ENGLISH TEST 1 EXPLANATIONS

Answer Key

Check your answers then refer to the relevant Answer Explanations for a break-down of why that answer is correct and why other choices were not.

#	Answer	#	Answer
1	A	26	H
2	H	27	B
3	B	28	G
4	H	29	B
5	D	30	G
6	G	31	D
7	A	32	F
8	J	33	C
9	B	34	H
10	H	35	A
11	D	36	G
12	G	37	B
13	B	38	H
14	F	39	B
15	C	40	G
16	G	41	A
17	D	42	G
18	J	43	B
19	A	44	G
20	G	45	A
21	C	46	H
22	G	47	B
23	B	48	F
24	F	49	A
25	B	50	J

English Breakdown

Production of Writing (29-32%)

TOD and ORG

Knowledge of Language (15-17%)

KLA

Conventions of Standard English (52-55%)

SST, USG, and PUN

ACT Standards

ORG – Organization, Unity, and Cohesion

KLA – Knowledge of Language

TOD – Topic of Development

USG – Usage

PUN – Punctuation

SST – Sentence Structure

Answer Explanations

Use the following answer explanations and examples to determine why that answer is correct and why other choices were not.

Passage I - Stories at the Crossroads

1. Add/Delete Sentences – TOD 504

The correct answer is **A** because the sentence creates a strong picture of the setting where Robert Johnson began his music career. The details about the dim light, cigarette smoke, sounds, and atmosphere help the reader feel the mood of the juke joints. If the sentence were removed, the paragraph would lose this vivid description, making the writing less engaging and less focused.

Why are the other options incorrect?

- **B** – This is incorrect because the sentence does not explain any struggles. It only describes the place and atmosphere where Johnson played.
- **C** – This is incorrect because the sentence does not give facts such as where Johnson was born. It focuses on imagery, not biographical details.
- **D** – This is incorrect because the sentence does not explain his success or achievements. It sets the scene but does not explain outcomes later in his life.

2. Fragments – SST 401

The correct answer is **H** because it fixes a sentence fragment and creates a clear, complete sentence. In the original version, *"Drifting between small towns and the bustling streets of Memphis"* is a fragment—it does not have a subject or a main verb on its own. Choice H correctly joins this participial phrase to the main sentence using a comma, showing that *drifting* describes Johnson.

Non-Example	Example
Born in 1911 in Hazlehurst, Mississippi, Johnson grew up poor. Drifting between small towns and the bustling streets of Memphis.	Born in 1911 in Hazlehurst, Mississippi, Johnson grew up poor, drifting between small towns and the bustling streets of Memphis.
She finished the race exhausted. Breathing heavily as she crossed the line.	She finished the race exhausted, breathing heavily as she crossed the line.

Why are the other options incorrect?

- **F** – This choice leaves the second part as a fragment. A fragment is not a complete sentence, so this option is grammatically incorrect.
- **G** – This choice incorrectly uses a semicolon. Semicolons are used to join two complete sentences, but *"drifting between small towns…"* is not a complete sentence, so a semicolon does not work here.

- **J** – This choice makes the sentence awkward and unclear. It incorrectly suggests that *"poor"* and *"drifting"* are equal adjectives, instead of showing that *drifting* explains how Johnson lived.

3. Word Choice – USG 305

The correct answer is **B** because "their" is the correct possessive pronoun to use in this sentence. The guitars belong to the bluesmen, which is a plural noun, so the sentence needs a plural possessive word.

Non-Example	Example
He spent his earliest years pressing his ear to the music of others, begging seasoned bluesmen to let him hold there guitars.	He spent his earliest years pressing his ear to the music of others, begging seasoned bluesmen to let him hold their guitars.
The team washed there uniforms.	The team washed their uniforms.

Why are the other options incorrect?

- **A** – This choice keeps "there," which is used to talk about a place, not ownership.
- **C** – This choice is incorrect because "they're" is a contraction that means "they are." Saying *"they are guitars"* does not fit the sentence.
- **D** – This choice is incorrect because the guitars do not belong to "him." They belong to the bluesmen, so using "his" changes the meaning of the sentence.

4. Awkward Fragments – SST 301

The correct answer is **H** because it fixes an awkward and incorrect sentence structure by adding a comma after the introductory phrase. The sentence begins with "One night in 1930," which is an introductory time phrase. Introductory phrases should be followed by a comma to clearly separate them from the rest of the sentence. With the comma added, the sentence flows smoothly and clearly shows how the ideas are connected.

Non-Example	Example
One night in 1930 after yet another failed attempt to impress the crowd inside a packed juke joint, Robert quietly slipped away.	One night in 1930, after yet another failed attempt to impress the crowd inside a packed juke joint, Robert quietly slipped away.
After the final bell but students rushed out of the building.	After the final bell, students rushed out of the building.

Why are the other options incorrect?

- **F** – Without the comma, the sentence sounds awkward and is harder to read.
- **G** – This choice removes the word "and" but still does not add the comma, so the sentence remains awkward and unclear.

- **J** – This choice incorrectly adds "but," which shows contrast. There is no contrast between the ideas in the sentence, so using *but* is grammatically incorrect.

5. Verb Tense – SST 302

The correct answer is **D** because it keeps the verb tense consistent and logical within the sentence. The sentence describes a general truth about how stories move through communities. General truths are usually written in the present tense, so "travel" is the best choice.

Non-Example	Example
In communities where stories traveled faster than trains, silence invited imagination.	In communities where stories travel faster than trains, silence invited imagination.
In communities with limited entertainment options, families gathered on porches and share stories each evening.	In communities with limited entertainment options, families gather on porches and share stories each evening.

