (D) needlessly incorporates several modifiers that do not convey any essential information.

33)  A**Concept(s) Tested: Organization**

Because of the use of the pronoun "these," which is used to indicate to something mentioned previously, the phrase "These oral traditions," located in sentence 2, is awkward and unclear unless information is added before sentence 2 that describes or defines the oral traditions. Thus, the added sentence should be placed after sentence 1 because "thousands of stories, songs, and poems" is an appropriate antecedent for the pronoun "these." The sentence also belongs at the beginning of the discussion about literature

because it introduces and describes the topic. (B), (C), and (D) create disorganization and are therefore incorrect.

34)  C**Concept(s) Tested: Syntax**

In writing, it is often preferable to use the active voice over the passive voice. Choice (A) is incorrect because it uses the passive voice, stating that the American Civil War "was fought." (C) is correct because it uses the more direct and easier to understand active voice. (B) uses redundant and awkward phraseology. People do not "go to civil war against each other," they fight a civil war. (D) is incorrect because it is wordy and awkwardly personalizes.

35)  A**Concept(s) Tested: Combining Sentences**

Choice (A) is correct because "which" is an effective way to introduce additional information, in this case about slavery. (B) is incorrect because the phrase "the main support of the southern economy" is unclear and awkward. (C) is incorrect because it creates an overly long sentence and because it uses the word "slavery" twice, which is redundant. Similarly, (D) uses the word "slavery" twice and joins the sentences using the word "yet," which implies contrast and therefore does not fit the context.

36)  B**Concept(s) Tested: Subject-Verb Agreement**

Choice (B) is correct because, in standard English grammar, "none" is treated as if it were "not one." Thus, it is a singular subject and requires a singular form of the verb. (A), (C), and (D) are each incorrect for that reason. In (C), it is also not necessary to state "the writers," since it is clear from the context of the sentence that the author is speaking about the writers mentioned. Also, (D) is incorrect because it wrongly places **emphasis** on the poems. It was not the case that the poems were unable to produce good writing, but that the authors themselves were unable to do so.

37)  D**Concept(s) Tested: In-Sentence Punctuation**

As written, the two commas after "read" and "heard" interrupt the flow of the sentence. When using "or" to indicate two alternatives, it is not necessary to place a comma before each alternative. Therefore (D) is correct and (A) is incorrect. (B) uses an em dash, which should primarily be used to indicate an interjection or interruption in the

middle of a sentence. Since there is no interruption here, the “—” symbol is not necessary. (C) also incorrectly places a break in the sentence by placing a comma where one is not needed.

38)  B

Concept(s) Tested: Passage Development

Choice (A) is incorrect because it strays from the author's focus on the Civil War. It also fails to introduce the “morally ambiguous situation” that is mentioned in the next sentence. (B) rectifies this situation by mentioning American authors and their failure to capture experiences of the Civil War. This sentence provides context for the sentences that follow. (C) has a less direct connection to the main point of the paragraph. It is less relevant that American authors wrote about travels in Europe or other distractions than that they failed to illustrate the war. (D) is incorrect because the passage does not support the idea that American authors remained silent during the Civil War, only that they failed to publish material that portrayed the realities of war.

39)  D

Concept(s) Tested: Precise Diction

The entire sentence at 39 sets up a contrast. (D) is correct because “unequivocal” (absolute) maintains that contrast. It makes sense that the moral ambiguity was caused by people having *absolute* opinions on the issues, but also hating the war. (A) is incorrect because “equivocal” (uncertain) views would not contrast with disillusionment about the war. (B) is incorrect because as in (A), the word would create an illogical sentence; “indefinite” views would be views that were not very strongly held and would not contrast with negative feelings about the war.

40)  A

Concept(s) Tested: Passage Development

Choice (A) is correct because the sentence at 40 elaborates on the previous point: photographers documented the carnage of the Civil War. (B) is incorrect because the author is not making a statement about the overall importance of photography, but about its role in documenting the Civil War. (C) is incorrect because listing famous photographers is superfluous and interrupts the paragraph's flow. (D) is incorrect because the focus is not on the visual arts “in general,” but on the visual arts as a means for conveying the graphic nature of Civil War battles.

41)  C

Concept(s) Tested: Parallel Structure

Choice (C) is correct because it maintains parallel structure. If men and horses *run*, and trains *run off* bridges, then it sounds best if fires *blaze* and smoke *billows*. (A) is incorrect because in mid-sentence it shifts to a structure using “there is.” (B) is incorrect because it also shifts structure in mid-sentence (“also fire and smoke are there.”) (D) is incorrect; it contains a different verb tense (fires “are threatening”) and a less active verb (smoke “is”) compared to the series’ other phrases.

42)  C

Concept(s) Tested: Possession

Choice (C) is correct because the sentence indicates America's ownership of “most gifted painters.” Thus, the word requires an apostrophe. Since “America” is referring to the country, it is a singular noun that requires an apostrophe before the “s.” (A) is incorrect because it has no apostrophe to indicate the possessive. (B) wrongly mentions Americans, which does not make sense. Winslow Homer is a product of America, not Americans. (D) is incorrect because “America” is a singular noun, and the apostrophe belongs before the “s.”

43)  B

Concept(s) Tested: Verb Tense

Choice (B) is correct because it maintains consistent verb forms in the sentence. One soldier “is shooting,” so it is appropriate to say another “is running.” (A) is incorrect because it shifts the sentence's verb tense from present progressive (“is shooting”) to simple present (“runs”). (C) and (D) are incorrect because each creates a mid-sentence shift into past tenses. The shift is awkward, and activity within images is normally described in the present tense.

44)  A

Concept(s) Tested: Passage Organization

Choice (A) is correct because it creates a cohesive flow of information. Paragraph 1 provides historical context for the American Civil War. Yet paragraph 2 begins with the word “ironically,” which is confusing because no irony has been introduced. Paragraph 3, however, explains that very few contemporary American authors depicted the war experience. Thus, it makes sense to place paragraph 3 before paragraph 2 because paragraph 2 introduces a legitimate irony: few American authors wrote about the Civil War, so it is ironic that “some of the best-known American writers were alive at the time.”