## NTI Days - AP Literature - Ms. Kilgore

(Multiple Choice Questions are 3 pts each)

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<td>Complete a 1 page response to discuss at least 3 skills that you struggled with throughout this packet and provide specific reasons in support for why you think that you struggled within those particular areas. Discuss at least 3 specific things you could do to improve within these areas. 40 pts 10 pts for length requirement 10 pts for the identification of 3 skills that you struggled with 10 pts for specific reasons in support for why you think that you struggled within those particular areas 10 pts for discussion of 3 specific things you could do to improve within these areas.</td>
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I also encourage you to read anything you can get your hands on and explore AP practice questions and content that is available for your study purposes on AP Central.
Day 1 - Main Idea, Supporting Details, and Word Meaning Practice

THE SKILL
You may be starting this book on your own or in a class to prepare for that huge academic moment in your life—sitting down for the ACT test. Yes, it is an important step before you leave high school, but don’t fear the test. The more you get to know what the test is like and the more you sharpen your skills, the less you’ll fear it. One of the most basic and simplest skills to practice is finding the main idea. Simply put, the main idea is a sentence summary of the information, purpose, or focus of the passage—but that’s it! Nothing to it, right? Nothing to fear! You’ve been finding main ideas since second grade and the ACT knows it. That’s why the ACT will ask an average of one main idea question per reading passage.

WHAT THESE QUESTIONS LOOK LIKE
- The main purpose of the third paragraph (lines 21-28) is…
- The primary purpose of the fourth paragraph (lines 29-35) can best be summarized by which of the following statements?
- The passage primarily focuses on…
- The overall purpose of the passage is to…
- The passage as a whole suggests that…
- Which of the following statements best describes the main point of the passage?
- Information in the second paragraph (lines 9-16) supports the narrator’s claim that…

STRATEGIES TO WIN
As you read a passage, think about:
1. What the author’s main point is
2. What the author is trying to prove
3. What the author deals with most
4. How information in the passage or paragraph adds up to one major idea
5. How the thesis statement (can be the main idea or very close) usually hangs out in the first paragraph
6. How the introduction and conclusion paragraphs can reveal the passage’s main idea, while topic sentences can reveal a paragraph’s main idea

Be careful of:
1. Answer choices that are too broad or too narrow to be the correct main idea
2. A supporting detail (next section) answer choice posing as the main idea (hey, I read that answer choice in the passage, so it must be the main idea, right? WRONG!)
Nearly all human beings have a fear of something. Most of these fears are normal to have, such as the fear of a nuclear war, death, speaking in public, or the dentist, and most people with these common fears go on living normal lives and face them head-on when needed. On the other hand, some people suffer from irrational fears, which are generally categorized as the types of fears that bring upon intense anxiety on the sufferer, will even alter his or her life, and may not have any logical cause behind them.

A phobia is defined as an irrational fear and can practically paralyze the victim. The sufferers of phobias may clearly understand that their fear is unjustified but simply can’t prevent or manage the anxiety. Without professional help, phobias can lead to great life alterations for their victims.

One phobia that regularly plagues sufferers in such a way is called agoraphobia, the fear of public places. Someone with this phobia dreads being trapped in a public place, such as in line at the grocery store, in crowds at the mall, or even on a bridge. It can begin with a seemingly innocent event that causes the sufferer to avoid the place or situation again and can eventually lead to being housebound.

Like agoraphobia, another relatively common life-altering phobia is claustrophobia, the abnormal fear of tight spaces. People suffering from claustrophobia will likely never ride in elevators, panic from being in a room without windows, and under no circumstances wear tight-collared shirts. The need to have an escape is important for these sufferers, so to avoid the symptoms of sweating, rapid heartbeat, hyperventilating, and nausea, they manage their fear by sitting near exits and opening windows. For the roughly 5% of people who have claustrophobia, though, tactics like this will never actually cure the problem.

We all have things or situations that we have no reason to fear, but those suffering from phobias cannot manage the effects. Fearing a thunderstorm or seeing a snake slither across the sidewalk may lead to some discomfort or tension for most of us, but if we cower in a closet or run inside to escape these fears, it may be the start of something uncontrollable.
Supporting Details

The Skill

Supporting details are those important bits of information that help build the main idea. Think of supporting details like this: When you dress in your best clothes, you want each part of the outfit to match or accent the other parts. Women might focus on enhancing their outfits with the right makeup, belt, purse, jewelry, and, of course, shoes. Guys may concentrate on the perfect cap and sneakers, each with the right color and style to highlight the entire look. The whole look can be thought of as the main idea, and each article of clothing or accessory would be a supporting detail.

What These Questions Look Like

- The passage indicates...
- In line 30, the author states...
- Details in the passage suggest...
- Which of the following does ["quote"] refer to in line 25?
- Which of the following statements is NOT supported by the second paragraph (lines 9-18)?
- The author identifies all of the following as [something] EXCEPT...

Strategies to Win

1. Don’t get bogged down by every detail. Focus on finding the main idea first and how the details you’re reading support that idea.
2. Supporting details are right there in the passage. You can go back and find them and put your finger on them, but the wording may be different from the question options.
3. Think about how a certain paragraph or section functions to support the main idea.
4. Make simple inferences about how specific details are used and how they support the passage.

Often, for questions presented in this “Reading Basics” section of the book, you can actually turn back to the passage and put your finger on the answer or something quite similar. Remember this when practicing.
SUPPORTING DETAILS PRACTICE

It’s a multi-billion dollar industry, and you may have a few friends who are quite involved in the buying, selling, and trading of sneakers. Limited edition and rare kicks can go for hundreds to thousands of dollars on eBay, and true “sneakerheads” (the slang term for someone who collects sneakers) will wait for days outside a store to get their hands, but not feet, on some rare footwear.

Like any collector, a sneakerhead will keep his shoes mint and never wear the best pairs. Some buy two pairs if they can afford it—one to keep on display and the other to accent shirts, jeans, or caps and truly be the envy of onlookers. Others can never justify breaking in a pair of fresh Jordans and will keep shelves dedicated to the prized pairs. When retail prices of limited edition shoes usually start at least two hundred dollars a pair (if one is lucky enough to get them retail), it’s no wonder why certain sneakers never hold a pair of feet.

Forget hundreds for rare sneakers. Can you imagine spending thousands or even tens of thousands on a pair of sneakers? To set itself apart in the sneaker collecting business, one Atlanta store created the most expensive sneaker in the world, but this is no ordinary retail pair. This particular So-Cal (a specialized version of Nike’s Air Force One) is worth a whopping $50,000—the price of a luxury car! This pair has 11 carats of white, yellow, or blue diamonds adorning the exterior. For a fraction of the cost, a collector can try to grab a pair of Air Zoom Kobe I’s, a Nike Air laser-inscribed by Kobe Bryant, for $11,000. Only twenty-five exist, and counterfeits appear on eBay frequently. The third most expensive pair is a limited edition Nike Dunk Low Pro SB’s inspired by the French artist Bernard Buffet, which can go from $5,000 to $11,000, but good luck finding a pair. There were only 202 pairs created.

If you want to get started collecting sneakers, be sure to have the money to invest. Like any collection, rare pieces will cost a great deal of money, so begin by finding a reputable boutique and get shoes that you like and are in your budget. Buying a pair of So-Cals one day may be any sneakerhead’s dream, but start small and grow your collection to suit your style.

1. According to the passage, a sneakerhead’s behavior does NOT include:
   A. wearing the only owned pair of rare sneakers.
   B. finding exotic sneakers.
   C. waiting in line for rare sneakers.
   D. displaying a sneaker collection.

2. Based on information in the passage, what makes a pair of So-Cals so expensive?
   F. They come with a luxury car.
   G. They are adorned with diamonds.
   H. There are only twenty-five in existence.
   J. The Atlanta-based artist charges high premiums for his work.

3. The passage states that in order to start collecting sneakers, one should do all of the following EXCEPT:
   A. determine if starting a shoe collection is financially feasible.
   B. locate a trustworthy dealer.
   C. purchase shoes based on personal preference.
   D. find the most exotic pair to start the collection.
WORD MEANING

THE SKILL

We've all heard of context clues. You know, those little hints that help us understand other words or phrases in sentences. They may not always exist in texts you normally read, but on the ACT, the words in question always have a clue or two. Think of context clues as puzzle pieces to a little kid's six-piece puzzle. You may be able to look at just one piece and guess what the whole puzzle picture is (no cheating by looking at the picture on the box!), but the more pieces you have in front of you, the more likely you are to be certain of what the entire picture actually is. You'll see an average of one word choice question per passage.