Why are the other options incorrect?

- **A** – This choice keeps "traveled," which is past tense. The sentence is not describing something that happened only in the past; it is making a general statement, so past tense is not the best fit.
- **B** – This choice shifts the verb to the future tense, which suggests the action has not happened yet. That does not make sense for a general truth.
- **C** – This choice uses the present perfect tense, which suggests an action that happened in the past and is still continuing. The sentence does not need this tense, so it sounds awkward and unclear.

6. Organizing Details – ORG 405

The correct answer is **G** because this order helps the reader follow the story step by step, ending with a thoughtful explanation of why the change felt so mysterious.

Why are the other options incorrect?

- **F** – This order is confusing because it starts with a reflection on the change before explaining what actually happened. Readers need to see the events first before understanding why they seemed unbelievable.
- **H** – This choice starts by describing Johnson's skills before explaining when or why they appeared. This makes the paragraph feel out of order and harder to understand.
- **J** – This choice begins with the musicians' reaction before explaining Johnson's return or improvement. Without that context, the reaction does not make sense yet.

7. Commas and Lists – PUN 302

The correct answer is **A** because it correctly adds commas to separate items in a simple list. When listing three or more items in a series, commas are needed between each item to make the sentence clear and easy to read.

Non-Example	Example
Johnson's own songs, filled with eerie references to evil spirits; hellhounds; and bargains made in the night, only deepened the mystery.	Johnson's own songs, filled with eerie references to evil spirits, hellhounds, and bargains made in the night, only deepened the mystery.
The museum exhibit featured faded photographs, carefully preserved letters; and artifacts recovered from the old homestead.	The museum exhibit featured faded photographs, carefully preserved letters, and artifacts recovered from the old homestead.

Why are the other options incorrect?

- **B** – Semicolons are not used to separate items in a simple list, so this punctuation is incorrect.
- **C** – Without commas, the list runs together and becomes confusing.
- **D** – This choice adds an unnecessary comma. The punctuation does not fit the structure of the sentence and creates an interruption without a clear purpose.

8. Delete Unnecessary Commas – PUN 401

The correct answer is **J** because the comma after "say" should be removed. In this sentence, "whether he intended the lyrics…" is a noun clause that functions as the direct object of the verb *say*. A comma should not separate a verb from the clause that completes its meaning.

Non-Example	Example
No one could say, whether he intended the lyrics as confession or clever showmanship.	No one could say whether he intended the lyrics as confession or clever showmanship.
She packed extra supplies, so that the group would be prepared for unexpected delays.	She packed extra supplies so that the group would be prepared for unexpected delays.

Why are the other options incorrect?

- **F** – This choice keeps the comma after "say," which is incorrect. The comma creates an unnecessary pause between the verb and its direct object clause, making the sentence awkward.
- **G** – This choice uses a dash, which is too strong and informal for this sentence. A dash suggests a dramatic break, but no break is needed between say and whether.
- **H** – This choice adds even more commas, which makes the sentence choppy and confusing. The clause beginning with whether should flow directly after the verb.

9. Subject/Verb Agreement – USG 302

The correct answer is **B** because the subject of the sentence is singular, so the verb must be singular as well. Even though the phrase *"along with countless audiences"* appears in the sentence, it is extra information and does not change the subject. The true subject is "Johnson." Since *Johnson* is one person, the verb should be singular past tense, which is wandered.

Why are the other options incorrect?

- **A** – This choice uses have wandered, which is plural. That verb would only be correct if the subject were plural, but Johnson is singular, so the verb does not agree.
- **C** – This choice uses the present tense, which does not fit the rest of the sentence. The sentence describes something that happened in the past, so present tense is incorrect.
- **D** – This choice is also plural and does not agree with the singular subject *Johnson*. It also unnecessarily changes the verb form.

10. Add/Delete Sentences – TOD 503

The correct answer is choice **H**. Although the essay vividly describes Robert Johnson's early struggles, sudden transformation, and the folklore surrounding his music, it does not fully elaborate on his rise to musical fame. Instead of tracing how Johnson gained widespread recognition, built a reputation, or influenced audiences beyond local juke joints, the passage focuses primarily on atmosphere, mystery, and legend. The emphasis on supernatural explanations and myth outweighs concrete details about professional success or public acclaim, so the essay does not fully meet the stated purpose.

Why are the other options incorrect?

- **F** – This option is incorrect because the essay does not explain how Johnson became widely known. While audiences are described as "astonished," the passage does not establish broad recognition, popularity, or fame beyond localized reactions.
- **G** – The essay moves from Johnson's early struggles to improved musicianship, it does not trace a clear career progression. There is little discussion of professional milestones, sustained success, or career development, so the essay does not fully chart a rise from obscurity to professional fame.
- **J** – This choice is incorrect because the essay contains very few technical details about blues music itself. The passage is descriptive and narrative, emphasizing mood, setting, and legend rather than musical technique or theory.

Passage II - Women and Marriage

11. Commas and Compound Verbs – PUN 501

The correct answer is **D** because the two parts of the sentence form a compound verb phrase, not two independent clauses. The subject is "a married woman's legal and financial identity," and the verb phrase is "disappeared and [became her husband's property]." Both verbs depend on the same subject conceptually and grammatically—the identity both disappeared and became her husband's property. Because the sentence is not joining two separate independent clauses, no comma is needed before "and."

