

# Writing and Language Test

35 MINUTES, 44 QUESTIONS

Turn to Section 2 of your answer sheet to answer the questions in this section.

## DIRECTIONS

Each passage below is accompanied by a number of questions. For some questions, you will consider how the passage might be revised to improve the expression of ideas. For other questions, you will consider how the passage might be edited to correct errors in sentence structure, usage, or punctuation. A passage or a question may be accompanied by one or more graphics (such as a table or graph) that you will consider as you make revising and editing decisions.

Some questions will direct you to an underlined portion of a passage. Other questions will direct you to a location in a passage or ask you to think about the passage as a whole.

After reading each passage, choose the answer to each question that most effectively improves the quality of writing in the passage or that makes the passage conform to the conventions of standard written English. Many questions include a "NO CHANGE" option. Choose that option if you think the best choice is to leave the relevant portion of the passage as it is.

Questions 1-11 are based on the following passage.

### The Pioneers of the Great Exodus

At the end of the Reconstruction era that followed the American Civil War, tens of thousands of black former slaves left the southern United States **1** for finding social and economic opportunity in the western states and territories. The movement was known as the Great Exodus, and **2** their participants came to be

1

- A) NO CHANGE
- B) in search of
- C) with a look for
- D) to the discovery of

2

- A) NO CHANGE
- B) his or her
- C) its
- D) one's

called exodusters. **3** During this time, travel from one part of the country to another took days or even weeks, and the dangers wild animals posed were not to be underestimated.

The most popular destination was Kansas, in part because of its role as an early stronghold of the movement to abolish slavery. One settlement in that state was Nicodemus, a town in northwestern Kansas that drew more than 300 settlers to make the long journey from Kentucky in 1877. **4** Real estate agents

**5** mentioned Nicodemus in brochures and newspapers, but the reality that exodusters confronted on arrival was less appealing. For one early settler of Nicodemus, Willianna Hickman, the flat, empty landscape contrasted starkly with the forested hills where she grew up—Hickman recalled bursting into tears when she first saw her new home.

3

Which choice provides the most appropriate context for the discussion that follows in the passage?

- A) NO CHANGE
- B) Settlers from Kentucky, Tennessee, and Missouri were part of the Great Exodus.
- C) The Great Exodus has parallels to large-scale migrations that occurred in the United States during the twentieth century.
- D) Drawn by the promise of farming on their own land rather than sharecropping for a landlord, exodusters founded dozens of communities in the West in the 1870s and 1880s.

4

At this point, the writer is considering adding the following sentence.

Between 1870 and 1879, approximately 10,000 exodusters entered Kansas.

Should the writer make this addition here?

- A) Yes, because it sheds light on an aspect of the settlers' backgrounds.
- B) Yes, because it provides a historical context for the discussion of the Great Exodus.
- C) No, because it contradicts information in the previous paragraph.
- D) No, because it digresses from the discussion of the settlement of Nicodemus.

5

Which choice most effectively sets up the information that follows in the paragraph?

- A) NO CHANGE
- B) wrote songs and slogans to attract settlers,
- C) advertised the location and characteristics of Nicodemus,
- D) promised plentiful harvests and abundant wildlife,

Some exodusters returned to the familiar **6** expanse of their home **7** states: but others— including Hickman and her husband, Daniel, decided to stay in their new farming villages. These farmers faced many difficulties. In Nicodemus, the lack of trees for home construction or fuel forced settlers to build houses out of sod and burn materials such as sunflowers for heat. Possessing less wealth than settlers from Europe or other parts of the United States, **8** horses or farm implements could not be afforded by many exodusters, who had to do agricultural work with inadequate hand tools. In the first years, many could not raise enough crops to sustain themselves and had to seek aid from neighbors or state governments.

6

- A) NO CHANGE
- B) terrain
- C) spread
- D) locale

7

- A) NO CHANGE
- B) states—but others
- C) states; but, others
- D) states, but others,

8

- A) NO CHANGE
- B) affording horses or farm implements was impossible for many exodusters, who
- C) many exodusters could not afford horses or farm implements and
- D) the lack of affordability of horses or farm implements meant many exodusters

The prosperity of exoduster settlements depended on the yields of their farms. **9** Eventually, harvests in Nicodemus grew, which allowed residents to purchase lumber for their houses and attracted **10** banks, grocery stores, and other businesses. But the challenges of small-scale farming, **11** exacerbated and made worse by economic volatility, slowed the Great Exodus. By the twentieth century, Nicodemus had stopped growing, with many businesses moving away, and other exoduster communities had disappeared altogether. As settlers left the region, Nicodemus became the only original exoduster town to endure to the present day. It remains, in the words of a 1996 congressional bill establishing it as a National Historic Site, “symbolic of the pioneer spirit of African Americans who dared to leave the only region they had been familiar with to seek personal freedom and the opportunity to develop their talents and capabilities.”