Context clues are generally put into the following categories (check out the acronym below):

GRDE
General Idea—overall ideas in the paragraph lead to word meaning
Restatement—a word or short phrase after the word in question typically surrounded by commas
Antonyms—opposite meaning of the word
Definition—No need to explain the obvious, but a definition hint probably won’t be located in the same sentence as the unknown word
Example—an example explaining the word, such as “Any form of plagiarism, including copying, sharing, or forging someone else’s work, will result in serious penalties”
Synonyms—another word that means the same thing

WHAT THESE QUESTIONS LOOK LIKE

- As used in line 20, the word [“word”] most nearly means...
- In line 20, [“word”] implies that...
- It can be inferred that the author’s use of the word [“word”] in line 22 is meant to convey that...
- As it is used in the passage, the phrase [“quote”] refers to...

STRATEGIES TO WIN

1. Word meaning questions refer back to the passage. You can likely answer them without reading the entire passage (though you need to read lines around the word).
2. Be careful of words in the answer choices that are not PRECISE enough to be the correct answer.
3. Know that often times, the correct answer is probably NOT the most obvious definition, especially if you already recognize the word. You probably can’t answer word meaning questions correctly without looking back at the passage.
4. You may not recognize all of the words in the choices even if you know the likely meaning from the context. Narrow your choices down to as few options as possible and look at the root word.
WORD MEANING PRACTICE

Recall the time commitment, focus, and frustration spent on those 500 or 1,000 piece puzzles of childhood. Well, students at the University of Economics of Ho Chi Minh City in Vietnam may have been pushed to their limits when making history on September 24, 2011, by setting a new record for the world’s largest jigsaw puzzle. Put together inside an enormous stadium by 1,600 participants, the puzzle pictured a lotus flower with six petals. It took the students 17 hours to divide the puzzle into over 3,000 different sections, and then teams of two fabricated their own very small sections. Once pooled, scenes of jubilation occurred—this excitement lasted during the early morning hours in preparation for the bestowing of the Guinness World Records certificate the next day. During this live TV broadcast of the presentation of the certificate, government officials were treated to a production filled with performance and song. The previous record of 212,332 puzzle pieces set in Singapore in 2002 was shattered by a 551,232 piece puzzle, each measuring just under an inch, amassing to the final scope. When all was said and done, the largest jigsaw record wasn’t about the final size of the puzzle (48 ft. by 76 ft.), but the number of pieces. Over a half million tiny bits and an enormous amount of manpower earned students in Vietnam a record that won’t soon be surpassed.

1. As it is used in line 11, the word pooled most nearly means:
   A. saturated.
   B. compiled.
   C. filled.
   D. hoarded.

2. The word bestowing (line 14) most nearly means:
   F. accomplishing.
   G. establishing.
   H. synchronizing.
   J. bequeathing.

3. As it is used in the passage, the phrase “amassing to the final scope” (line 20) refers to:
   A. the miniscule pieces.
   B. the vastness of the project.
   C. the massive program created for live TV.
   D. the assembled jigsaw.

4. It can be inferred that the author’s use of the word jubilation in line 12 is meant to convey:
   F. the students’ pure elation.
   G. the sense of relief for the participants.
   H. the hindrances experienced through the process.
   J. the anxiety felt during the night.
Nicole walked down the block by herself, nervous and on the edge of shaking. There they stood in the distant blackness, just like they said they would be. They hadn’t noticed her coming yet; she still had a chance to turn back. Something didn’t feel right about this.

Growing up, Nicole had it sort of rough. She thought so, at least. She grew up to be a good kid, though, and kept herself away from trouble and knew the difference between right and wrong. She had divorced parents and only got to see her dad on special occasions. Her mom had to work two jobs, so she walked home from school alone, made herself a dinner of Lucky Charms or Cheetos, played with her always-excited-to-see-her dog, and only had to make it look like she had done her homework by opening some books and pulling out the same notebook every night just to avoid the possibility of a hassle. She was a smart kid and once had dreams of being a veterinarian because of her love for animals, but she didn’t really put much effort into school anymore, so her grades sat around D’s—her mom was too busy to notice bad report cards. Nicole sometimes wondered, was it the grades her mom didn’t care about, or was it Nicole?

She could start to see how many there really were as her walking slowed to a crawl, still at least a half a block away from the group. There were about ten people—a lot more than expected—in dark hoodies in front of the house she was destined for. They still hadn’t noticed her yet, but she knew they were there for her. Her heart fought through the pounding and warned for a split second—there were people waiting for her! She couldn’t remember the last time even one, let alone ten, people anticipated her arrival.

She never had a knack for making friends; she was the antisocial type. She did her own thing at school and sat at the lunch table with the other rejects, rarely saying anything to those sitting at the other end from her. How embarrassing! She knew what her place was at school, and even though these outcasts invited her over to sit with them, asked her questions about herself from a few seats down, and reached out to her, she wouldn’t dare be associated with those people any more than she already was. What would everyone else think? She was a closed door and it would have to take someone special to open her back up.

Two more people came out from around the side of the house and slammed the door behind them. The light from the streetlight caught the side of their faces—she didn’t recognize those two guys. In fact, most of the shady figures had builds and heights of guys; only a few were small enough to be girls. This made her even tenser. What was going on? Was she missing something? Was this something more than what she thought?

Nicole felt like she had been missing something for a long time now, so when three of the tougher girls from school came up to her locker and started talking to her, she felt good. Really good. This could be what she was searching for all along. She was told to sit at their table during lunch, and she was happy to do it. She felt anxious to see where this would lead. After a couple weeks, they told her to come by their friend’s house late one Saturday to hang out. She felt accepted. She could easily assimilate to these girls with just a bit of effort—dressing like them with baggy sweats and hoodies and acting tough wouldn’t be that hard.

“What’s up?” one of the guys said as the entire group caught notice of her approaching.

“’Sup, Nic.” She knew that voice. It was one of the girls from school.

“Hey.” Nicole mustered up the deep, gruff voice she had mastered at the lunch table.

“So we gonna do this?” one of the unknown guys asked the group. “Come on, then. We wasted enough time waiting for her.”

Most of the group moved to a few cars parked in the street. Two of the girls from school moved toward Nicole and weakly hugged her. “Listen,” one of them said to Nicole. “They want to know if you’re cool, so if you want to hang out with us, you gotta do something to prove you want in.”

Nicole’s eyes darted to the filling cars, engines roaring and bass rupturing the otherwise serene night. Her fingers worked the house key in her hoodie’s front pocket. Was she ready to do what these people told her to do, whatever it was, just to be accepted? Was this the way it worked? Would this be Nicole’s story? She clutched the sweaty key in her pocket, thought of her dog sadly waiting for her at home, and hesitated.
1. According to the passage, which of the following occurred?
   A. The main character refused to join the group in the car.
   B. The main character’s mother purposely neglected her.
   C. The main character resembled her new friends’ look and attitude.
   D. The main character continually rejected all offers of friendship.

2. The word *assimilate* in paragraph six (lines 53-64) most nearly means:
   F. conjoin.
   G. coordinate.
   H. comply.
   J. conform.

3. All of the following were clearly identified in the passage as the reactions the main character experiences during and preceding her meeting with her new friends EXCEPT:
   A. sweaty hands.
   B. nervous trembling.
   C. genuine appreciation.
   D. reduced pace.

4. Which of the following statements best describes the main point of the passage?
   F. Teens in high school face rejection and prejudice regularly.
   G. Teens from divorced families face greater challenges with socialization than those with conventional families.
   H. The attractions of making new friends and feeling wanted can cause teens to do things out of character.
   J. Groups of teenagers gather at night to commit illegal activities.

5. As it is used in line 81, the word *rupturing* most nearly means:
   A. dispersing.
   B. disintegrating.
   C. disrupting.
   D. circumventing.

6. The primary purpose of paragraphs two, four, and six is to inform the reader of:
   F. background information about the main character’s life.
   G. the main character’s refusal to make friends at her lunch table.
   H. information about the main character’s family.
   J. events that have defined the main character.

7. The passage mentions all of the following as reasons for the main character’s lack of friends EXCEPT:
   A. her antisocial nature.
   B. her poor grades.
   C. her concern about others’ opinions.
   D. her own opinion of others.

8. According to the passage, which of these is NOT mentioned as part of the main character’s after school routine?
   F. completing her homework.
   G. playing with her dog.
   H. choosing her own dinner.
   J. using her house key to let herself in.