Non-Example	Example
Under a rule called *coverture*, a married woman's legal and financial identity disappeared; and everything she owned became her husband's property.	Under a rule called *coverture*, a married woman's legal and financial identity disappeared and everything she owned became her husband's property.
Under prolonged stress, the organization's internal communication broke down and key decisions stalled at the leadership level.	Under prolonged stress, the organization's internal communication broke down and key decisions stalled at the leadership level.

Why are the other options incorrect?

- **A** – This comma incorrectly separates the two parts of a compound verb, making the sentence appear to contain two independent clauses when it does not. A comma before and is only used when joining two independent clauses.
- **B** – This choice makes the original comma error worse by adding another comma. Resulting in an incorrect pause before "and" and an impossible and ungrammatical punctuation pattern after "and."
- **C** – A semicolon cannot be used before a coordinating conjunction (and). Semicolons may join two independent clauses on their own, but not when followed by "and."

12. Add/Delete Sentences – TOD 402

The correct answer is **G** because the sentence explains how coverture functioned in practice by listing specific legal restrictions placed on married women, such as the inability to sign contracts, file lawsuits, or control wages. These examples directly clarify and reinforce the definition without introducing new ideas or shifting focus.

Why are the other options incorrect?

- **F** – This choice is incorrect because the sentence does not define the term coverture. The definition is already provided in the passage ("a married woman's legal and financial identity disappeared…"). The added sentence gives examples, not a definition.
- **H** – This choice is incorrect because the sentence does not introduce a counterargument. Instead, it supports the existing explanation by expanding on how the law affected married women.
- **J** – This choice is incorrect because the sentence does not shift the focus of the essay. It remains tightly connected to the discussion of coverture and women's legal status, making the concept clearer for the reader rather than diverting attention elsewhere.

13. Formal and Objective Tone – KLA 402

The correct answer is choice **B**, "was labeled," removes the emotional bias and maintains a consistent, formal tone that aligns with the rest of the passage. It states the historical fact without implying the author's opinion.

Non-Example	Example
A woman considered "past her prime"—usually between her mid-twenties and late twenties—<u>was unfortunately labeled</u> a spinster, a term suggesting she had failed in her expected role.	A woman considered "past her prime"—usually between her mid-twenties and late twenties—<u>was labeled</u> a spinster, a term suggesting she had failed in her expected role.
The policy <u>was questionably labeled</u> unconstitutional by the court.	The policy <u>was labeled</u> unconstitutional by the court.

Why are the other options incorrect?

- **A** – This choice keeps the subjective adverb unfortunately, disrupting the passage's objective tone.
- **C** – Adds unnecessary wordiness and informality.
- **D** – This option is too casual and inappropriate for a formal historical explanation.

14. Commas and Parenthetical Phrases – PUN 404

The correct answer is choice **F** because the phrase "such as brothers" is a simple, nonessential parenthetical that provides an example of the relatives being referenced. Such parenthetical elements must be set off by commas.

Non-Example	Example
Because women depended on marriage for social standing and financial security, those who never married relied upon relatives such as, brothers for support.	Because women depended on marriage for social standing and financial security, those who never married relied upon relatives, such as brothers, for support.
Certain animals such as dolphins are known for their intelligence.	Certain animals, such as dolphins, are known for their intelligence.

Why are the other options incorrect?

- **G** – This option includes the opening comma for the parenthetical phrase but omits the closing comma. Without the second comma, the sentence incorrectly absorbs "such as brothers" into the main clause.
- **H** – This version removes both commas, making the phrase essential, which changes the meaning.
- **J** – This places the comma inside the phrase, splitting the expression "such as brothers" incorrectly. Grammatically, "such as" cannot be separated from the noun it introduces. This incorrect placement creates a structural error and fails to set off the parenthetical correctly.

15. Parallel Structure – SST 501

The correct answer is choice **C**, as it is the *only* option that produces a clean, balanced, and grammatically consistent series. Each verb is in the same form (base verb) and serves the same grammatical function.

Non-Example	Example
Men, meanwhile, often viewed marriage as a way to earn respect, achieve stability, and a well-behaved partner who would enhance their reputation.	Men, meanwhile, often viewed marriage as a way to earn respect, achieve stability, and find a well-behaved partner who would enhance their reputation.
He viewed his professional efforts as a way to sharpen his abilities, building confidence in his judgment, and gain experience that would support future success.	He viewed his professional efforts as a way to sharpen his abilities, build confidence in his judgment, and gain experience that would support future success.

Why are the other options incorrect?

- **A** – This option breaks parallel structure as it mixes a verb phrase with a noun and noun phrase.
- **B** – The verbs and nouns in this choice do *not* follow a consistent grammatical pattern.
- **D** – This revision removes the verb entirely, creating a fragmentary, unclear list.

Passage III - The Serve

16. Add/Delete Sentences – TOD 301

The correct answer is **G** because the sentence about the campground selling fishing bait and postcards does not contribute to the main focus of the paragraph, which centers on sports and the tennis/basketball court. Removing it improves focus and cohesion.

Why are the other options incorrect?

- **F** – This option says the sentence contradicts other information, but it does not conflict with anything in the paragraph; it is simply unnecessary, not inconsistent.
- **H** – This option suggests the sentence helps visualization, but the added detail about bait and postcards does not connect to the sports facilities that are the paragraph's main point.
- **J** – This option claims the sentence explains why the family chose a lakeside cabin, but nothing in the paragraph states that bait or postcards influenced that decision.

17. Sentence Placement – ORG 301

The correct answer is **D** because placing the sentence after Sentence 5 introduces the detail that the grandfather has been teaching the family tennis immediately after the court is described as convertible into a tennis court, creating a natural lead-in to their experience playing tennis there.

