

STAAR Spring 2026 Grade 3 Reading Language Arts Rationales

Item Position	Rationale	
1	Option A is correct	In paragraph 6, the author includes the phrases “want their team to win” and “when their team breaks a rule” to help the reader understand that in this context, <u>admit</u> means “to say something is true” (Definition 1).
	Option B is incorrect	Although sports fans want more people to join their group and cheer for their team, the author does not include context in paragraph 6 to support “to allow into a group” (Definition 2) as the meaning of <u>admit</u> in this context.
	Option C is incorrect	In paragraph 6, the author focuses on the importance of following the rules in sports, which is the opposite of “to let something happen” (Definition 3).
	Option D is incorrect	In paragraph 6, the author focuses on playing sports and does not provide information that is related to hospitals. The author does not include context to support “to accept into a hospital” (Definition 4).

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2	Option A is correct	The claim the author makes throughout the selection is that referees are needed in order to ensure that sports are played correctly (paragraph 1), with respect (paragraphs 2 and 3), safety (paragraphs 4 and 5), and fairness (paragraphs 6–8).
	Option B is incorrect	Although it is likely helpful for a referee to have played the sport before, this idea is not discussed by the author in the selection.
	Option C is incorrect	The author supports the idea that referees help “keep players safe” and “make sure injured players stop playing and get help” in paragraphs 4 and 5. However, this is not the main claim of the entire selection.
	Option D is incorrect	In paragraph 9, the author states that referees “make the game more enjoyable.” However, there is no indication by the author that referees enjoy judging many different sports.

Item Position	Rationale	
3	Option D is correct	In paragraph 5, the author supports the idea that referees care about players by explaining that “they can make sure injured players stop playing and get help,” which means referees will stop a game’s play when they notice a player is injured and needs assistance.
	Option A is incorrect	In paragraph 5, the author shares the number of young players who get hurt each year, “3.5 million,” to explain why referees are needed, not to show that referees care about the players.
	Option B is incorrect	In paragraph 5, the author mentions the number of players out of 10 on a team who will likely get hurt during a season, “one or two of them,” to support the idea that referees are needed. The author does not use this detail to support the idea that referees care about players.
	Option C is incorrect	In paragraphs 4 and 5, the author explains that referees are needed to help keep players safe. However, the statement in paragraph 5, that “referees cannot stop all accidents,” is merely an acknowledgment that some players may still get hurt.

Item Position	Rationale	
4	Option D is correct	The idea that referees make a game more enjoyable is an opinion expressed by the author in paragraph 9. It cannot be proved as true or false.
	Option A is incorrect	In paragraph 1, the detail that referees ensure that players follow the rules is a factual statement by the author that can be proved.
	Option B is incorrect	The author includes information in paragraph 4 that explains that referees are responsible for ensuring players’ safety, which includes watching for hurt players. This is a fact that can be proved.
	Option C is incorrect	In paragraph 7, the author specifies that one of a referee’s responsibilities is to ensure that both teams follow the rules. This is a fact that can be proved.

Item Position	Rationale	
5	Option C is correct	A simile is a figure of speech in which two things are compared using the word “like” or “as.” In these sentences, the author compares a referee to a judge. Judges have a reputation for being impartial. The author uses the simile in paragraph 7 to support the idea that referees must ensure that “both teams get the same treatment.”
	Option A is incorrect	Although judges and referees may be kind, the author does not indicate this in paragraph 7. The paragraph is about how referees fairly assess games to “make sure that both teams play by the rules.”
	Option B is incorrect	In paragraph 7, the author mentions that referees “know the rules of the game better than anyone else.” However, the author uses the simile to show how referees and judges are similar because they have to be fair to both sides.
	Option D is incorrect	Although the author describes some responsibilities of referees in paragraph 7, the author does not include information about the work it takes to become a referee.

Item Position	Rationale	
6	Option B is correct	The prefix <i>dis-</i> means “not” or “none.” In paragraph 8, the author includes the phrases “very angry” and “make too many wrong calls” to help the reader understand that sometimes people do not agree with referees’ decisions.
	Option A is incorrect	A word that means “after” would have a prefix of <i>post-</i> . <i>Dis-</i> means “not” or “none.” Based on the context the author includes in paragraph 8, the reader can determine that some people do not agree with the decisions made by referees.
	Option C is incorrect	A word that includes the meaning “fully” would have a suffix of <i>-ful</i> or <i>-ous</i> . The prefix <i>dis-</i> means “not” or “none.” The author provides context in paragraph 8 that helps the reader understand that some people are not in agreement with the decisions made by referees.
	Option D is incorrect	A word that indicates “again” would include a <i>re-</i> prefix. The prefix <i>dis-</i> means “not” or “none.” Based on the context the author provides in paragraph 8, the word <u>disagree</u> means that sometimes people do not agree with referees’ decisions.