9

- A) NO CHANGE
- B) Still,
- C) Rather,
- D) Next,

10

- A) NO CHANGE
- B) banks, grocery, stores
- C) banks; grocery stores,
- D) banks; grocery stores

11

- A) NO CHANGE
- B) exacerbated and worsened
- C) exacerbated
- D) made worse by exacerbation

Questions 12-22 are based on the following passage.

### Debunking Myths of the Dodo

Julian Hume, a paleontologist at the Natural History Museum in Hertfordshire, United Kingdom, has long been troubled by the misunderstandings surrounding the scientific community’s knowledge of the dodo (*Raphus cucullatus*), a large, flightless **12** bird. This was a bird that was endemic to the Indian Ocean island of Mauritius and likely went extinct by the year 1693.

**13** Consequently, the dodo has been depicted as an unintelligent, oddly shaped animal with tiny wings and a clumsy demeanor—a veritable buffoon of a bird.

**14** However, Hume and others have shown that the dodo was much more capable than such depictions would suggest.

**12**

Which choice most effectively combines the sentences at the underlined portion?

- A) bird that was endemic to the Indian Ocean island of Mauritius and
- B) bird, a bird that was endemic to the Indian Ocean island of Mauritius and that
- C) bird, which was endemic to the Indian Ocean island of Mauritius; here the dodo
- D) bird endemic to the Indian Ocean island of Mauritius—one that on this island

**13**

- A) NO CHANGE
- B) Traditionally,
- C) Therefore,
- D) Similarly,

**14**

The writer is considering revising the underlined portion to the following.

However, using cutting-edge techniques to analyze skeletal specimens,

Should the writer make this revision?

- A) Yes, because it introduces information that is developed later in the passage.
- B) Yes, because it gives details that reinforce the description in the previous sentence.
- C) No, because it adds an idea that is not directly related to the passage’s main discussion.
- D) No, because it contradicts information provided in the concluding paragraph.

[1] Hume was part of a team of paleontologists that employed 3-D laser scanning to produce high-resolution images of each bone from two nearly complete dodo specimens. [2] The team used the images to reconstruct a more streamlined model of dodo skeletal structure; they also evaluated the individual bone images. [3] Hume noted that the robust kneecaps of *R. cucullatus*, along with its thick leg bones and broad **15** pelvis would have provided **16** them with the strength and maneuverability to easily navigate the rocky and densely forested landscape of Mauritius. [4] The prominence of these features suggests a well-developed musculature, indicating that the wings, while small in size relative to the rest of the body, likely enhanced the dodo's speed and agility. **17**

15

- A) NO CHANGE
- B) pelvis—
- C) pelvis;
- D) pelvis,

16

- A) NO CHANGE
- B) it
- C) these
- D) that

17

The writer wants to add the following sentence to the paragraph.

The team also argued for the anatomical significance of the ridges and indentations in the dodo's wing bones.

To make the paragraph most logical, the sentence should be placed

- A) after sentence 1.
- B) after sentence 2.
- C) after sentence 3.
- D) after sentence 4.

Another team of scientists, **18** being a team that was overseen and led by comparative biologist Eugenia Gold, then a graduate student working at the American Museum of Natural History, focused on the dodo's capacity for cognition. They used computed tomography scanning on a well-preserved *R. cucullatus* skull to create a virtual endocast, a 3-D model of the brain cavity. The team created similar models for eight of the dodo's presumed closest relatives, including several extant species, **19** they calculated the ratio of brain volume to total body mass for each specimen. The ratio for the dodo was comparable to that of a modern bird possessing considerable navigational and visual skills and a vaunted capacity for learning. **20** While brain volume is not an infallible indicator of intelligence, Gold's team concluded that the dodo was not all that dimwitted.

18

- A) NO CHANGE
- B) led
- C) a team led
- D) overseen and also led

19

- A) NO CHANGE
- B) also they
- C) and
- D) DELETE the underlined portion.

20

The writer wants to acknowledge a potential objection to the means by which Gold and her team reached their conclusion. Which choice most effectively accomplishes this goal?

- A) NO CHANGE
- B) Comparing dodos to Neanderthals, another underestimated extinct species,
- C) Despite the fact that the dodo is extinct,
- D) Since the dodo's brain volume was correlated to its body size,

21 Hume and Gold's results', obtained with more comprehensive data than previously available and with the aid of improved analytical techniques, offer a necessary revision of the dodo's reputation. The dodo may not have been the most graceful of birds or an avian Einstein, but neither 22 was it the clownish creature that is so often imagined.

21

- A) NO CHANGE
- B) Humes' and Gold's results,
- C) Hume's and Gold's result's,
- D) Hume's and Gold's results,

22

- A) NO CHANGE
- B) will it be
- C) is it being
- D) will it have been



Questions 23-33 are based on the following passage and supplementary material.