9. The main idea of the last paragraph (lines 80-87) is to illustrate how:
   A. the main character successfully conformed to the others in the group.
   B. the use of rhetorical questions can strengthen the reader’s understanding of a situation.
   C. the main character’s dog is her only friend.
   D. the main character is uncomfortable about her next step.

10. When the author describes the main character as “a closed door” (lines 42-43), he most nearly means that she:
    F. keeps her door locked when friends come to visit her at her home.
    G. consistently refuses to let others get to know her.
    H. halfheartedly rejects friendly advances.
    J. challenges others to become acquainted with her.
**AUTHOR’S APPROACH**

**THE SKILL**

We’ve all been there—asking parents for a later curfew. When you’re planning out how to ask, you’re essentially working on author’s approach. You probably try to butter them up first by doing things like cleaning up around the house more than normal or being extra nice for a while, all in preparation for the big conversation. Maybe you try to persuade them by saying how responsible you are, how good your grades are, or simply how your older brother or sister gets to stay out later. Whether you succeed is not the concern here; it’s the way you approach the topic. You think about how to handle to situation, and that’s what authors do on paper, too. Authors have certain approaches in getting you to believe in their purposes: make you sympathetic to their ideas, get your blood boiling, make you think about a cause, or just plain make you feel something. Author’s approach is an inference-type question, and the ACT will likely have an average of one or two author’s approach questions per reading passage.

**WHAT THESE QUESTIONS LOOK LIKE**

- The author’s overall message in the passage is that she...
- The narrator’s point of view is that of...
- Which of the following did the author clearly intend to show through the writing of the passage?
- Considering the passage as a whole, which of the following best describes the narrator’s attitude toward [something]?
- Which of the following statements represents a conclusion drawn by the author of the passage?
- The author’s tone throughout the passage can best be described as...

**STRATEGIES TO WIN**

1. If you can determine the author’s approach and discover the main idea, you have a very good chance of doing well on these inference-type questions.
2. You must read carefully in order to understand the approach and purpose of the author.
3. Look for words that can reveal the author’s purpose (for example, words like should, must, or we are often used when trying to persuade).
AUTHOR’S APPROACH PRACTICE

Curfew laws have been implemented and enforced for as long as teens can remember, but many think that local governments are taking over something that should be decided upon by parents. The biggest changes of late in curfew legislation focus on kids at or under the age of sixteen, with cities like Charlotte and Chicago leading the charge.

Though the exact curfew times vary slightly by age and day of the week, some oppose the more stringent policy. “Why should I have to be in early when it’s other kids doing bad stuff? I’m only hanging out with my friends; I’m not doing anything wrong!” expressed one teen from Chicago. The new laws seem unfair to some, but they are necessary in order to keep kids safe. Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Chief Rodney Monroe stated, “When you look at the opportunities for our kids to get themselves in trouble either by being a victim of a crime or a perpetrator of a crime, it’s between the hours of 10 p.m. and 6 a.m. Unless we look to hold ourselves responsible and parents responsible, bad things are going to continue to happen with our young people.”

Teenagers think they are the target of unjust laws that attempt to quell fun and socializing, but crime is reaching younger and younger ages. As Monroe stated, it isn’t always about the kids who are breaking the law; laws like this help protect potential victims as well.

1. Considering the passage as a whole, all of the following describe the author’s attitude toward curfew laws EXCEPT:
   A. curfew laws, like those imposed in Charlotte and Chicago, are necessary for citizens.
   B. curfew laws protect the innocent.
   C. as more crime is committed by youths, more laws are necessary.
   D. parents, not local governments, should decide curfew.

2. The author can best be characterized as:
   F. someone who values teens’ safety and well-being.
   G. a law enforcement official who works with youths.
   H. the parent of a teenager who has a strict curfew.
   J. an objective news reporter for the crime section.

3. Which of the following is most likely the author’s purpose for offering a quotation from an official (lines 16-21)?
   A. Teens are more likely to agree to a new curfew law if police approve.
   B. The reader will be more likely to obey curfew laws.
   C. Providing the exact words of an official strengthens the author’s argument.
   D. It is an opportunity to blame parents for the misbehavior of youths.
MAKING INFERENCES ASSESSMENT

Organic soy milk, free-range poultry, and kalescucumber juice, anyone? Certainly eating healthy and staying in shape can help us to avoid diseases and live longer. Nearly all fast food restaurants are moving toward healthier options to help us eat better by including real fruit smoothies, salads, and grilled chicken on their menu, but others have been bucking the trend. It’s great to have healthy options, but when visiting a fried chicken restaurant, is our intention really to eat healthy? Can we fault the restaurant for offering fried chicken? Fast food restaurants are facing some of the greatest criticisms for unhealthy offerings while home cooks are innovating some of the most creative foods yet avoiding the media coverage. Those restaurants, critics claim, should bear the brunt of responsibility when it comes to obesity in the country, but it all boils down to our own choices, not availability.

Throw two strips of bacon, two slices of cheese, and some special sauce between two boneless fried chicken breasts and you have the KFC Double Down. Yes, that’s fried chicken substituting for bread in this sandwich that seems like it could have come from Frankenstein’s kitchen. Though “the Double Down generated more buzz than any test market item in KFC history,” according to Yum Brands (parent company to KFC, Pizza Hut, and Taco Bell), the hubbub did not translate into sales. Some speculate that the highly critical media coverage deterred customers from ever trying the culinary creation; others believe that American appetites never wanted the product, preferring healthier options. More likely, it’s an item that people indulge in only occasionally for fun.

Maybe Yum Brands learned something from the KFC Double Down test. Its newest innovation at Pizza Hut, the Hot Dog Stuffed Crust Pizza, was only unveiled at UK restaurants; the company has no plans to bring the taste to the US, so if an American wants to try a hot dog stuffed pizza, it may have to be made in one’s own kitchen.

Perhaps some critics should take note of just how popular certain fatty food innovations are. People flock to restaurants and stands that fry up desserts, such as the famous fried Twinkie, fried Snickers, or fried pie. Home chefs prepare Krispy Kreme burgers (a burger with a donut bun) and deep fried turkey, so there must be some draw to these fatty masterpieces. The general population isn’t eating like this every day; therefore, these uber-fatty foods are likely considered novelty items. The entertainment value of serving a hot dog/pizza or burger/donut combination or any other crazy food concoction creates a carefree feeling and allows people to play with their food.

One group has created a huge following on YouTube for how it plays with food. With over 6 million subscribers to its channel and over 800 million video views, Epic Meal Time creates the ultimate food monstrosities to satisfy the group’s cravings for bacon, candy, and everything in between. Shot in July 2010, their first video, “Fast Food Pizza,” showed how “two men created a pizza more disgusting than we ever thought possible in an attempt to take their tastebuds on an incredible journey.” The creation consisted of a large cheese pizza acting as a crust for piled-on fries, onion rings, popcorn chicken, three hamburgers, and other fast foods all covered with mozzarella cheese. Epic Meal Time makes it a point to display a running total of fat and calories in its creations (the fast food pizza had 286 grams of fat and 5,210 calories), and with cheers and high fives often seen in the background, the group creates truly epic food events for each of its culinary inventions.

Epic Meal Time has taken unhealthy to the next level, and though its members may eventually regret their eating choices, there is no denying the entertainment value of guys creating and eating monstrosities like fast food lasagna, candy tacos, and a supersized take on the Double Down. Having foods like the Hot Dog Stuffed Crust Pizza available may draw incredible amounts of criticism, but we all have a choice in what we eat. It isn’t McDonald’s fault that Americans have grown bigger. If you want to eat healthy, enjoy your salad and fruit smoothie. If you want that bacon burger, go ahead and enjoy that, too.

Food has become more than nourishment; it’s also entertainment and novelty for many people who don’t think Double Downs are what’s wrong with the world.
1. It can be reasonably inferred from the passage that the author would agree with which of the following statements?

A. Responsible adults should not choose unhealthy foods.
B. It is the fault of the individual consumer for gaining weight.
C. Restaurants like KFC should not continue to introduce unhealthy menu items in the US.
D. The KFC Double Down is a delicious sandwich.

2. The author’s tone throughout the passage can best be described as:

F. frantic.
G. nostalgic.
H. candid.
J. desperate.

3. In lines 32-33, the author suggests that Yum Brands learned that:

A. to introduce over-the-top menu items in a health-conscious nation can be a poor decision.
B. the KFC Double Down was unsuccessful in test markets.
C. Pizza Hut required a menu item that was as unique as KFC’s Double Down.
D. American tastes would not enjoy a hot dog and pizza creation.