Why are the other options incorrect?

- **A** – Placing the sentence after Sentence 2 interrupts the general description of the campground before the sports facilities are fully introduced.
- **B** – Putting the sentence after Sentence 3 separates the mention of the court from the idea that it can become a tennis court, weakening the progression from basketball to tennis.
- **C** – Adding the sentence after Sentence 4 inserts background information between the family's love of basketball and the explanation that the court can also be used for tennis, disrupting that comparison.

18. Idiomatic Prepositions – USG 403

The correct answer is **J** because "working on" is the standard idiomatic expression used when someone is performing a task or trying to improve a skill. In context, the narrator is actively practicing a tennis serve, so "working on" communicates that ongoing effort naturally and precisely.

Non-Example	Example
My grandfather knelt beside her and began working at restringing the racket.	My grandfather knelt beside her and began working on restringing the racket.
She wanted to participate on the committee.	She wanted to participate in the committee.

Why are the other options incorrect?

- **F** – This option does not form a standard idiom with the verb *working* and sounds unnatural in the context of practicing a skill.
- **G** – This choice suggests employment, purpose, or assignment rather than actively practicing the serve itself.
- **H** – This choice implies assistance, collaboration, or the use of a tool. It does not clearly communicate focused effort on improving the serve.

19. Modifiers – SST 401

The correct answer is **A** because it places the modifier next to the person performing the action. The sentence clearly shows that the narrator is carrying out the action, so there is no confusion about who the modifier describes.

Non-Example	Example
I stood about half a court away, tossing the ball eagerly into the air.	I stood about half a court away, eager to practice the serves I had been learning
To prepare for the exam, the notes were reviewed carefully.	To prepare for the exam, she reviewed her notes carefully.

Why are the other options incorrect?

- **B** – This choice adds an unnecessary modifying phrase that does not improve clarity and makes the sentence more awkward than the original.
- **C** – The sentence has already established who is performing the action, so this additional wording is redundant.
- **D** – This choice creates a misplaced modifier that illogically suggests the tennis ball has thoughts or feelings, rather than the narrator.

20. Transitions – ORG 401

The correct answer is **G** because "Next" signals the next step in a sequence of actions. Since the passage is describing the process of serving a tennis ball, a transition that indicates chronological order is needed.

Why are the other options incorrect?

- **F** – This transition signals contrast between ideas, but the sentence continues the sequence rather than opposing a previous point.
- **H** – This choice introduces an example or illustration. The writer is describing a step in a process, not providing an example.
- **J** – This transition indicates similarity or comparison, which does not fit the paragraph's progression from one action to the next.

21. Purposeful Wording – TOD 403

The correct answer is **C** because "helplessly" strengthens the emotional impact of the moment. The word emphasizes the narrator's inability to control the situation and helps convey the fear and anxiety felt while watching the ball's movement.

Why are the other options incorrect?

- **A** – This wording communicates the basic action but does not emphasize the narrator's emotional reaction.
- **B** – This choice is less vivid and does little to develop the tension or fear present in the scene.
- **D** – While this option describes the action, it does not directly convey the narrator's sense of fear, vulnerability, or lack of control.

22. Word Choice Precision – KLA 402

The correct answer is **G** because "skittering" vividly describes quick, irregular movement. The word helps readers picture the tennis ball darting unpredictably across the court and contributes to the scene's energetic, dramatic tone.

Why are the other options incorrect?

- **F** – This choice communicates movement but does so in a general way that provides little imagery for the reader.
- **H** – Although this option may sound more formal, it is less precise and does not create as strong a visual image.
- **J** – This word is broad and nonspecific, making the description less vivid and less engaging.

23. Redundancy – KLA 401

The correct answer is **B** because removing "fast" eliminates unnecessary repetition. The sentence already communicates the idea of speed, so keeping both expressions repeats the same information without adding meaning.

Why are the other options incorrect?

- **A** – This choice leaves the redundant wording in place, creating unnecessary repetition.
- **C** – This option removes wording that contributes to the intended meaning, weakening the description rather than simply eliminating repetition.
- **D** – This choice still expresses the same idea twice, so the redundancy problem remains.

24. Commas with Introductory Phrase – PUN 403

The correct answer is **F** because a comma should follow a long introductory phrase before the main clause begins. The comma signals the transition from the introductory information to the sentence's main idea and helps prevent misreading.

Non-Example	Example
For nearly, a minute he lay unconscious, and in that silence I felt a dread I had never known before.	For nearly a minute, he lay unconscious, and in that silence I felt a dread I had never known before.
During, the violent hailstorm the windows rattled constantly, and everyone inside grew anxious.	During the violent hailstorm, the windows rattled constantly, and everyone inside grew anxious.

Why are the other options incorrect?

- **G** – This choice places the comma within the introductory phrase, incorrectly separating words that belong together.
- **H** – This option places the comma between the subject and verb of the main clause, creating an unnecessary interruption.
- **J** – This choice inserts a comma in the middle of the main clause, breaking the sentence apart without a grammatical reason.

25. Straight-Forward Introductions – ORG 502

The correct answer is **B** because it directly states the emotional and thematic takeaway of the story–the narrator's new awareness of their grandfather's fragility–which connects smoothly to "That day changed how I saw my grandfather." It sets up the reflective tone of the final paragraph and clearly signals the essay's main lesson.

Why are the other options incorrect?

- **A** – This choice emphasizes "almost ruined our vacation," which is not the main lesson developed in the final paragraph. It instead focuses on changed perception and vulnerability.
- **C** – This choice suggests the essay is about the dangers of tennis, but the ending centers on the grandfather's vulnerability and the consequences of carelessness, not the sport itself.
- **D** – This choice introduces a new idea (sport preference at campgrounds) that does not connect to the reflective, serious tone or to the main point of the essay about the grandfather and responsibility.

