

STAAR Spring 2026 Grade 5 Reading Language Arts Rationales

Item Position	Rationale	
1	Option D is correct	In line 4, the playwright's uses of the phrases "hurled us" and "whole world was spinning" help the reader understand that the prefix <i>super-</i> means "beyond." Based on the prefix for the word <u>supersonic</u> , the reader can infer that the word means "beyond fast."
	Option A is incorrect	Since the prefix <i>super-</i> means "beyond" or "more than," the reader can determine that the meaning of the word <u>supersonic</u> is not "rarely fast."
	Option B is incorrect	Although the word "almost" can be used to suggest quantity or measurement, it does not indicate going "beyond." Instead, the prefix <i>super-</i> indicates that the ride was "beyond fast."
	Option C is incorrect	The word prefix <i>super-</i> indicates going "beyond." Therefore, the word <u>supersonic</u> means "beyond fast," which is not the same meaning as "becoming fast."

Item Position	Rationale	
2	Option C is correct	The playwright includes details in lines 4 and 5 of the play that suggest that Leila and Dominic have been friends for a long time. The characters recount memories from when they were much younger. In line 5, Dominic says, "I remember. Then your mom always made us take a break," indicating a shared experience between the two characters as well as a relationship between their families.
	Option A is incorrect	Although the playwright includes details about what the characters used to do at past carnivals, as when Leila says, "We would get in line again and again," the playwright's use of these details from the past do not suggest that Leila and Dominic have set a schedule for the day.
	Option B is incorrect	Although the playwright includes details that suggest that Leila and Dominic attended the carnival in the past, the playwright does not include enough details to suggest that they have not spent time together recently.
	Option D is incorrect	In lines 4 and 5, the playwright includes details about previous carnivals and shows that Leila and Dominic enjoy reflecting on the past. However, that is not enough evidence to suggest that they have no problems in their friendship.

Item Position	Rationale	
3	Option B is correct	As the play ends, the playwright includes details in line 33 to indicate that Leila and Dominic are walking toward "The Spinning Squirrel," and Dominic confirms that they have enough tickets for it. The playwright's inclusion of these details strongly suggests that they will get on that ride.
	Option A is incorrect	The playwright includes details in lines 33 and 34 that suggest that Leila and Dominic already have enough tickets and do not need to buy more. Leila says, "We still have some tickets to use, right?" and Dominic says "Right" as he <i>"holds up the tickets and grins."</i> Therefore, the characters seem unlikely to buy more tickets next.
	Option C is incorrect	Although the playwright includes details in lines 29 through 32 that suggest Leila and Dominic's interest in volunteering at the carnival in the future, as the play ends, they are headed to "The Spinning Squirrel" and discussing whether they still have tickets to use. The reader can infer that the two characters will most likely ride "The Spinning Squirrel" next.
	Option D is incorrect	In the play, Leila and Dominic help Zoey by giving her an extra ticket for "The Spinning Squirrel." However, the playwright does not provide enough details to support that Leila and Dominic will likely make more friends.

Item Position	Rationale	
4	Option A is correct	The playwright includes details in line 26 that show that Leila encourages Zoey to have a good time at the carnival by emphasizing how much fun “The Spinning Squirrel” is. In that line, Leila says, “‘The Spinning Squirrel’ is great. No, it’s more than great. It’s incredible!”
	Option B is incorrect	Although the playwright includes details in scene 2 that suggest that Leila is kind to Zoey, the playwright also suggests that the two have just met. The character of Zoey is introduced in line 20 of the play, and as she meets Dominic and Leila, the two friends do not act like they have met Zoey or have any connection with her.
	Option C is incorrect	Even though Leila talks about how “The Spinning Squirrel” was once her and Dominic’s favorite ride and how it spun them so fast that they felt the world “spinning,” the playwright does not indicate that Zoey wants to ride with Leila.
	Option D is incorrect	The playwright does not provide any details suggesting that Zoey aspires to be like Leila, even though Zoey is younger than both Leila and Dominic and she appreciates their help with the extra ticket for “The Spinning Squirrel.”

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5	Option C is correct	In line 3, the playwright’s use of hyperbole, an overexaggeration for the purpose of creating emphasis or being humorous, emphasizes how unimpressed Dominic is with the ride as he overstates how slowly it moves.
	Option A is incorrect	Although the playwright’s use of hyperbole in line 3 compares the speeds of Dominic’s sister’s turtle and “The Spinning Squirrel,” the playwright does so to emphasize how slow the ride seems to Dominic.
	Option B is incorrect	It may be plausible that Dominic enjoys thrilling rides, but the playwright’s hyperbolic comparison demonstrates that Dominic is unimpressed with the speed of “The Spinning Squirrel.”
	Option D is incorrect	Although Dominic might dislike waiting in line, the playwright does not specifically communicate that to the audience through the use of hyperbole in line 3 of the play.

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6	Option D is correct	In line 22, the playwright introduces Zoey, a younger child who is still excited to be at the carnival. Zoey’s positive experience with the carnival ultimately changes Leila and Dominic’s outlook on it.
	Option A is incorrect	Although Leila and Dominic do help Zoey, she does not express a need for help in line 22. Zoey thinks that she has “just enough tickets” to ride. She learns that she does not have enough tickets when Dominic mentions this in line 23.
	Option B is incorrect	Later in the play, in line 32, the playwright has Leila and Dominic mention possibly speaking to someone about volunteering at the school carnival. However, line 22 is important because Leila and Dominic shift their attitudes about the carnival when they discover that Zoey is still excited about the rides.
	Option C is incorrect	Although in lines 22 through 30 the playwright shows that Zoey is enthusiastic about riding “The Spinning Squirrel,” her words do not show that this is her favorite ride at the school carnival.