4. The information in lines 66-67 most strongly implies that members of Epic Meal Time:

F. celebrate their creations.
G. revel in eating the entire mountain of food.
H. show off for the sake of being on YouTube.
J. rejoice in eating high calorie foods for subsequent intense work outs.

5. As it is revealed in the passage, the author’s attitude toward novelty food is one of:

A. faint concern.
B. exasperated pleading.
C. warm amusement.
D. unbridled anticipation.

6. The passage indicates that which of the following is an important factor when creating novelty foods?

F. Media coverage.
G. Availability to the public.
H. Unconventional cooking methods or ingredient combinations.
J. Public demand.

7. Based on information in the passage, the most reasonable inference that can be made about the Epic Meal Time group is that:

A. they seek fame and fortune.
B. they enjoy creating over-the-top foods.
C. they are sponsored by fast food companies.
D. they provide a fat counter on their videos to caution viewers.

8. The phrase “from Frankenstein’s kitchen” (lines 22-23) suggests which of the following?

F. The excitement felt by the creators when finished making the Double Down is synonymous with creating life.
G. Creating the Double Down produced immediate concern for Yum Brands.
H. Using various parts from chicken and pig developed a concoction not suitable for human consumption.
J. The creation of the Double Down was an invention of wild imagination.

9. The author’s overall message in the passage is that:

A. consumers who are obese should avoid fast food.
B. Epic Meal Time, though disgusting, is very entertaining.
C. consumers should have a choice to eat whatever they want and should not be ostracized.
D. novelty food items should be part of every fast food restaurant.

10. The discussion of healthy food choices in the first paragraph (lines 1-17) can function in the passage in all of the following ways EXCEPT:

F. It provides the reader with important background about the history of fast food restaurant menu options and where restaurants are now focused.
G. It enables the reader to understand the author’s disgruntled attitude about health fanatics.
H. It helps create a contrast between healthy options and unhealthy ones.
J. It provides information that will be drawn upon throughout the article about fast food restaurant criticism.
Day 4 - Subject-Verb Agreement, Verb Tense, and Pronoun-Antecedent Agreement Practice

SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT

THE SKILL

Subjects need to agree with their verbs. Okay, so what does that mean, exactly? You know that subjects can be either singular or plural. Well, verbs can also be singular or plural.

WHAT THESE QUESTIONS LOOK LIKE

The songs on Katy Perry’s first pop album was controversial.

3. A. NO CHANGE  
   B. album were  
   C. albums was  
   D. album is

This question is designed to make you think the verb should agree with album. However, the subject is actually the plural noun songs, which makes B the correct answer. Subjects of sentences are not parts of prepositional phrases (this is a common trick on the ACT). In the example above, album is part of the prepositional phrase on Katy Perry’s first pop album. Ignore this phrase to isolate the subject songs.

STRATEGIES TO WIN

It can be tempting to jump straight to the verb—that’s usually all the ACT will underline. But remember, it’s subject-verb agreement. So logically, the first step is to:

1. Find the subject (who or what is performing the action of the sentence?)
2. Then, locate your verb. Keep in mind that there may be more than one verb in a sentence—find the one that directly relates to the subject.
3. Determine if your subject is singular or plural, then select the verb that agrees.

Watch Out! ACT rarely places subjects and verbs side-by-side; that would be way too easy! Instead, they will often include the subject, then insert some additional information, and then give you the verb. They want you to assume that the verb should agree with the noun directly before it, but that may not be the case.
SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT PRACTICE

Teenage Dream

One of today’s most popular and well-known pop (1) stars are Katy Perry. It is surprising, then, that she was not allowed to listen to pop music growing up. Born in 1984 as Katheryn Hudson, Katy grew up in her pastor parents’ church, often performing gospel music. The support of (2) her parents were a contributing factor in the release of her first album, which focused on gospel music. The album was not very successful, though. Craving a larger stage for her vocal and songwriting talents, she changed her name to Katy Perry and moved to Los Angeles, ready to break onto the pop music scene.

Although a few record labels (3) were interested in the singer, at first Katy’s search for stardom was slow. Katy finally hit it big with her first pop studio album released in 2008; the album launched three number-one hits for Perry. A string of hits continued, and in 2010 she set a huge record. Her third album, Teenage Dream, had five consecutive number-one singles, a streak of hits that (4) was last accomplished by Michael Jackson. Perry became the first female artist to set this record. She was also the only musician to spend over a year straight in Billboard’s Top Ten. Her fourth album, Prism, debuted at number one in many countries including the U.S. with another number-one single with “Dark Horse.”

Katy Perry’s controversial lyrics, outlandish costumes, and (5) funky hair continues to keep people’s attention. In addition to her prolific music career, she has launched two fragrances, lent her voice to the Spark movie, and even released her own theatrical documentary, Katy Perry: Part of Me.

1. A. NO CHANGE
   B. stars is Katy Perry.
   C. stars were Katy Perry
   D. stars do include Katy Perry.

2. F. NO CHANGE
   G. her parents are
   H. her parents was
   J. her parents have been

3. A. NO CHANGE
   B. was interested
   C. is interested
   D. were interesting

4. F. NO CHANGE
   G. are last accomplished by Michael Jackson.
   H. Michael Jackson was last accomplished by.
   J. were last accomplished by Michael Jackson.

5. A. NO CHANGE
   B. funky hair continue
   C. funky hair is continuing
   D. funky hair are continued
THE SKILL

Verb tense tells us when the action of a story takes place. In general, try to avoid switching verb tenses. In other words, if a story is about the past, use all past tense verbs. It's pretty much that simple.

Now, there are times when verb tense shift is okay. Take a graduation speech, for example—the speaker may spend part of the speech discussing the last four years of high school (past tense), then switch to what lies ahead (future tense).

WHAT THESE QUESTIONS LOOK LIKE

Centuries ago, Friday the thirteenth was viewed as a sinister day. Nowadays, most people (2) faced the day with very little apprehension.

2. A. NO CHANGE
   B. will have faced
   C. will be facing
   D. face

This is an instance when tense shift is acceptable. Although the first sentence uses the present tense verb was viewed, the term nowadays in the second sentence indicates the use of the present tense verb face (choice D).

STRATEGIES TO WIN

Notice the tense of the other verbs in the paragraph. Usually, the verbs should be written in the same tense. Also, look for some time-order clues that will provide hints as to the tense in which the passage should be written:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PAST TENSE</th>
<th>PRESENT TENSE</th>
<th>FUTURE TENSE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yesterday/last week/last month</td>
<td>Currently</td>
<td>Tomorrow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Earlier</td>
<td>Nowadays</td>
<td>later</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Previously</td>
<td>Presently</td>
<td>In the days/weeks/years ahead...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Watch Out! The ACT is counting on you cutting corners and only reading the underlined portions of the English section. If you take this route, it is going to hurt you, especially when it comes to verb tense. You need to skim the ENTIRE passage to figure out when the story takes place.
VERB TENSE PRACTICE

Friday the Thirteenth

Friday is usually a day people look forward to, marking the end of the work or school week and the beginning of a fun, relaxing weekend. However, the upbeat tone of the typical Friday (1) tended to fade when the Friday falls on the thirteenth of the month.

The ominous atmosphere of Friday the thirteenth (2) has been catching on in the eighteenth century. Since then, superstitious tales of horrific events taking place on that day (3) make many people wary of the date. For instance, an earthquake in Turkey on Friday, March 13, 1992, killed over 2,000 people. The sinking of the Costa Concordia cruise ship on Friday, January 13, 2012, (4) results in 32 deaths. Legendary rapper Tupac Shakur was pronounced dead on Friday, September 13, 1996.

In fact, there is even a scientific name for people who have an intense fear of the number thirteen: triskaidekaphobics. Some people even (5) avoid driving, flying, or working on Friday the thirteenth, choosing to play it safe and stay close to home. However, an insurance statistics firm reports that there actually are fewer incidents of fire, car accidents, and theft on Friday the thirteenth compared to other Fridays in a month.