### VISTA Offers New Perspectives

Considering her options after graduation, college student Shauntia Dyson **23** thought about what she might do and decided that she wanted to use her skills to help people struggling with the challenges of poverty. A search for such opportunities led her to the AmeriCorps VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America) program. Each VISTA member works full time for one year at a private nonprofit or public agency in a low-income community. In 2016, Dyson began her VISTA service at the Forsyth Farmers' Market in Savannah, **24** Georgia, where, in exchange for a modest salary and benefits, she supports the organization in its mission of offering locally produced food options to people in the Savannah area. Dyson and **25** their fellow VISTA members, or VISTAs, have made an excellent decision, one that will benefit them now and in the future.

23

- A) NO CHANGE
- B) mulled over her future plans and decided
- C) made a choice, deciding
- D) decided

24

- A) NO CHANGE
- B) Georgia; where,
- C) Georgia, where:
- D) Georgia; where

25

- A) NO CHANGE
- B) its
- C) her
- D) one's

VISTAs' salaries may be low, but the VISTA experience is very rewarding in other ways. The program's dedication to assisting people in need makes the work especially **26** reassuring to those who, like Dyson, find joy in serving and helping others.

**27** However, VISTAs' responsibilities tend to be at a higher level than those found in private-sector jobs. VISTAs are typically not hired to offer direct services such as delivering **28** food, rather they use their talents on big-picture initiatives such as building the capacity and improving the financial health of the organizations that employ them. Dyson enthusiastically **29** explains that: her role at the farmers' market involves, "enhancing the organization's reach and visibility" as well as "increasing and diversifying financial and in-kind resources."

26

- A) NO CHANGE
- B) thankful
- C) satisfactory
- D) gratifying

27

- A) NO CHANGE
- B) To that end,
- C) What's more,
- D) Nevertheless,

28

- A) NO CHANGE
- B) food, rather,
- C) food; rather,
- D) food, rather:

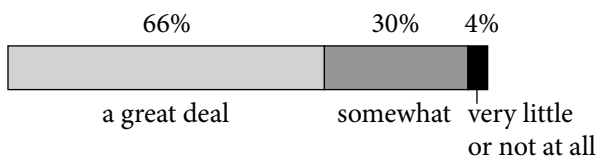
29

- A) NO CHANGE
- B) explains that her role at the farmers' market involves:
- C) explains, that her role at the farmers' market involves
- D) explains that her role at the farmers' market involves

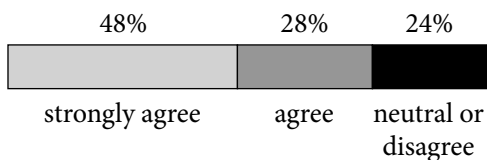
The program also assists VISTAs in **30** preparing for their future careers. A 2015 study asked VISTA alumni to rate the program’s success in helping them build various career-specific skills. Five of these skills—communicating in writing, conducting oneself professionally, working independently, meeting deadlines, and prioritizing tasks—were grouped under the heading “Managing Self and Work.” The data are persuasive: **31** 30% of alumni rated VISTA service as having improved their management of self and work “somewhat,” while a mere 4% said the program improved their skills in this area “very little or not at all.” Additionally, **32** most VISTA alumni surveyed, about three-fourths, agreed or strongly agreed with the claim that VISTA was a worthwhile experience in furthering their professional goals.

Results from 2015 Survey of  
VISTA Alumni

Percent indicating that VISTA helped build skills in the area of managing self and work



Percent indicating that VISTA was a worthwhile experience in furthering professional goals



Adapted from “AmeriCorps Alumni Outcomes Summary Report.” Corporation for National and Community Service. Published in 2015.

30

Which choice provides the most effective introduction to the paragraph?

- A) NO CHANGE
- B) learning to meet deadlines.
- C) determining what they want to do for a living.
- D) furthering their commitment to public service.

31

Which choice most effectively uses information from the graph to support the writer’s argument for VISTA service?

- A) NO CHANGE
- B) 66% of alumni rated VISTA service as having improved their management of self and work “a great deal,”
- C) more VISTA alumni reported that the program had improved their management of self and work than reported that it had not done so,
- D) of the VISTA alumni who responded to the survey, some thought the program had improved their management of self and work,

32

Which choice most effectively uses information from the graph to support the main idea of the paragraph?

- A) NO CHANGE
- B) many VISTA alumni surveyed, about half, agreed with
- C) only about one-fourth of VISTA alumni surveyed disagreed with
- D) virtually all VISTA alumni surveyed either agreed with or were neutral regarding

By joining VISTA, Shauntia Dyson is following in the footsteps of hundreds of thousands of people, over the program's fifty-year history, who **33** are helping improve both their communities and their career prospects. More US students should consider devoting a year as a volunteer in service to America.

33

- A) NO CHANGE
- B) have helped
- C) will have helped
- D) would have helped