Passage IV – The Five Tribes

26. Commas and Introductory Clauses – PUN 403

The correct answer is **H**. The original sentence is missing a comma before the phrase beginning with the word including. Two commas are needed in addition to the commas before items in a series. The comma after today sets off the introductory adverb. The comma before including separates the list that follows from the main clause. This comma assists with clarity and avoids a "marked disturbance" in the sentence by forcing a short pause before the list.

Non-Example	Example
Today, 39 federally recognized tribes call Oklahoma home including the Cherokee, Choctaw, Chickasaw, Muscogee (Creek), and Seminole Nations—often referred to collectively as the Five Tribes.	Today, 39 federally recognized tribes call Oklahoma home, including the Cherokee, Choctaw, Chickasaw, Muscogee (Creek), and Seminole Nations—often referred to collectively as the Five Tribes.
In recent years many programs have grown, including online options such as Psychology, Math of Finance, and Creative Writing.	In recent years, many programs have grown, including online options such as Psychology, Math of Finance, and Creative Writing.

Why are the other options incorrect?

- **F** – This choice is missing a comma before the phrase beginning with "including".
- **G** – This choice drops the comma from the introductory word "Today".
- **J** – Not only does this choice remove the introductory comma, but also misplaces the second comma, resulting in an awkward pause in the sentence.

27. Parenthetical Commas – PUN 404

The correct answer is **B**. In the original sentence, the prepositional phrase that follows the subject adds additional – but not essential – information must be set off by commas before and after the phrase.

Non-Example	Example
These tribes, along with many others have shaped the state's traditions, governance, and contributions to society.	These tribes, along with many others**,** have shaped the state's traditions, governance, and contributions to society.
The orchestra along with several guest musicians performed flawlessly at the concert.	The orchestra, along with several guest musicians, performed flawlessly at the concert.

Why are the other options incorrect?

- **A** – This choice omits the second required comma.
- **C** – This choice omits the first required comma.
- **D** – This choice injects a semicolon, which is unnecessary.

28. Modifiers – SST 401

The correct answer is **G**. The introductory clause describes the subject of the sentence and accurately describes the challenges the tribe went through.

Non-Example	Example
Deeply intertwined with the era of forced removal in the 19th century, the story of Oklahoma's tribes tells of resilience.	Deeply intertwined with the era of forced removal in the 19th century, Oklahoma's tribes tell a story of resilience.
Inspired by years of experience, the lesson was taught carefully to ensure students learned everything.	Inspired by years of experience, the teacher taught the lesson carefully to ensure students learned everything.

Why are the other options incorrect?

- **F** – This answer implies it was the story that was deeply intertwined with struggle, not the tribes.
- **H** – This choice creates a subject-verb agreement issue: tribes . . . tells
- **J** – This choice gives the sense of wordiness and the subject is interrupted from its predicate.

29. Delete Unnecessary Commas – PUN 401

The correct answer is **B** because removing the comma allows the two verb phrases to flow naturally together. Since “displaced” and “relocated” share the same subject and form a compound predicate, no comma is needed.

Non-Example	Example
The Indian Removal Act of 1830 led to the infamous Trail of Tears during which thousands of Native Americans were displaced from their ancestral lands, and relocated to what was then called Indian Territory.	The Indian Removal Act of 1830 led to the infamous Trail of Tears during which thousands of Native Americans were displaced from their ancestral lands and relocated to what was then called Indian Territory.
The cafeteria workers carefully prepared the sandwiches to ensure the dietary needs of students are met, and served at lunch.	The cafeteria workers carefully prepared the sandwiches to ensure the dietary needs of students are met and served at lunch.

Why are the other options incorrect?

- **A** – The comma before "and" is unnecessary here because "and" is joining two verbs ("were displaced" and "relocated") that share the same subject. A comma is only needed before "and" when joining two independent clauses.
- **C** – This option incorporates a semicolon, which is used to join clauses without a conjunction.
- **D** – The conjunction "and" is omitted and it is required to join the two verbs: displaced and relocated.

30. Delete Wordy Material – KLA 401

The correct answer is **G** because "Remarkable achievement" fully conveys the idea without repetition. Removing "that is impressive" tightens the sentence while preserving the full meaning.

Why are the other options incorrect?

- **F** – "Remarkable" and "impressive" convey the same meaning in this context. Using both words creates unnecessary redundancy, which ACT English consistently penalizes.
- **H** – Simply reordering "remarkable" and "impressive" does not eliminate the redundancy; both words still appear, and the sentence remains wordy.
- **J** – Changing "impressive" to "impressed" shifts to the past tense but does not remove the redundancy, since "impressed" is still implied by "remarkable achievement." The revision also creates a tense inconsistency with "was."

31. Add Conjunctions – KLA 403

The correct answer is **D** because it uses the correct coordinating conjunction ("and") to join the dependent clause with the independent clause.

Non-Example	Example
The Cherokee Nation, for example, is renowned for its written language developed by Sequoyah, the Choctaw and Chickasaw peoples have preserved oral traditions and ceremonial practices that date back centuries.	The Cherokee Nation, for example, is renowned for its written language developed by Sequoyah, and the Choctaw and Chickasaw peoples have preserved oral traditions and ceremonial practices that date back centuries.
Both movies released on the same day and were widely acclaimed by film critics, audiences continue to support the films as evidenced by their box office gross.	Both movies released on the same day and were widely acclaimed by film critics, and audiences continue to support the films as evidenced by their box office gross.