1. A. NO CHANGE
   B. has faded
   C. tends to fade
   D. had been fading

2. F. NO CHANGE
   G. caught on
   H. was catching on
   J. caught on

3. The underlined portion can be replaced with all of the following EXCEPT:
   
   A. have made
   B. will made
   C. often make
   D. can make

4. F. NO CHANGE
   G. resulting
   H. has resulted
   J. resulted

5. A. NO CHANGE
   B. avoided
   C. will be avoiding
   D. have been avoiding
PRONOUN-ANTECEDENT AGREEMENT

THE SKILL
What word do you see within the word pronoun? That’s right—noun! So of course, the job of a pronoun is to refer back to an existing noun (someone or something). We call this the antecedent. Just as nouns can be singular or plural, so can pronouns. It’s only common sense, then, that pronouns should be the same in number (as well as the same in gender) as the nouns they refer to.

WHAT THESE QUESTIONS LOOK LIKE
A citizen can use (5) their right to vote to change controversial laws.  
5. A. NO CHANGE
   B. its
   C. his
   D. his or her

In this sentence, the right to vote belongs to a singular person of an unknown gender, making D the correct answer.

STRATEGIES TO WIN
These steps are actually quite similar to those outlining subject-verb agreement:
1. Find the pronoun.
2. Find your antecedent (Ask yourself this: to whom or what does this pronoun refer? You may need to look around a bit).
3. Determine if your antecedent is:
   a. Singular or plural
   b. Masculine or feminine (or neither)
   c. Possessive or not possessive
4. If the pronoun and antecedent agree, select NO CHANGE. If not, choose the option that agrees in both gender and number (as well as possessive/not possessive).

Watch Out! Often times, ACT will underline the pronoun, but not its antecedent. Alone, the pronoun may sound okay, but it does not agree with its antecedent. Another way the test tries to throw you off is to separate the pronoun from the antecedent—you may have to look far away from the pronoun to the noun to which it refers.
PRONOUN-ANTECEDENT AGREEMENT PRACTICE

Profanity Prohibited in Public

The use of profanity is certainly frowned upon in schools and in the presence of adults. One Massachusetts town, though, became so offended by the use of profanity in public that (1) they decided to make it against the law.

Actually, an ordinance prohibiting the use of curse words had been on the books since 1968 in Middlebury, Massachusetts, but (2) it was never enforced. By June of 2012, though, the town’s police chief convinced the city council to impose a fine to try to curb loud, profanity-laden conversations held by teenagers in the town’s public parks and downtown area.

Since then, residents have expressed mixed reactions. Many adults and small business owners are relieved, hoping that (3) it will get through to teenagers and help them to watch their language. Others, however, feel that the law will be ineffective. Many teens in particular feel that (4) their age group is being unfairly targeted.

Of course, there is also the issue of constitutionality. Some lawyers anticipate that the law will be questioned on the basis of the First Amendment, which guarantees the right of free speech, and (5) it is expected of the ordinance to eventually be reversed.

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Day 5 - Subject and Object Pronouns, Adjectives and Adverbs, and Grammar Assessment

**SUBJECT & OBJECT PRONOUNS**

**THE SKILL**

We've already established that pronouns refer back to nouns and that they need to agree in gender and number. Now there's one more aspect of pronouns we need to discuss: In addition to being either singular or plural, and masculine or feminine (or neutral), pronouns can also be categorized as subject pronouns or object pronouns. (Who knew these pesky little words were so complex?)

The *subject* of your sentence is the main person or thing that performs the main action of the sentence. The *object* of your sentence receives the action or is acted upon.

**WHAT THESE QUESTIONS LOOK LIKE**

I am a huge *Twilight* fan. Reading those books is fun for (1).

1. A. NO CHANGE
   B. myself
   C. me
   D. we

Since the pronoun follows a preposition, use an object pronoun. In this case, select *me* (choice C).

**STRATEGIES TO WIN**

1. When trying to figure out whether to use *who* or *whom*, insert *he* or *him*. *He* corresponds with *who* and *him* corresponds with *whom*.

2. After a preposition (*with*, *for*, *between*, etc.), use an object pronoun.

3. Sometimes we select the wrong pronoun when we have a compound subject. To determine which pronoun to use, temporarily ignore the other person.

   **INCORRECT:** Her and Megan waited in line all night for *Twilight* premiere tickets.

   **CORRECT:** She and Megan waited in line all night for *Twilight* premiere tickets.
The “Robsten” Romance

Bella and Edward: The onscreen chemistry between (1) them helped make the four Twilight films box office hits. (2) Us Twilight fans wonder, though, if this chemistry was solely due to the acting chops of the films’ stars, Kristen Stewart and Robert Pattinson. Perhaps the sparks did not take much acting to generate.

The famous couple, (3) who fans referred to as “Robsten,” were not the first pair of actors to find love on the movie set. However, whereas many stars’ relationships find their way into the spotlight, Kristen and Robert tried their best to keep their rumored love private.

In the Twilight films there is tension between Edward and Jacob for Bella’s love. Edward ultimately wins, although both (4) him and Jacob have Bella’s affection at some point. In real life, though, Kristen Stewart’s heart seemed, for a time, to belong to Robert Pattinson; Stewart admitted that their dating was “obvious,” but both actors were evasive when answering questions about one another.

Of course, it was obvious to (5) I and all the other Twilight fans that love blossomed between the real life Bella and Edward. Unfortunately, amid rumors of cheating by Stewart, this became more of a story of love lost than everlasting romance.
ADJECTIVES V. ADVERBS

THE SKILL

Hopefully you’ve heard of adjectives and adverbs before. Years ago, when your teacher was explaining these two parts of speech, you were probably thinking, “When am I ever going to need to know the difference between an adjective and an adverb?” Well, that day has arrived! Now, the ACT won’t actually use the terms adjective or adverb, but it is going to use these types of words to describe something else in a sentence. Your job is going to be to figure out if the words in question are describing someone or something (use an adjective) or if they are describing how, when, or where an action occurs (use an adverb).

WHAT THESE QUESTIONS LOOK LIKE

It is (4) real difficult to believe in the existence of aliens.

4. F. NO CHANGE
   G. real difficulty
   H. difficult really
   J. really difficult

We should use the adjective difficult to describe the pronoun it. The adverb really should be placed in front of difficult to describe HOW difficult it is. J is the correct answer.

STRATEGIES TO WIN

When should you use an adjective, and when should you use an adverb? Follow these steps:

1. Determine which word in the sentence the adjective or adverb is describing.
2. Once you’ve found that word, ask yourself:
   a. Is this word a person or a thing (noun)? If so, choose an ADJECTIVE to describe it.
   b. Is this word an action (verb)? If so, choose an ADVERB to describe it. Remember, adverbs can also describe adjectives or other adverbs.

Watch Out! Adverbs usually end in -ly. But words like very, always, never, and well (among others), can also be considered adverbs because they tell when, how, or to what extent an action occurs.

Similarly, some adjectives, like friendly, lovely, and silly, end in -ly. The -ly suffix is a helpful clue for identifying an adverb, but it isn’t a guarantee.
ADJECTIVES & ADVERBS PRACTICE

Roswell, New Mexico

Nowadays, the name Roswell is synonymous with UFOs. How did this New Mexico quiet town become the center of extraterrestrial speculation? More importantly, what really happened there?

In the summer of 1947, reports circulated of mysteriously discovered debris in the desert outside of Roswell. Military spokespeople explained that they recovered the remnants of a weather balloon. With that explanation, the incident in Roswell faded from public interest for decades simply.

Revived interest in Roswell resulted from an interview conducted with Major Jesse Marcel in 1978, who was present at the scene. He described a military cover-up of a crashed alien spacecraft and actual alien cadavers. A decade later, mortician Glenn Davis added his account of secret military-conducted alien autopsies.

A 1995 internal investigation concluded that the recovered object was, in fact, a top secret air balloon. The accounts of alien autopsies likely were the result of a blatant hoax or unreliable memories. However, there are still plenty of skeptics who believe that whatever occurred in Roswell was out of this world.

1. A. NO CHANGE
   B. New Mexico town quiet became
   C. quiet New Mexico town become
   D. New Mexico town become quietly

2. F. NO CHANGE
   G. debris mysteriously
   H. mysterious debris
   J. debris that was mysterious

3. A. NO CHANGE
   B. the simple incident in Roswell faded from public interest for decades.
   C. the incident in simple Roswell faded from public interest for decades.
   D. the incident in Roswell simply faded from public interest for decades.