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Item Position	Rationale
7	For SCR items, please refer to the scoring guide.

Item Position	Rationale	
8	Option A is correct	In paragraphs 10 and 11 of the story “Swim Team,” the author depicts how Nick and José help Frankie improve his swimming techniques by advising him to “try using [his] arms” methodically and teaching him “different ways to swim.” Therefore, Frankie will most likely thank Nick and José for their help.
	Option B is incorrect	Nick and José are good swimmers, but the author does not include a suggestion that they will compete against each other.
	Option C is incorrect	Although Frankie struggles to keep up at first, the author includes details about how the advice from his classmates after the warmup helps him improve. This improvement supports the idea that Frankie will not quit but rather continue to hone his skills.
	Option D is incorrect	Although Nick and José seem knowledgeable about swimming, the author does not include any indication in the story to suggest that they become team captains.

Item Position	Rationale	
9	Option C is correct	The term <i>point of view</i> refers to the perspective from which the events in a story are told. In the story "Swim Team," the narrator is Frankie, who uses the first-person pronouns "I," "me," "my," and "us" to share his experience at swim team practice.
	Option A is incorrect	The author uses first-person point of view to tell the story from Frankie's perspective, and although Nick is a key character, he is not the narrator; Frankie is.
	Option B is incorrect	Although the narrator mentions the coach, the coach does not tell the story. The story is told in first-person point of view by Frankie.
	Option D is incorrect	When a story is told using a third-person point of view, the pronouns "he," "she," "him," "her," "they," and "them" may be used. However, the author uses first-person point of view, and the story is narrated by Frankie, not by an outside observer.

Item Position	Rationale	
10	Option A is correct	In paragraph 8 of the story "Swim Team," the author describes Frankie as being slower and less experienced than the other swimmers. This explains the conflict, or Frankie's problem, in the story.
	Option B is incorrect	The author includes the detail where Frankie points out that Nick is his classmate in paragraph 1, not paragraph 8.
	Option C is incorrect	In paragraph 10, not paragraph 8, the author includes details about how Nick helps Frankie improve his swimming, which leads to the resolution.
	Option D is incorrect	Frankie is the narrator of the story. The author uses the character Nick to identify the narrator as Frankie in paragraph 2, not paragraph 8.

Item Position	Rationale	
11	Option A is correct	Onomatopoeia is a type of figurative language where a word or the structure of words is meant to convey how something sounds. The author of the story "Swim Team" uses onomatopoeia in paragraph 11 to draw attention to the moment Frankie "got faster and faster," emphasizing his improved swimming skills.
	Option B is incorrect	Although splashing in a pool can cause the water to spill out, the author does not include idea of "making a mess by the pool" in the story. Therefore, this detail is not likely the reason the author uses onomatopoeia.
	Option C is incorrect	The author uses the phrase "I could hear the splish splash of the water" to describe the sound of the water heard, not the sound of the other swimmers.
	Option D is incorrect	More classmates do eventually join Frankie, Nick, and José, but the author uses the phrases "I could hear the splish splash" and "I got faster and faster" to describe Frankie's excitement, not his friends.

Item Position	Rationale	
12	Option B is correct	In paragraph 5 of the selection from <i>Unlikely Friendships for Kids</i> , the author uses the phrases “to make himself look big” and “to scare away predators” to help the reader understand that the iguana felt threatened and thus made a sound meant to scare away the cat.
	Option A is incorrect	Based on the context the author includes in paragraph 5, it is unlikely that an animal who wanted “to scare away predators” would listen quietly.
	Option C is incorrect	In paragraph 5, the author does not indicate that the iguana was trying to run away to hide. Instead, the iguana was trying to “scare away” the cat.
	Option D is incorrect	Although some animals may display curiosity at the unknown, the context the author includes in paragraph 5 implies that the iguana was acting defensively “to scare away” a perceived predator, not curiously.