Why are the other options incorrect?

- **A** – This option does not include a coordinating conjunction (FANBOYS) to join the two clauses.
- **B** – While "but" is a coordinating conjunction, it is not the most appropriate choice from FANBOYS to join the two clauses.

- **C** – While “so” is a coordinating conjunction, it is not the most appropriate choice from FANBOYS to join the two clauses.

32. Most Appropriate Word – KLA 404

The correct answer is **F** because “connecting” is the most appropriate word in context: it fits the idea of linking younger generations with their roots.

Why are the other options incorrect?

- **G** – This option uses “Contacting” which is a common verb, but wrong in this context. “Contacting” is more about getting in touch, and less about cultural linkage.
- **H** – This option uses “Covering” which is another common verb, but also wrong in this context. “Covering” is more about concealing or protecting, and doesn’t fit the intended meaning of the sentence.
- **J** – This option uses “Changing”, which is another common verb, but also wrong in this context. “Changing” is more about altering, which is the opposite of preserving.

33. Relevant Transitions – ORG 501

The correct answer is **C** because it uses the correct transition phrase to clarify that details are being added about the subject.

Why are the other options incorrect?

- **A** – “Therefore” suggests a conclusion, not the addition of information.
- **B** – “However” suggests the introduction of a contrasting viewpoint, not the addition of information.
- **D** – “Instead” suggests that something is being done despite opposition, not the addition of information.

34. Relevance – TOD 301

The correct answer is **H** because the sentence distracts from the subject of the paragraph and must be deleted.

Why are the other options incorrect?

- **F** – This choice contains an irrelevant detail.
- **G** – This choice is unrelated to other infrastructure-driving examples in the paragraph.
- **J** – While powwows are discussed in another paragraph, the sales of food and goods is not.

35. Essay Goals – TOD 504

The correct answer is **A** because the article shows several instances of unfair treatment.

Why are the other options incorrect?

- **B** – Traditions like powwows and stomp dances are unrelated to the unfair treatment of Native Americans.
- **C** – This is a false equivalency. Yes, many tribes are enjoying peace and plenty now but that doesn’t override their past unfair treatment.

- **D** – Another false equivalency. Yes, tribes have autonomy for how they educate their children and how they transfer cultural norms, but it does not override past unfair treatment.

Passage V – The Eastern Dragon

36. Topic Development – TOD 502

The correct answer is **G**. If the writer deleted the preceding sentence, the paragraph would lose the specific visual details — horns of a stag, neck of a snake, belly of a sea monster, claws of an eagle, ears of an ox — that show exactly how the dragon's appearance draws from multiple animals. Without it, the paragraph only makes a general claim about "many animal characteristics" but never illustrates what that looks like.

Why are the other options incorrect?

- **F** – The four theories appear in the next sentence, not the one being considered for deletion. Removing this sentence would not affect the theories at all.
- **H** – The sentence describes the dragon's physical features. It does not connect the origin theories to agriculture; that role belongs to the sentence about the dragon's "supposed influence on water" in paragraph 2.
- **J** – The sentence describes the dragon's body parts, not the history of Chinese art. Nothing in it discusses artistic development or tradition.

37. Most Appropriate Word – KLA 505

The correct answer is **B**, "prevailing," because the passage is describing theories that are widely accepted among scholars. "Prevailing" means dominant or commonly held, which is the precise meaning the context calls for.

Why are the other options incorrect?

- **A** – "Reliable" describes something you can count on to work consistently, like a tool or a routine. It doesn't carry the meaning of being widely accepted.
- **C** – "Guaranteed" means certain to happen. Theories are explanations supported by evidence, not certainties.
- **D** – "Dependable" means the same thing as "reliable" and has the same problem — it describes trustworthiness, not how widely something is accepted.

38. Relevance – TOD 401

The correct answer is **H**. The sentence should not be deleted because it connects two ideas that would otherwise have no logical bridge: the origin theories in paragraph 1 and the dragon's role as a farming symbol in the sentence that follows. It does this by identifying water as the common thread running through the theories. Without it, the passage jumps from origin stories straight to harvest symbolism with no explanation of how those ideas relate.

Why are the other options incorrect?

- **F** – The sentence does not contradict the theories. It pulls them together by pointing out what most of them share — a connection to water.
- **G** – The passage covers more than the zodiac. It discusses the dragon's origins, its link to water, and its cultural importance. Water is part of the essay's focus, not a digression from it.
- **J** – While the sentence does reference the dragon's connection to water, that describes only what the sentence says — not why the writer included it. The sentence's purpose is to serve as a transition between the origin theories and the agricultural significance that follows. This choice identifies the topic but misses the structural function, which is the actual reason to keep it.

39. Pronoun-Antecedent Agreement – USG 303

The correct answer is **B**, "its," because the word refers back to "Chinese culture," which is singular. When a singular noun owns something, the possessive form is "its" — with no apostrophe.

Non-Example	Example
Dragons are important to Chinese culture and are featured in <u>their</u> zodiac calendar, which cycles every twelve years with a different animal.	Dragons are important to Chinese culture and are featured in <u>its</u> zodiac calendar, which cycles every twelve years with a different animal.
Folktales are central to Greek mythology and are preserved in <u>their</u> ancient literature, which records the adventures of gods and heroes.	Folktales are central to Greek mythology and are preserved in <u>its</u> ancient literature, which records the adventures of gods and heroes.

Why are the other options incorrect?