4. F. NO CHANGE
   G. Interest revived in Roswell resulted
   H. Revived interest in Roswell resulted
   J. Interest in revived Roswell resulted

5. A. NO CHANGE
   B. were the likely result
   C. likely resulted
   D. like, were the result
Forward This Email

The classic distribution of chain letters and 
scams (1) have become much easier with the invention of 
the internet. How often have you come across an email in 
your inbox that seemed too good to be true, like an 
(2) unbelievable photo, a heartbreakingly charity story, 
or a promise of a windfall of riches? The internet 
helps these hoaxes spread like wildfire.

The most sympathetic type of these internet 
hoaxes (3) involve a fake charity donation. For instance, 
making the rounds since 1997, a popular email promises 
senders that every time they forward the message, Bill 
Gates will either donate money to (4) them or to various 
charities. Similarly, those heartbreaking photos of sick 
children posted on Facebook are usually false. Despite 
the (5) captions accompanying, Facebook does not 
donate a dollar to help the child every time the photo is 
reposted.

Other popular internet hoaxes (6) get popular 
because they promise people a huge financial windfall. 
The Bill Gates email sometimes pledges the recipients of 
the email a check dependent upon the number of times 
(7) he forwards the message. Alas, such a check never 
arrives.

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Some emails are much more harmful, though. Variations of the so-called “Nigerian Email Scheme” have cost unsuspecting Americans billions of dollars. The emails inform them that they are owed a large sum of money. The email instructs readers to reply to the message providing their bank account number, social security number, and other personal sensitive information. This information is then used for identity theft. Some people have even found their bank accounts to be a total drain.

Often times, though, internet hoaxes were simply a contemporary means to spread urban legends. For instance, the Neiman Marcus Cookie Recipe myth, around since the 1940s, has been given new life in recent years. The story goes that a woman asking a waiter at the Neiman Marcus Café in Houston for the recipe of the delicious chocolate chip cookie she had just ordered, instructing her to add the charge to her bill. She thought the recipe cost $2.50, but was shocked to receive a bill for $250. In revenge, supposedly, she wrote an email containing the secret recipe, hoping to expose it to the world for free. It is unsubstantiated but lives on through cyberspace.

The internet is certainly an efficient and often entertaining mechanism for distributing information, but when it comes to enticing emails, the old saying, “if it sounds too good to be true, it probably is,” is spot-on.
Day 6 - Sentence Fragments, Run-On Sentences, and Misplaced Modifiers Practice

**SENTENCE FRAGMENTS**

**THE SKILL**

A sentence must do/have three things:
- Express a complete thought
- Contain a subject (a person or thing)
- Contain a verb (what that person or thing is/is doing)

If a “sentence” is missing any of these three things, it is not actually a sentence—it’s an imposter! A sentence fragment may look like a sentence; it begins with a capital letter, it ends with a period, and it may even contain a bunch of nouns and verbs. Just like an imposter, it may look legit upon first glance, but upon closer examination, something is missing.

**WHAT THESE QUESTIONS LOOK LIKE**

2. F. NO CHANGE
   - He walked into a car dealership dressed in a suit and tie
   - H. Walked into a car dealership dressed in a suit and tie
   - J. Dressed in a suit and tie, walking into a car dealership

The underlined portion is missing a subject. Choice G correctly adds a subject, allowing the sentence to contain both a subject and a verb and to express a complete thought.

**STRATEGIES TO WIN**

First, you need to be able to recognize a fragment. When looking at what appears to be a complete sentence, ask yourself:
- Does it express a complete thought?
- Does it contain a subject (a person or thing)?
- Does it contain a verb (what that person or thing is/is doing)?

If you cannot answer YES to all three questions, you have a fragment.

Once you have spotted a fragment, you have three ways to fix it. You can either:
- Join the fragment with an existing sentence, or
- Add in the missing words, or
- Take out some words
SENTENCE FRAGMENTS PRACTICE

The Imposter

Vincent Richardson reported for duty at a Chicago police station. **Telling the other officers that** he was being transferred for the day from another police district. Richardson spent the next five hours on a **typical patrol. Driving around the city with his new partner, making traffic stops, and even handcuffing a suspect. Just a typical day for a Chicago police officer.**

Upon returning to the station, though, another officer became suspicious of the fact that Richardson did not have a badge or gun. Soon after, **the shocking discovery** that Vincent Richardson was not a Chicago police officer. **In fact, he was not even an adult.**

Only fourteen years old!

It was later discovered that Richardson had been part of a police cadet program for Chicago youth. Perhaps he enjoyed the experience so much that he wanted to play the role of a police officer for a day. However, impersonating a police officer is a serious crime. **Causing Richardson to serve a month in jail, and he was sentenced to probation thereafter.**

By the time he was seventeen years old, Richardson had several more encounters with the police, including arrests for grand theft auto and possession of illegal firearms.

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RUN-ON SENTENCES

THE SKILL

Several complete thoughts within one sentence must be separated in some way. You have three options (only pick one, please):

- Divide the run-on into two (or more) complete sentences. Put a period between the two (or more) complete thoughts. Super simple.
- Insert a comma + a conjunction (never a comma alone) between the two complete thoughts.
- Insert a semicolon between the two complete thoughts (review semicolons on page 54).

WHAT THESE QUESTIONS LOOK LIKE

Wonderstruck is a fragrance by singer (1) Taylor Swift it capitalizes on her vast fanbase amongst teenage girls.

1. Which of the following choices would NOT correct the underlined portion?
   A. Taylor Swift, it capitalizes
   B. Taylor Swift. It capitalizes
   C. Taylor Swift, and it capitalizes
   D. Taylor Swift, it capitalizes

A, B, and C are all options for correcting the run-on sentence. D is not acceptable (and thus our answer) because a comma alone cannot be used to join two complete thoughts.

STRATEGIES TO WIN

Remember your three options for correcting a run-on sentence:

- Period
- Semicolon
- Comma + conjunction

Check your work: Only use one of the options above if everything before the period/semicolon/comma + conjunction is a complete thought, AND if everything after the period/semicolon/comma + conjunction is a complete thought.

Watch Out! Many students (and adults) incorrectly try to combine two complete thoughts by joining them with a comma. This is incorrect! Only use a comma between two complete thoughts if you combine it with a conjunction (and remember, the comma is placed before the conjunction).
RUN-ON SENTENCES PRACTICE

Fearless

Country cross-over artist Taylor Swift combines girl-next-door charm (1) with country roots and catchy tunes. After moving with her family to Nashville at age fourteen, Swift became the youngest songwriter hired by Sony/ATV Music. Soon after, she released (2) her debut album the single “Our Song” made her the youngest singer-songwriter of a #1 country song. In 2006, Swift was also nominated for a Grammy for Best New Artist.

Two years later, Swift released her (3) second album, Fearless and she went on to become the youngest Grammy winner ever for Album of the Year. Fearless became the most-awarded country album in history. Her acceptance speech after becoming the first country artist to win an MTV Video Music Award was overshadowed by (4) Kanye West’s interruption Swift maintained her poise and won even more fans.

Taylor Swift shows no signs of slowing down. Her third album, Speak Now, sold one million copies in its first week. Red and 1989 have been smash, number-one records, and she has also (5) ventured into films and even released her own fragrance, Wonderstruck. Taylor Swift made her mark on the world at a young age and will likely continue to inspire her fans for years to come.

1. A. NO CHANGE
   B. with country roots, and catchy tunes.
   C. with country roots. And her catchy tunes.
   D. with country roots, and she writes catchy tunes.

2. Which of the following changes to the underlined portion would NOT be acceptable?
   A. her debut album; the single “Our Song”
   B. her debut album, and the single “Our Song”
   C. her debut album. The single “Our Song”
   D. her debut album, the single “Our Song”

3. A. NO CHANGE
   B. second album, Fearless, and she went on
   C. second album, Fearless; and she went on
   D. second album, Fearless. And she went on

4. The underlined portion can be replaced with all of the following EXCEPT:
   F. Kanye West’s interruption, but Swift maintained
   G. Kanye West’s interruption; however, Swift maintained
   H. Kanye West’s interruption, Swift maintained
   J. Kanye West’s interruption, though Swift maintained

5. A. NO CHANGE
   B. ventured into films, and even released
   C. ventured into films and she even released
   D. ventured into films; even released
MISPLACED MODIFIERS

THE SKILL

Imagine watching a cooking show when you catch the host say, “I have to cook spaghetti sauce in my dirty clothes!” Fair enough, but you probably don’t want something cooked in a bubbling pot of dirty clothes. How about waking up in the night and exclaiming, “I just saw a raccoon outside in my pajamas!” How did the raccoon get dressed in those? These sentences show misplaced modifiers. A modifier is a group of words that explains or describes something or someone in a sentence. It is only logical that a description should be located close to whatever it is describing. Otherwise, the sentence is confusing and often sounds quite silly.