Item Position	Rationale	
13	Option D is correct	The author of the selection from <i>Unlikely Friendships for Kids</i> uses a problem-and-solution structure in paragraphs 2 and 3 to explain the problem of a man finding “a small iguana on the street” in New York City a place that was unsafe for a young iguana, and how the man solved the problem by taking “the iguana to a friend” to be cared for.
	Option A is incorrect	Although the man rescued Sobe from the street, he did not keep him. Instead, he gave the iguana to a friend who cared for stray animals. The author does not include information about the man deciding to keep Sobe for himself. The author uses the structure of paragraphs 2 and 3 to describes how the man encountered the iguana: “walking to work, he came across a small iguana on the street” (paragraph 2) and “brought the iguana to a friend” (paragraph 3).
	Option B is incorrect	Paragraphs 2 and 3 are not about caring for iguanas in New York. Rather, the author uses the details in paragraphs 2 and 3 to explain how a man rescued an iguana from the street to address a problem and solved the problem when he took it to a friend who cared for strays.
	Option C is incorrect	In paragraph 2, the author notes that it was strange to find an iguana in New York: “Iguanas usually live in Central or South America.” The author does not include an explanation in the selection of how the animal may have gotten there. However, the author uses paragraph 2 to provide context for why finding an iguana on a street in New York is a problem and that the man solves the problem when he “brought the iguana to a friend who often took in stray animals” (paragraph 3).

Item Position	Rationale	
14	Option B is correct	In the selection from <i>Unlikely Friendships for Kids</i> , the author includes information about the setting of the woman's house because it is important to understand that the woman was known for taking in stray animals; she welcomed the iguana into her home and named it Sobe (paragraph 3) but also took in a stray cat soon after and named it Johann (paragraph 4). Sobe and Johann had to learn to share the same space. This caused them to become friends and form a strong bond.
	Option A is incorrect	Although Sobe eventually grew to a large size (paragraph 14), the author does not indicate in the selection that the house was too small for him and Johann.
	Option C is incorrect	Although an iguana's natural habitat is in a warm climate, the author does not indicate that Sobe needed to live somewhere warmer than the woman's house. In fact, Sobe grew and thrived in the woman's home (paragraph 6).
	Option D is incorrect	Johann was a stray cat living outdoors before the woman took him in and helped him become healthy (paragraph 4), but the author does not suggest that Johann wanted to go back outside once the cat felt better.

Item Position	Rationale	
15	Option D is correct	In paragraph 3 of selection from <i>Unlikely Friendships for Kids</i> , the author states the man knew that “a small iguana would not survive on the streets. . . . He brought the iguana to a friend who often took in stray animals.” The author includes this statement to help the reader infer that the man wanted the iguana to be safe.
	Option A is incorrect	The author does not indicate that the man had a pet iguana. After the man gave the iguana he rescued to the woman, the iguana became her pet (paragraphs 3-6).
	Option B is incorrect	The man thought the iguana would not survive because the iguana was small and alone in the streets of a big city (paragraph 3), not because he thought the iguana was sick. The author does not include any evidence to support the idea that the iguana was unhealthy.
	Option C is incorrect	Although the man appeared to have quickly recognized what the iguana was and what to do with it, finding the iguana was a new and unusual experience for him, based on the details the author provides in paragraph 2.

Item Position	Rationale	
16	Option A is correct	In the story "Swim Team," the author implies through Frankie's thoughts that Frankie feels out of place: "everyone was staring [him] down" (paragraph 6). This is similar to the idea of Sobe, the iguana, being out of place on the street in New York City (paragraph 2), as depicted by the author in the selection from <i>Unlikely Friendships for Kids</i> .
	Option B is incorrect	The author includes the detail about "swimming to the other end of the pool" to depict a location within the pool. The author does not use this detail to support the idea that Frankie feels out of place.
	Option C is incorrect	The author uses the phrase "I was ready to call it a day" in paragraph 9 to imply that Frankie is tired and ready to leave swim team practice. The author does not use the phrase to support the idea that Frankie feels out of place.
	Option D is incorrect	In paragraph 11, the author supports the idea that Frankie starts to feel more comfortable as other classmates start "coming over to swim with [him]," not the idea that Frankie feels out of place.

Item Position	Rationale	
17	Option C is correct	In the story "Swim Team," the author depicts how Nick and José work with their friend Frankie to help him improve his swimming technique (paragraphs 2–4, 9–11). In the selection from <i>Unlikely Friendships for Kids</i> , the author shows how having a friend makes life better. In the selection, Sobe and Johann chose to spend their time together, and Sobe appeared to smile when Johann curled up next to him (paragraphs 5– 6).
	Option A is incorrect	In the story "Swim Team," Nick and José are Frankie's classmates. The author does not indicate that they have been or will be lifelong friends. In the selection from <i>Unlikely Friendships for Kids</i> , Sobe and Johann appeared to have a meaningful friendship, but the author does not indicate how long it lasted.
	Option B is incorrect	Although the author of the selection from <i>Unlikely Friendships for Kids</i> describes friends being kind to each other (Johann cleaned Sobe, and Sobe let Johann lean his head on Sobe while he slept, paragraphs 5–6), the author of the story "Swim Team" does not describe friends starting a new activity. Instead, Frankie joins an activity that his classmates have already been doing (paragraphs 8, 10, and 11). Frankie becomes closer to his classmates as they help him become a better swimmer.
	Option D is incorrect	Both authors of the story "Swim Team" and the selection from <i>Unlikely Friendships for Kids</i> describe a change in friendship. In the story, Frankie becomes better friends with classmates Nick and José when they offer swimming advice (paragraphs 8–11), and in the selection, Sobe and Johann become friends after being rescued and brought to live in the same woman's house (paragraphs 3–6).