- **A** – "Their" is a plural possessive. Since "culture" is singular, using "their" creates a mismatch between the pronoun and the word it refers to.
- **C** – "They're" is short for "they are." Plugging it in produces "featured in they are zodiac calendar," which doesn't make sense. The sentence needs a word that shows ownership, not a contraction.
- **D** – "It's" is short for "it is." The sentence needs a word that shows ownership, and the possessive form of "it" never takes an apostrophe.

40. Comma Splices – SST 301

The correct answer is **G**. The original sentence runs two complete thoughts together with only a comma between them: "which cycles every twelve years with a different animal" finishes one idea, and "people born in a dragon year are believed to be lucky" starts a completely new one. When two complete sentences are joined by just a comma, the fix is to end the first sentence and start a new one. A period after "animal" turns them into two clear, correct sentences.

Non-Example	Example
...which cycles every twelve years with a different animal**,** people born in a dragon year are believed to be lucky.	...which cycles every twelve years with a different animal**.** People born in a dragon year are believed to be lucky.
The festival lasts fifteen days**,** each night features a different performance.	The festival lasts fifteen days**.** Each night features a different performance.

Why are the other options incorrect?

- **F** – Keeps the error. Two complete thoughts separated by only a comma is incorrect in standard written English.
- **H** – A semicolon can join two complete thoughts on its own, but adding "and" after it is redundant. The semicolon already does the joining work — tacking on a connecting word makes the sentence awkward.
- **J** – Removing the comma without replacing it with anything makes the problem worse. The two ideas blur together with no signal for where one ends and the next begins.

Passage VI – Hurricane Laura

41. Verb Tense – SST 502

The correct answer is **A** because it maintains consistent and logical verb tense within the sentence. The verb "sat" establishes the simple past tense, and "was surrounded" correctly continues in the same tense to describe conditions that existed at the same time. The sentence presents two related past actions using a consistent tense, which keeps the description clear and coherent.

Non-Example	Example
It sat on the corner of two streets and is surrounded by similar vintage homes.	It sat on the corner of two streets and was surrounded by similar vintage homes.
The bridge crossed the river and is supported by steel beams.	The bridge crossed the river and was supported by steel beams.

Why are the other options incorrect?

- **B** – This choice shifts the verb tense to the present tense, creating an illogical mismatch with the past-tense verb *"sat."* The sentence describes a past situation, so present tense is inappropriate.
- **C** – This choice introduces the future tense, which is inconsistent with the past-tense context of the sentence. There is no indication that the surrounding homes are a future condition.

- **D** – This choice uses the past perfect tense, which is only needed when describing an action that occurred before another past action. In this sentence, the surrounding homes existed at the same time the house sat on the corner, so the past perfect is unnecessary and misleading.

42. Redundancy – KLA 301

The correct answer is **G** because this choice removes some extra words and avoids repetition with "severe" and "bad."

Why are the other options incorrect?

- **F** – This choice keeps the original wording, which is wordy and repetitive. Saying *severe and bad* repeats the same idea, so the sentence is not as clear as it could be.
- **H** – This choice keeps the same meaning, but it is still wordy. The phrase *"that was"* is unnecessary and makes the sentence longer than needed.
- **J** – The original sentence says "frequent severe and bad weather." The words severe and bad mean almost the same thing, so using both is repetitive.

43. Word Choice – USG 305

The correct answer is **B** because the sentence needs the words "it is," not a possessive word. The sentence is explaining what determines whose house survives, so it needs a subject and a verb. The phrase "it's fate that determines…" is correct because "it's" means "it is."

Non-Example	Example
I did not realize until much later that <u>its</u> fate that determines whose house survives and whose does not.	I did not realize until much later that <u>it's</u> fate that determines whose house survives and whose does not.
<u>Its</u> important to finish the project on time.	<u>It's</u> important to finish the project on time.

Why are the other options incorrect?

- **A** – This choice keeps "its," which is a possessive word that shows ownership. The sentence is not showing ownership, so "its" does not make sense here.
- **C** – This is not a real word in standard English. Adding an apostrophe after *s* does not create a correct form.
- **D** – This choice removes an important part of the sentence and makes it unclear. The sentence needs "it's" to explain what causes the outcome.

44. Delete Irrelevant Content – TOD 301

The correct answer is **G** because the information about being widowed is not related to the main focus of the essay. The essay focuses on hurricanes, preparation, and the fate of the house, not on the narrator's personal life. Removing the phrase does not change the meaning of the paragraph or affect the story about the storm. Deleting it helps the essay stay focused on its main topic.

Why are the other options incorrect?

- **F** – This is incorrect because the sentence is still grammatically correct without the phrase. The sentence would read: *"I was determined not to leave my house,"* which is complete and clear.
- **H** – This is incorrect because the phrase does not actually explain the preparation. The narrator prepares because of the approaching hurricane, not because of being widowed.
- **J** – This is incorrect because the phrase does not connect ideas or move the paragraph from one point to another. It introduces new personal information that does not help the paragraph flow.

45. Parallel Verbs – SST 501

The correct answer is **A** because it maintains proper parallel structure throughout the series. Each item in the series uses the same past-tense verb form: "filled," "bought," "checked," "gathered," and "boarded." The second action, "bought groceries, an extra bag of dog food, and plenty of water," includes a compound direct object—multiple nouns receiving the action of the single verb *bought*—but the overall structure remains parallel because the list continues to present actions in the same grammatical form. The series is correctly punctuated with commas.