WHAT THESE QUESTIONS LOOK LIKE

(1) Suzanne Collins read from her book wearing glasses.

1. A. NO CHANGE
   B. From her book wearing glasses, Suzanne Collins read
   C. Suzanne Collins, wearing glasses, read from her book.
   D. Wearing glasses from her book, Suzanne Collins read.

The original sentence implies that the book was wearing glasses. That’s silly! Wearing glasses should be placed near Suzanne Collins (choice C).

STRATEGIES TO WIN

When deciding where to place a modifier:
- Find the phrase that is descriptive (the ACT will usually underline this)
- Figure out who or what that phrase is most logically intended to describe
- Select the option to move the modifier to the place that makes the most sense

After moving a modifier, reread your sentence to make sure the move makes sense.

Watch Out! ACT questions involving misplaced modifiers can be a bit confusing because they give you all sorts of options to move things around. Instead of getting overwhelmed by the answer choices, figure out on your own where you would move the modifier, then select the answer choice that is most similar to what you were going to do.
Hungry for *The Hunger Games*

*The Hunger Games* series has taken the nation by storm. The popular trilogy of books has enchanted teenage and adult fans alike and has even spawned a series of movies. (1) Created by author Suzanne Collins, readers are captivated by the action sequences, romance, and fantasy world. One fascinating aspect of the series that people may overlook, though, is how much it resembles real life.

The story takes place in the fictional land of Panem. (2) The people of twelve districts by the Capitol are controlled and oppressed. In fact, the Capitol forces one boy and one girl from each district (3) to literally fight in the annual Hunger Games competition to the death, which is watched by the population nation-wide, live on television.

(4) Flipping through the channels on her television, the author has said that the inspiration for the story came from blurring together images from reality competitions and news footage of war zones. *The Hunger Games* is more than young adult fiction; it is indirectly a commentary on war, starvation, oppression, and the extent to which our culture values violence as entertainment. Although the fictional world of the books makes it easy for readers to dismiss these real issues, it is important to study the series as a reflection of the very real world around us.
SENTENCE STRUCTURE ASSESSMENT

Paranormal Investigators

When detectives set out to solve a crime, they conduct extensive (1) investigations. Gathering evidence, collecting clues, and interviewing witnesses. Those who believe in the supernatural follow a similar approach. Their hope is to establish a case for the existence of ghosts in haunted places.

Popularized by reality television shows like Ghost Adventures and Paranormal State, (2) viewers, otherwise known as paranormal investigation, have an increasing fascination with ghost hunting. These programs show investigators’ attempts to prove the (3) existence of ghosts through the use of tools including electromagnetic field meters, digital thermometers, night vision camcorders, and audio equipment.

Typically, ghost hunters will begin by traveling to a location that is (4) believed to be haunted they will research the history of the location and interview witnesses. From there, they will conduct their own investigation. (5) A team of investigators will search the premises for clues.

1.  A. NO CHANGE  
    B. investigations; gathering evidence, collecting clues, and interviewing witnesses.  
    C. investigations gathering evidence, collecting clues, and interviewing witnesses.  
    D. investigations and gathering evidence, collecting clues, and interviewing witnesses.

2.  F. NO CHANGE  
    G. viewers, having an increasing fascination with paranormal investigation, are otherwise known as ghost hunters.  
    H. paranormal investigators, otherwise known as ghost hunters, have increased viewers fascination with the supernatural.  
    J. paranormal investigators, having an increasing fascination with ghost hunting, are otherwise known as ghost hunters.

3.  A. NO CHANGE  
    B. existence of ghosts; through the use of tools  
    C. existence of ghosts; through the use of tools  
    D. existence of ghosts, through the use of tools

4. The underlined portion can be corrected by all of the following options EXCEPT:

    F. believed to be haunted; they will research
    G. believed to be haunted, where they will research
    H. believed to be haunted. They will research
    J. believed to be haunted and they will research

5. The writer would like to add the phrase “that indicate the presence of ghosts.” This phrase should be placed:

    A. after the word investigators  
    B. after the word clues  
    C. after the word team  
    D. after the word premises
These encounters are usually recorded using special night-vision cameras. Special audio equipment of the typical human is also used to try to detect sounds that are out of the range. Moreover, ghost hunters also use meters to detect the presence of unexplained electromagnetic fields. As well as digital thermometers to measure sudden cold spots. When the team gathers multiple unexplained pieces of evidence, they are often confident that they have, in fact, witnessed the presence of the supernatural.

(9) Despite the popularity of this television genre, there is currently no scientific evidence that proves the existence of ghosts. In fact, some scientists have attempted to debunk the “evidence” found by ghost hunters. Whereas some ghost hunters cite low electromagnetic fields, unexplained cool spots, and sudden movements and vibrations as indications of the paranormal. Others argue that these natural phenomena simply make people subconsciously feel frightened and nervous.

(11) A scientist in England, to prove this theory, Dr. Richard Lord set out to create his own experiment. During a concert, unbeknownst to the audience, scientists filled the concert hall with inaudible sound waves during several of the songs. Many audience
members reported feeling uneasy, chilly, and frightened during the times when the sound waves were used.

(12) The audience could not hear the sound waves and were not fully aware of their presence, they could subconsciously feel that something in the room was different. Dr. Lord and his team concluded that the reason people suddenly feel frightened may have more to do with the presence of sound waves more so than the presence of ghosts perhaps places believed to be “haunted” simply have more undetectable waves, magnetic pulls, or temperature changes. However, the results of this study and those like it only suggest an alternative to (14) the presence of ghosts. But do not dismiss their existence entirely.

(15) While scientific evidence supporting the existence of ghosts may be weak, polls show that approximately one-third of Americans believe that ghosts exist. In addition to watching the search for the paranormal on their televisions, those interested in the supernatural can embark on ghost tours offered in cities nationwide. Some tours allow participants to not only visit haunted places, but to use equipment similar to that used by professional ghost hunters. Even people who are a bit skeptical can find these tours to be at the very least amusing and perhaps spookier than they anticipated.

12. The sentence can be corrected by all of the following EXCEPT:
   F. Adding the word Although to the beginning of the sentence (lowercasing the)
   G. removing the comma after presence
   H. inserting the conjunction but after the word presence (leaving the comma in place)
   J. replacing the comma after presence with a semicolon, then adding the word however,

13. A. NO CHANGE
    B. presence of ghosts; perhaps places
    C. presence of ghosts, perhaps Places
    D. presence of ghosts, perhaps places

14. F. NO CHANGE
    G. the presence of ghosts; but do
    H. the presence. Ghosts do
    J. the presence of ghosts but do

15. All of the following changes to the underlined portion are acceptable EXCEPT:
   A. Scientific evidence supporting the existence of ghosts may be weak, but polls show
   B. Though scientific evidence supporting the existence of ghosts may be weak, polls show
   C. Though scientific evidence supporting the existence of ghosts may be weak, but polls show
   D. Scientific evidence supporting the existence of ghosts may be weak; however, polls show
READING FINAL ASSESSMENT

How do you play your video games? Long before the Halo, Call of Duty, and Grand Theft Auto franchises saturated the video game console market of today, characters like Mario, Sonic, and Link ushered in the golden age of home gaming. And even before Nintendo and Sega ensured that children of the ‘80s hijacked the living room TV, kids and teens who wished to play a video game likely took a trip with pockets jangling with quarters to the neighborhood arcade. The transition from arcades to home systems was not easy for some arcade rats to resist; the change was insurmountable, much like the changes slowly taking place today. Gamers today have so many choices when it comes to what they want to play and on what console they want to play it, but with the prevalence of smartphones and tablets, a new breed of video game technology threatens to take over the market in the coming years. It’s quite likely that you have already supported the change with a purchase or free download on your phone.

Apps like Angry Birds may not cost much to download, and social games like Draw Something don’t charge much for in-game extras, but the profits app companies are seeing are astronomical compared to the cost of producing one of these digital downloads. The relatively simple process of creating an app doesn’t require an enormous studio and team of developers working for years on a product like console game companies do. This allows for more and more small businesses and everyday people to develop apps, which means a growing market and endless ideas. This is starting to cut into sales of major video game production companies like EA and Rockstar as well as Nintendo, Microsoft, and Sony by creating a new market of casual gamers who are content with being entertained for a couple of minutes a few times a day on phones instead of hours at a time stuck in front of a TV or computer.