Item Position	Rationale	
18	Option C is correct	In the story "Swim Team," the author implies that Nick helps Frankie feel more comfortable by being friendly to him when he arrives at the pool (paragraphs 1–4) and by offering him advice to improve his swimming skills (paragraphs 10–11). In the selection from <i>Unlikely Friendships for Kids</i> , the author suggests that Johann made Sobe feel comfortable by "[rubbing] up against the iguana's rough skin and [purring]" when the two first met, showing that he was friendly and nonthreatening (paragraph 5).
	Option A is incorrect	Although Johann from the selection from <i>Unlikely Friendships for Kids</i> deals with a change well when he was rescued from the streets and brought to live with a woman and her iguana (paragraph 3), the author does not indicate that Nick from the story "Swim Team" deals with any changes.
	Option B is incorrect	In the story "Swim Team," the author does not indicate Nick is trying something new. His classmate Frankie is. In the selection from <i>Unlikely Friendships for Kids</i> , the author does not include evidence to suggest that Johann was looking for something new. He was a sick stray cat who was rescued by a woman who nursed him back to health.
	Option D is incorrect	Although Nick in the story "Swim Team" and Johann in the selection from <i>Unlikely Friendships for Kids</i> are both good friends to someone else, the authors do not include any indication that either of them tried to keep a friend safe.

Item Position	Rationale	
19	Part A	
	Option D is correct	The central idea of the article is that cowboys are an important part of history. The author supports this idea by stating, "Cowboys have been a part of Texas culture for generations" (paragraph 1). The author goes on to discuss that "being a cowboy was a popular job" (paragraph 2). The author includes information about how important cowboys were because they "were needed to gather the cattle and take them to market" (paragraph 2). Additionally, people around the country "wanted to buy Texas cattle," and the cowboys were an important part of taking cattle to various places (paragraph 3).
	Option A is incorrect	Although the author mentions the railroad stations in paragraphs 5 and 7 and that cowboys would travel in order to move the cattle to the Northeast, this is not the central idea of the article. The author includes this supporting detail to show how the railroads helped the cowboys and ranchers move the cattle around the country.
	Option B is incorrect	The author includes important details in the section "The Long Drive," including how the "cowboys herded over 2,000 cattle hundreds of miles" (paragraph 5). However, the author includes this detail to support the central idea that cowboys were an important part of history because they helped ranchers move cattle across the country.
	Option C is incorrect	The author includes information in paragraph 6 that cowboys "could make more money on the long drive." The author includes this information to support the reason why people may have chosen to become cowboys, considering that the job "was difficult and dangerous" (paragraph 6). This is a supporting detail and not the central idea of the article.
	Part B	
	Option A is correct	The central idea of the article is that cowboys are an important part of history, and the author supports this idea by explaining that "for generations," cowboys have been an important "part of Texas culture" (paragraph 1).
	Option B is incorrect	In paragraph 2, the author elaborates on the work that cowboys did "on ranches raising and caring for cattle," but this is a detail and does not support the central idea about the historical importance of cowboys.
	Option C is incorrect	In paragraph 6, the author presents information about the dangers of being a cowboy on a long drive. These problems meant that the cowboys "needed a better way" to transport their cattle. However, these dangers and the solutions that followed are only part of what made cowboys important to history.
	Option D is incorrect	The author explains in paragraph 7 how building more railroad tracks ultimately led to the decline in the need for cowboys. However, the central idea of the article is about the importance of the cowboy to history, and this sentence does not support that central idea.