Non-Example	Example
I filled my car with gas, bought groceries, an extra bag of dog food, and plenty of water, checked my hurricane kit, and gathered extra batteries for my flashlight, and boarded the large windows on the sun porch at the front of the house.	I filled my car with gas, bought groceries and an extra bag of dog food, purchased plenty of water, checked my hurricane kit, gathered extra batteries for my flashlight, and boarded the large windows on the sun porch at the front of the house.
With my gift certificate, I bought a new wireless controller and extra rechargeable batteries, going home, set up my gaming system in the family room, connected my headset and charging dock, downloaded the latest game update, and invited my friends over to play.	With my gift certificate, I bought a new wireless controller and extra rechargeable batteries, went home, set up my gaming system in the family room, connected my headset and charging dock, downloaded the latest game update, and invited my friends over to play.

Why are the other options incorrect?

- **B** – Groups "groceries, dog food, and water" as objects of "bought," breaking the parallel structure of separate actions. Each purchase should be a distinct parallel action.
- **C** – Destroys parallelism by mixing past tense verbs ("bought," "checked") with present participles ("purchasing," "gathering"). All verbs in a series must use the same form.
- **D** – Complete structural breakdown. Mixes gerunds ("buying"), past tense verbs ("purchased," "gathered"), and present participles ("checking"). Total violation of parallel structure.

46. Pronoun Agreement – USG 502

The correct answer is **H** because the pronoun must match the noun it refers to. In this sentence, the pronoun refers back to "my nephew," which is singular. The correct singular subject pronoun for my nephew is he. Using he keeps the pronoun clear and correctly matched to its antecedent.

Non-Example	Example
I gathered a small bag and my dog and climbed into the cab of my nephew's Ford F-150 as they helped me lock up the house.	I gathered a small bag and my dog and climbed into the cab of my nephew's Ford F-150 as he helped me lock up the house.
My sister helped me improve my stride as they went on their daily run.	My sister helped me improve my stride as she went on their daily run.

Why are the other options incorrect?

- **F** – This choice keeps "they," which is plural. The sentence only mentions one person (the nephew), so using a plural pronoun does not agree with the antecedent.
- **G** – This choice uses an object pronoun, but the sentence needs a subject pronoun because the pronoun is doing the action (*helped*). "Them" cannot be the subject of a verb.
- **J** – This is also an object pronoun, not a subject pronoun. You cannot say *"him helped me lock up the house."*

47. Commas and Lists – PUN 302

The correct answer is **B** because it correctly adds commas to separate items in a simple list. When listing three or more items in a series, commas are needed between each item to make the sentence clear and easy to read.

Non-Example	Example
My nephew his wife, my dog and I huddled on the floor of a central hallway, which was the only place without windows that was large enough to accommodate us.	My nephew, his wife, my dog, and I huddled on the floor of a central hallway, which was the only place without windows that was large enough to accommodate us.
The Engineering class supplies included pencils notebooks, a calculator and a folder to ensure that students were ready to learn each day.	The Engineering class supplies included pencils, notebooks, a calculator, and a folder to ensure that students were ready to learn each day.

Why are the other options incorrect?

- **A** – This choice does not add the needed commas, so the list runs together and is confusing. Without commas, it is hard to tell how many people or things are being listed.
- **C** – Semicolons are not used to separate items in a simple list, so this punctuation is incorrect.
- **D** – This choice mixes missing commas with an incorrect semicolon. It does not clearly separate the items in the list and makes the sentence harder to understand.

48. Idioms – USG 404

The correct answer is **F** because it is concise, clear, and maintains appropriate tone. "Unsure how long it would be" is idiomatic, natural English that flows well with the passage. Grammatically sound and stylistically consistent.

Why are the other options incorrect?

- **G** – Adding "of" is unnecessary and makes the phrase wordier. "Unsure how long" is the standard, more concise construction.
- **H** – "Being" is unnecessary and makes the participial phrase awkward and wordy. The simple adjective "unsure" is clearer.
- **J** – Overly formal and wordy for a personal narrative. "Duration" and "restoration" create an unnecessarily bureaucratic tone inconsistent with the passage's style.

49. Verb Tense + "Have" – USG 501

The correct answer is **A** because it uses past perfect "had left" correctly to show the damage occurred before the narrator arrived. "Its" is the correct singular possessive pronoun referring to "wind and water" treated as one unit.

Non-Example	Example
But the wind and water left its calling card.	But the wind and water had left its calling card.
When we arrived, the accident left their impact on the road.	When we arrived, the accident had left its impact on the road.

Why are the other options incorrect?

- **B** – Simple past tense doesn't show the proper sequence of events. The damage occurred before the narrator's arrival, so past perfect is needed.
- **C** – Present perfect tense is inappropriate for a completed past event in a past-tense narrative.
- **D** – While "had left" is correct, "a" is wrong. "Wind and water" is treated as a singular unit (one combined force), not separate entities requiring a plural pronoun.

50. Verb Tense + "Have" – ORG 302

The correct answer is **J** because it clearly sums up one of the main themes of the essay. Throughout the passage, the narrator reflects on the experience of losing a long-time home and realizing that some things cannot be controlled. Choice **J** ends the essay with a thoughtful lesson about life and leaving, which makes the conclusion feel complete and meaningful.

Why are the other options incorrect?

- **F** – This choice ends the essay by focusing on the cost of repairing the roof, which is a specific detail. A conclusion should focus on the big idea, not a small or practical detail.
- **G** – This choice restates an action the narrator took, but it does not explain what the experience meant. A conclusion should explain the lesson learned, not just repeat what happened.
- **H** – This choice shifts the focus away from the narrator's personal experience and lesson. It sounds more like a fact from the middle of the essay, not a reflective ending.

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