As app platforms (smartphones and tablets) move into more hands and houses, video game companies are taking notice. Rumors exist that Nintendo lowered the price of its handheld 3DS due to Apple’s increasing encroachment on the gaming market with the iPhone and iPad. Though there can be a number of reasons why prices on a handheld or console might decrease, it is interesting to note the prevalence of smartphones and the emergence of significant app growth at similar times. (Simply look at the camera industry. Sales are shrinking in this market, and the reason for it is largely suspected to be that the general public doesn’t need video or still cameras anymore—people have this technology on their phones they already have in their pockets.) A casual gamer may think twice about the purchase of a handheld system and the cost of games if he or she already has a smartphone when a game only costs 99 cents, thus leading to the unnessiness of video game companies.

For a while, there were rumors that in order to keep hold of their shrinking revenues, Microsoft and Sony would block the resale of games in their Xbox One and PS4 consoles. Game developers applauded the buzz, while Paul Raines, CEO of the used video game store GameStop, hoped the rumor had no teeth. Luckily for gamers, their voice changed the companies’ minds. Another reasonable theory for lost revenue is that as technology advances, more and more games are being illegally pirated and copied. One game in particular, Minecraft, is said to have been illegally downloaded more than 106 million times. If the cost of games increases, as they generally do with each new console generation, and the app market continues taking larger percentages of the market, video companies we have grown to love may actually have to make drastic changes to stay alive.

Change is inevitable, and just as arcades became vacant, that home console sitting under your TV may become a memory. Now, just as parents who grew up with Pac-Man tell of the old arcade, this generation will regle its children with stories of a wired controller and discs that fit into a machine. The next generation will likely pull out their phones and play a game of Madden NFL 2025 while walking down the street.

1. The main purpose of the passage is to show that:
   A. beginning an app company can be profitable.
   B. change happens in all industries.
   C. the video game industry is in the early stages of a major transformation.
   D. casual gamers are taking over the video game market.
2. According to the passage, all of the following are directly related to the profits of major video game companies EXCEPT:

F. video game piracy.
G. the reduction in price of handheld video game units.
H. the cost to produce an app.
J. the increasing number of casual gamers.

7. The passage most strongly suggests that Microsoft and Sony may block used games on their next generation consoles in response to:

A. increased sales at video game resale stores.
B. the alarming rate of piracy.
C. the encouragement of game developers.
D. the predicted increase in price for next generation games.

3. As it is used in line 60, the phrase “had no teeth” most nearly means:

A. there is nothing to support a claim.
B. something cannot hurt those involved.
C. something will be painful.
D. something will devour competition.

8. In this passage, the author was most likely attempting to:

F. inform readers of the dangers of downloading apps.
G. encourage readers to play their video games on their smartphones and tablets.
H. persuade readers to help stop the changing video game industry.
J. inform readers of the changing video game industry.

4. It can be most reasonably inferred that the author compares cameras to handheld gaming units because:

F. as phone technology advances, cameras in phones are becoming more high tech.
G. hand held gaming units must improve graphics to stay competitive with smartphones.
H. hand held gaming units have cameras built in.
J. hand held gaming units are becoming obsolete.

9. The use of the word rats (line 11) most nearly means:

A. those who inform authorities.
B. rodents known to live in dingy places.
C. an expression of disappointment.
D. kids who frequent a location.

5. Which of the following statements represents a conclusion drawn by the author of the passage rather than a simple statement of fact?

A. The development of an app is less expensive than creating a console game.
B. Camera sales have declined in recent years.
C. The home console will soon be obsolete.
D. Smartphones are becoming more prevalent.

10. It can be reasonably inferred from the passage that video game piracy:

F. will continue to rise in the future if no interventions are instituted.
G. occurs when the availability of a game is low.
H. cannot be stopped as digital downloads become the norm.
J. will be reduced when the next generation consoles are introduced.

6. It can be reasonably inferred from the first paragraph (lines 1-19) that the decline of the arcade began when:

F. gamers beat the arcade game Pac-Man.
G. Mario, Link, and Sonic were introduced to the home TV.
H. arcade patrons ran out of quarters.
J. vermin infested the properties.
ENGLISH FINAL ASSESSMENT

Some Work and All Play
[Paragraph 1]

When searching for a job, many people’s primary focus is on potential salary. (1) Other aspects such as benefits, insurance and vacation time also are important factors. One element of a potential career that is often overlooked, though, is workplace environment. (2) In fact, some of America’s most successful companies can feel more like playgrounds than places of employment.

[Paragraph 2]

One of the world’s most profitable and well-known companies (3) is Google engineers and programmers work demanding, high-powered jobs, and they are rewarded with lucrative salaries. However, what could be a cutthroat, high-pressure environment is actually quite the opposite. Google (4) aimed to create workplaces that foster creativity and encourage camaraderie among employees. For instance, the company takes care of many needs that often draw people away from the office. Instead of racing out during lunch to stop by a café or rushing to drop off dry-cleaning after work, Google offers (5) employees’ complimentary laundry services and unlimited food from its many dining halls. Not only do these perks reduce the stresses of

1. A. NO CHANGE
   B. Other aspects such as, benefits, insurance and vacation time
   C. Other aspects, such as benefits, insurance, and vacation time
   D. Other aspects, such as benefits, insurance, and vacation time,

2. Which replacement for the underlined portion would best express the belief that work and play are often not closely associated with one another?
   F. Of course,
   G. Surprisingly,
   H. Obviously,
   J. Undoubtedly,

3. A. NO CHANGE
   B. is Google, engineers
   C. is Google. Its engineers
   D. is Google, where engineers

4. F. NO CHANGE
   G. was aiming
   H. aims
   J. had aimed

5. A. NO CHANGE
   B. employees
   C. employee’s
   D. employee’s
everyday chores, they also encourage employees to stay at
the office with their co-workers. (6) continual
interacting with one another.

[Paragraph 3]

Google’s worldwide offices more closely
resemble playgrounds than traditional office spaces.
There are the famous “nap pods” for rest and relaxation.
The Zurich office has a slide running through the middle,
the Boulder location contains an indoor rock-climbing
wall, and the Netherlands site is marked by an indoor bike
lane. California employees are entertained by the goats
that live on the lawn that keep it neat and trim. [7]

[Paragraph 4]

Another notable company is online retailer
Zappos.com. Paying an average of $13 an hour for call
center employees, jobs at (8) this company is not nearly
as lucrative as those at Google. However, employees
likely enjoy their jobs just as much. Co-workers are
encouraged to recognize one another’s accomplishments
by being provided with a $50 bonus (9) he awards to a
peer. From there, executives award one person an
unconventional Employee of the Month award. The
lucky employee is rewarded with a parade around the
office in his or her honor, a special parking spot, a $150
gift certificate, a superhero cape, and the title of “Hero of
the Month.”

6. F. NO CHANGE
   G. continual interaction
   H. continuous interacting
   J. continually interacting

7. The author is considering adding the following
statement to Paragraph 3:
   Bocce court, a bowling alley, a soccer field, two tennis
courts, a putting green, and a roller hockey rink on the
Google premises all allow employees to recharge and
boost their creativity.

Should the author make this addition?
   A. YES, because it might motivate the audience
to apply for a job at Google.
   B. YES, because it provides specific details that
illustrate Google’s playground-like environment.
   C. NO, because these examples are unrelated to
Google’s success as a company.
   D. NO, because these examples are not as
exciting as the ones already provided in the
paragraph.

8. F. NO CHANGE
   G. these companies are not
   H. this company are not
   J. this company isn’t

9. A. NO CHANGE
   B. they award
   C. they awards
   D. he or she awards
Of course, Zappos doesn’t expect just anyone to become a “hero.” The company screens potential workers very carefully, with an emphasis on individuality and creativity. During the two week training period for potential hires, CEO Tony Hsieh offers trainees $2000 to quit the company. He would rather spend $2000 to get rid of an unmotivated person than invest time and cash training someone who is not fully motivated to work for the company.

Many businesses are following the lead of Google and Zappos, by adding unconventional perks to keep employees motivated and happy. For instance, online retailer ThinkGeek.com has a game room full of videogames, arcade games, and a foosball table. Social network development company Ning, meanwhile, allows workers unlimited vacation time as long as they meet their deadlines. When finished working for the day, three free pints of frozen yogurt, sorbet, and ice cream are given to employees at Ben and Jerry’s. Whoever would pass that up!!