Item Position	Rationale	
20	Option C is correct	The most likely reason the author includes the details in paragraphs 1 and 2 is to introduce the topic of cowboys to the reader. The focus of the article is how cowboys were an important part of history. The author introduces who the first cowboys in Texas were in paragraph 1 and includes information about the time period in paragraph 2.
	Option A is incorrect	The author does include information about some of the problems that cowboys faced, such as how it was “difficult and dangerous” work (paragraph 6). However, the author includes the details in paragraphs 1 and 2 most likely to introduce the topic of cowboys to the reader.
	Option B is incorrect	The author explains that cowboys have changed over time. In paragraph 7, the author states that “the railroads meant there was less of a need for cowboys.” However, the author includes the information in paragraphs 1 and 2 most likely to help introduce the topic of cowboys to the reader.
	Option D is incorrect	The author states in paragraph 5 that cowboys herded cattle from Texas to Kansas using the Chisholm Trail. However, the author includes the information in paragraphs 1 and 2 about cowboys and the time period most likely to introduce the topic of cowboys to the reader.

Item Position	Rationale	
21	Option B is correct	The author includes the map below paragraph 5 most likely to show how far the long drives could be. The author explains in paragraph 5 that “cowboys herded over 2,000 cattle hundreds of miles” and that “the trail was from San Antonio, Texas, to Abilene, Kansas.” The map includes a visual representation to help the reader understand the vast expanse traveled by the cowboys.
	Option A is incorrect	Although the author includes information in paragraph 3 about where the cattle would wander—“the open range had flat stretches of dry, gold-colored grass”—the map does not include where the open fields are located. Therefore, the author includes the map most likely to show how far the long drives could be.
	Option C is incorrect	Although the author does include a graphic organizer to demonstrate a timeline of when cowboys in Texas started to use trails, the map includes only information about the trail that cowboys traveled. Therefore, the author includes the map most likely to illustrate how far the long drives could be.
	Option D is incorrect	The author explains in paragraph 4 that ranchers could “make more money selling their cattle in the Northeast.” The author includes this information likely to explain why the cowboys needed to move the cattle off the open ranges. However, the map includes the trail the cowboys used, not information about why they left the open ranges.

Item Position	Rationale	
22	Option A is correct	By organizing paragraphs 6 and 7 in a problem-and-solution structure, the author shows how the railroads solved the problem of transporting the cattle across the country on a long drive. The author explains that these long drives were “difficult and dangerous” and that “cowboys needed a better way to move their cattle” (paragraph 6). This problem was solved when, by “1884, there were railroad tracks throughout Texas” (paragraph 7). These regional stations meant that cowboys did not need to travel as far.
	Option B is incorrect	Although the author does describe the need to herd cattle across long distances to sell them at market; the structure of paragraphs 6 and 7 specifically focuses on the dangers and difficulties that the railroads solved. Herding the cattle across long distances was costly, and cowboys “needed a better way to move their cattle” (paragraph 6). Once the train tracks were built in Texas, there was a “faster and cheaper” method of cattle ranching (paragraph 7).
	Option C is incorrect	The author mentions in paragraph 6 that “cowboys could make more money on the long drive.” This explanation may account for why some people decided to work in this job. However, the author structures paragraph 6 to describe the challenges the cowboys faced on the long drives, such as “bad weather” or the fact that “cattle got diseases” (paragraph 6). The author organizes paragraph 7 to demonstrate that once there were railroad tracks in Texas, the cowboys “did not have to travel hundreds of miles any longer.”
	Option D is incorrect	In paragraph 6, the author includes descriptive details of some possible events that could have happened to the cowboys on the trail: “Cowboys often faced bad weather. Sometimes people stole their cattle.” However, the author organizes these paragraphs in a problem-and-solution structure most likely to demonstrate that these trips were “difficult and dangerous” (paragraph 6) and that the railroads solved these problems because “cowboys did not have to travel hundreds of miles any longer” (paragraph 7).

Item Position	Rationale	
23	Option C is correct	In paragraph 3, the author describes the way in which the cattle wander as “freely,” noting that the open range was “dotted with cattle.” The author’s descriptions support the idea that the cattle were walking on the land without restraints. On that basis, a synonym for <u>wandered</u> is “walked.”
	Option A is incorrect	In paragraph 3, the author mentions “stretches of dry, gold-colored grass,” which the cattle may have been eating. However, the author is describing a detail about where the cattle walked freely on public land. Additionally, one of the central ideas of the article is about how cowboys helped gather the cattle in order to walk the trail to market. Therefore, “ate” is not a synonym for <u>wandered</u> .
	Option B is incorrect	The word <u>wandered</u> may look similar to the word “wondered,” but the cattle were not freely “asking” anything on the open range. Instead, the cattle were walking there. This is supported by the information the author includes about herding the cattle to market in paragraph 2. Thus, “asked” is not a synonym for <u>wandered</u> .
	Option D is incorrect	Although the cattle might have worn out the land through grazing, this meaning is not suggested in this specific sentence. Instead, the author suggests that the cattle have walked onto the open range for grazing. Therefore, “wore” is not a synonym for <u>wandered</u> .

Item Position	Rationale	
24	Option A is correct	This sentence is an accurate paraphrasing of all the key details the author includes in the sentences from paragraph 5, including emphasizing how well known the Chisholm Trail was, where it was located, and who is credited with its development.
	Option B is incorrect	Although these sentences include the detail that the author provides in paragraph 5 that the Chisholm Trail was a popular trail used by cowboys in the 1860s, they do not include important information about where the trail was located or who developed it.
	Option C is incorrect	This sentence incorporates important information the author includes about Jesse Chisholm and Black Beaver, including how they traveled on the trail that led from Texas to Kansas. However, it omits the key information from paragraph 5 that that trail was famous and used by many people.
	Option D is incorrect	The idea that cowboys worked together to figure out a way to get to the railroad station is not included in the original sentences from paragraph 5; therefore, this extraneous information should not be included in a paraphrase. Additionally, this information implies that cowboys were responsible for developing the Chisholm Trail, whereas the author explains in the original sentences that it was developed by Jesse Chisholm and Black Beaver.

Item Position	Rationale
25	The student response below has been identified by Texas educators as meeting the requirements for a 10-point (maximum score) response based on the rubric criteria. For additional information, refer to the Grade 3 scoring guide available on the STAAR Reading Language Arts Resources webpage. Life was worse for cowboys before 1884 when more railroad tracks were built in Texas because it was dangerous, they spent months traveling, and sometimes their cattle got stolen. Life was worse for cowboys before 1844 when more railroad tracks were built in Texas because it was dangerous. In paragraph 6, the text says, "It was difficult and dangerous. Cowboys often faced bad weather." This tells me the cowboys could've died from the weather. This reminds me of 2021 when it snowed in Texas. Life was worse for cowboys before 1884 when more railroad tracks were built in Texas because they spent months traveling lots of miles. In paragraph 5, the text says, "These journeys could take over two months. Cowboys herded over 2,000 cattle hundreds of miles." This tells me the cowboys probably barely got to see their family. This reminds me of when my dad had to leave Texas for work. Life was worse for cowboys before 1884 when more railroad tracks were built in Texas because their cattle sometimes got stolen. In paragraph 6, the text says, Sometimes people stole their cattle. Cattle got diseases. This tells me the cattle they needed for money either got stolen, or had a disease. This reminds me of how dogs and other animals get diseases. In conclusion, life was harsh for cowboys trying to sell their cattle.

Item Position	Rationale	
26	Option A is correct	With this sentence, the writer effectively brings Aunt Kendra into the story and prepares the reader for the conversation that follows.
	Option B is incorrect	Substituting this sentence does not strengthen the introduction because the information about Aunt Kendra exercising at the gym is not relevant to the gift she has for Anita or her purpose for giving it.
	Option C is incorrect	It may be true that Anita and her aunt like to bake together, but mentioning this fact does not help introduce the conversation and actions that are described in the paper. This is an irrelevant detail that does not strengthen the introduction.
	Option D is incorrect	The writer does not go on to discuss the love of reading that Anita and her aunt share, so inserting this sentence does not help build a stronger introduction for the paper.

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27 SCR	For SCR items, please refer to the scoring guide.

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28	Option D is correct	By replacing “said” with “suggested,” the writer makes it clear that Anita is offering her own proposal for the time they should set the alarm.
	Option A is incorrect	Substituting “spoke” for “said” does not improve the clarity of the original sentence, since Anita is proposing an alarm time to her aunt, not just mentioning a time.
	Option C is incorrect	Using the word “imagined” in place of “said” does not indicate that Anita replies aloud to her aunt’s question. This is not an effective verb to use in describing their conversation.
	Option D is incorrect	To write that Anita “voiced” a time for the alarm does not communicate that she is recommending it as the best time, so substituting this word does not fit the context in sentence 19.

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Item Position	Rationale	
29	Option B is correct	In the eighth paragraph, the writer describes what happens when Anita wakes up to the sounds coming from her alarm clock. There is no indication that she is awakened by the dog barking next door, so sentence 25 should be removed.
	Option A is incorrect	In sentence 24, the writer provides a description of the sounds that wake Anita up the next morning. This information demonstrates Anita’s successful use of the alarm clock, so sentence 24 should not be removed.
	Option C is incorrect	The writer uses sentence 26 to convey Anita’s confusion when she first wakes up, so this sentence is important to the story and should not be removed.
	Option D is incorrect	Sentence 27 is used to describe how Anita confirms that her clock has worked as planned, so it is essential in this context and should not be removed.

Item Position	Rationale	
30	Option C is correct	A topic sentence is a sentence that captures the subject of an entire paragraph. In the second paragraph, the writer describes what it was like to get a cut before stick-on bandages were invented. This sentence notes that these bandages were not available in the early 1900s, so it is the best topic sentence for the paragraph.
	Option A is incorrect	This sentence is about advances in medicine during the 2000s. It is not relevant to the problems that inspired the invention of stick-on bandages, so it is not an appropriate topic sentence for the second paragraph.
	Option B is incorrect	Here the writer makes a general point about learning history from the teacher, which has no direct relevance to the paragraph’s specific topic.
	Option D is incorrect	In this sentence, the writer offers advice about avoiding skin injuries. This cannot be the topic sentence for a paragraph that describes what it was like to get a cut before stick-on bandages were invented.

Item Position	Rationale	
31	Option A is correct	By adding this sentence, the writer explains Earle Dickson's motivation for trying to develop a stick-on bandage. This additional detail builds on sentence 13 and connects it to the ideas in the rest of the paragraph.
	Option B is incorrect	This sentence tells what happened in Dickson's lifetime but is not directly relevant to his invention of an improved bandage. Therefore, adding this sentence does not support the ideas in the third paragraph in a helpful way.
	Option C is incorrect	In this sentence, the writer is just restating and slightly expanding the idea already expressed in sentence 13. Inserting this sentence creates redundancy and fails to provide information about Dickson's specific interest in developing a better bandage.
	Option D is incorrect	Adding this sentence provides the reader with details about the Dicksons' family life, but these details are not relevant to the topic of this paragraph.

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Item Position	Rationale	
32	Option A is correct	By replacing the vague word “them” with “the new bandages,” the writer makes it clear that the company started producing and selling Dickson’s stick-on bandages.
	Option B is incorrect	Using the phrase “the cotton pieces” may be misleading in this context, since Dickson’s invention included pieces of cotton gauze and also tape to make the gauze stick. Therefore, this is not an effective clarification of “them” in sentence 20.
	Option C is incorrect	The phrase “the helpful items” is still vague, so substituting it for “them” does not clarify the meaning of sentence 20.
	Option D is incorrect	Replacing “them” with “the great products” still fails to identify the specific product made by the company. This replacement is also inconsistent with the writer’s claim that the product was not an immediate success.

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Item Position	Rationale	
33	Option B is correct	In this sentence, the writer removes the second use of “now,” which is the word that was repeated unnecessarily in sentence 26. The result is a sentence that is effective and clear in meaning.
	Option A is incorrect	Here the writer fails to correct the repetition of the word “now” and instead creates a longer and more awkward version of sentence 26.
	Option C is incorrect	In this revision, the writer uses an awkward construction that obscures the intended meaning of the sentence. The phrase “and the world all over” has no clear meaning.
	Option D is incorrect	In this sentence, the writer misplaces the word “popular” so that it seems to apply to a portion of the world rather than to the stick-on bandages. This revision changes the meaning of sentence 26.

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Item Position	Rationale	
34	Option C is correct	By replacing "geuss" with "guess," the writer corrects the spelling error in sentence 2.
	Option A is incorrect	In sentence 2, the writer refers to the time ("weeks") during which he tried to solve the mystery. Using the possessive form of the noun ("week's") is incorrect in this context.
	Option B is incorrect	The past-tense verb "tried" is consistent with the writer's verb usage throughout this paper. Changing the verb to "try" would be an incorrect shift to the present tense.
	Option D is incorrect	The writer uses sentence 2 to make a declarative statement, not to ask a question. A period is the proper punctuation for this sentence.

Item Position	Rationale	
35	Option D is correct	Changing “wouldnt” to “wouldn’t” corrects the error in sentence 6. The word “wouldn’t” is a contraction of “would” and “not,” and an apostrophe is required when two words are combined in a contraction.
	Option A is incorrect	In sentence 6, two independent clauses, or clauses that can stand alone as complete sentences, are joined by a conjunction. The comma after “him” is used properly to mark the break between the clauses. This comma cannot be deleted from the sentence.
	Option B is incorrect	By changing the conjunction in sentence 6 from “but” to “or,” the writer would signal uncertainty about which independent clause is true. Instead, the writer uses the sentence to state two related facts: he wants to thank Mr. Frank, and he doesn’t want to embarrass his neighbor. The conjunction “but” is appropriate here and should not be changed.
	Option C is incorrect	In sentence 6, the singular pronoun “him” is used to refer to the neighbor, Mr. Frank. Changing “him” to the plural pronoun “them” would not be correct.

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Item Position	Rationale	
36	Option B is correct	In this sentence, two independent clauses, or clauses that can stand alone as complete sentences, are joined by the conjunction “and.” By placing a comma after the word “yard,” the writer correctly punctuates this compound sentence.
	Option A is incorrect	Changing “wanted” to “wanting” creates a sentence fragment, or an incomplete sentence, which cannot be the correct answer.
	Option C is incorrect	Since the writer is referring to the dog owned by Mrs. Tinsley, the possessive form of her name is required. The apostrophe in “Mrs. Tinsley’s” correctly creates this possessive form.
	Option D is incorrect	The noun “dog” is not used in sentence 8 as a proper noun, or a noun that refers to a specific person, place, idea, or event. Therefore, it would be incorrect to capitalize it.

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Item Position	Rationale	
37	Option D is correct	In sentence 9, the writer uses the phrase “a few” to indicate that Dr. Lopez needs to pack several containers, not just one. Replacing the singular noun “box” with the plural noun “boxes” corrects the inconsistency in the phrase “a few box.”
	Option A is incorrect	The subject of sentence 9 is Dr. Lopez. Since the subject and verb in a sentence must agree in number, the singular verb phrase “was moving” should not be changed to the plural form “were moving.”
	Option B is incorrect	The verb phrase “had asked” is being used in sentence 9 to report an event that happened in the past. Substituting the future-tense “will ask” would not make sense in this context.
	Option C is incorrect	“Pakking” is not the correct spelling of the word “packing,” which is what the writer intends.

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Item Position	Rationale	
38	Option D is correct	In sentence 2, a comma after the word “fences” is needed because the writer is presenting a list of items that can be made with bamboo. Words in a list should be separated by commas.
	Option A is incorrect	The singular pronoun “It” is used here to refer to bamboo. Substituting the plural pronoun “They” would not be correct.
	Option B is incorrect	Changing “is used” (present tense) to “was used” (past tense) in this sentence would indicate that bamboo is no longer used to “make fences, bridges, and more.” That is clearly not the writer’s intent.
	Option C is incorrect	The word “make” is spelled correctly in this sentence and should not be replaced by the misspelling “mack.”

Item Position	Rationale	
39	Option D is correct	Sentence 6 is a sentence fragment, or an incomplete sentence, since it does not have a subject. In joining sentences 5 and 6, the writer creates a complete sentence.
	Option A is incorrect	In this rewrite of the sentences, there is no subject. That makes this answer choice a sentence fragment, which cannot be the correct answer.
	Option B is incorrect	This is not the correct way to rewrite sentences 5 and 6, since the second punctuated phrase ("To make tables and other furniture") is a sentence fragment.
	Option C is incorrect	This attempt to rewrite the two sentences fails because the second punctuated phrase ("This wood to make tables and other furniture") is a sentence fragment.

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Item Position	Rationale	
40	Option B is correct	The writer is correct to choose the present-tense verb “is” for this context, since the topic of these paragraphs is the many ways in which bamboo still serves as an important building material today.
	Option A is incorrect	The past-tense verb “was” is not the correct choice for this sentence. The writer is describing the current uses and properties of bamboo and uses present-tense verbs throughout the descriptions.
	Option C is incorrect	Introducing the future-tense verb “will be” is inappropriate here since the writer is stating properties that bamboo already has, not properties it will have in the future.
	Option D is incorrect	Using the verb form “being” in this sentence would create a sentence fragment, or an incomplete sentence. Thus, this cannot be the correct choice for this context.

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Item Position	Rationale	
41	Option B is correct	"Brake" and "break" are homophones, words that sound the same but have different meanings and/or spellings. The verb "brake" means to slow down a vehicle, which does not make sense in sentence 11. The writer is correct in replacing "brake" with "break" to express the claim that bamboo will not snap in two "when it is bent into a new shape."
	Option A is incorrect	The apostrophe in "won't" is the correct way of indicating that this word is the contraction of "will" and "not." The apostrophe should not be removed.
	Option C is incorrect	The adjective "new" is appropriate and effective in this context. The superlative form of the adjective, "newest," would be used to indicate the greatest degree of something. That would not make good sense here.
	Option D is incorrect	In the context of this sentence, the word "shape" is not being used as a proper noun, a noun that refers to a specific person, place, idea, or event. Therefore, the word should not be capitalized in sentence 11.