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7	Option B is correct	The playwright uses the stage directions in line 28 to illustrate how Leila uses nonverbal cues to prompt Dominic to adjust his words, ensuring he does not dampen Zoey’s enthusiasm for riding “The Spinning Squirrel.”
	Option A is incorrect	The playwright includes how Leila employs body language in line 28 to show how she hopes to influence Dominic’s response, but the playwright does not indicate that Leila is angry with Dominic during this scene.
	Option C is incorrect	Dominic may initially misinterpret Leila’s gestures in line 28, but the playwright does not suggest that Leila is confused by Dominic at this point in the play.
	Option D is incorrect	The playwright shows Leila and Dominic recalling past experiences together in lines 4 and 5, indicating that they know each other. However, the playwright's use of the stage directions in line 28 does not provide information that specifically shows how well the two characters know each other.

Item Position	Rationale	
8	Option D is correct	In the selection from <i>Clarence Birdseye: Frozen Food Innovator</i> , the author explains in paragraph 10 that frozen foods “made it more convenient for busy families to eat healthy,” which demonstrates that frozen foods enable families to quickly and easily prepare nutritious meals.
	Option A is incorrect	Although Birdseye’s patent for the Quick Freeze Machine was significant, the patent alone does not show that the invention was helpful.
	Option B is incorrect	Although the author explains in paragraph 8 that Birdseye was able to sell his invention for a large sum of money, the sale of his invention does not provide evidence to support that the invention itself was helpful.
	Option C is incorrect	The author explains in paragraph 9 that frozen foods became more popular during World War II because of a shortage of tin to make cans, but the author does not provide specific details in this paragraph about why frozen foods were helpful for people.

Item Position	Rationale	
9	Option B is correct	In paragraphs 6 and 7 of the selection from <i>Clarence Birdseye: Frozen Food Innovator</i> , the author describes how the Quick Freeze Machine operated and how it froze different types of food. For example, the author explains that “fish was still packaged in cartons and pressed between metal plates” (paragraph 6) and that “fruits and vegetables took just 30 minutes” (paragraph 7) to freeze.
	Option A is incorrect	Although the author explains in paragraph 8 that Birdseye sold his company, in paragraphs 6 and 7, the author focuses on explaining the Quick Freeze Machine’s operation rather than the reasons for the company’s sale.
	Option C is incorrect	In paragraphs 6 and 7, the author explains the functions of the Quick Freeze Machine, illustrating its ability to preserve a variety of foods using its freezing process. The author’s portrayal of Birdseye as a businessman is woven throughout the passage; however, it is not specifically detailed in paragraphs 6 and 7.
	Option D is incorrect	The author explains in paragraph 6 how the Quick Freeze Machine’s two metal plates froze food. However, the author does not provide a comprehensive list of all the materials that made up the Quick Freeze Machine.

Item Position	Rationale	
10	Option A is correct	The author expresses the central idea of the selection from <i>Clarence Birdseye: Frozen Food Innovator</i> in paragraph 4 by noting that “Birdseye soon discovered a way to flash freeze foods.” The author uses the rest of the selection to explain Birdseye’s methods and how frozen foods became popular.
	Option B is incorrect	The author describes how the Quick Freeze Machine worked in paragraph 4, explaining that “fresh food was packaged in small cardboard cartons.” The author’s use of this information explains the steps in the flash freezing process, which supports the central idea.
	Option C is incorrect	In this sentence from paragraph 4, the author includes the details that the machine used “two metal surfaces chilled to –40 degrees Fahrenheit.” Although this is an important detail about the flash-freezing process, it is not the central idea.
	Option D is incorrect	In paragraph 4, the author states that “Birdseye received a patent for this method in 1924.” The author continues to explain how Birdseye went on to make his invention successful and popular.

Item Position	Rationale	
11	Option B is correct	The author wrote the article "From Tin to Table" most likely to explain to the reader the long history of canned foods, as details about this history and how the canning process have changed are included throughout the article.
	Option A is incorrect	Although the author includes the history of what led to the invention of canned foods, the author does not share many facts about food. The author focuses the article on the history of the canning process and its uses.
	Option C is incorrect	Canned foods are sold in grocery stores, but the author does not imply that they are a recent development. Rather, the author indicates in paragraphs 2 and 3 that canning has been practiced since the late 1700s.
	Option D is incorrect	Although the author includes some details about how canning equipment has changed over time, this is not the author's main focus in this article. Instead, the most likely reason the author wrote this article was to explain the history of canned foods.

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12	Option A is correct	The author of the article "From Tin to Table" uses a simile, which is a figure of speech in which two things are compared using <i>like</i> or <i>as</i> , most likely to highlight how canning food preserves freshness by extending the life span of produce.
	Option B is incorrect	Although the author's use of "stopping time" may suggest revisiting the past, in this context the simile specifically addresses food preservation, not the literal halting of time.
	Option C is incorrect	Although the author mentions in paragraph 7 that "fresh food is great," the simile "like stopping time" is not a specific suggestion that fresh food tastes better after canning.
	Option D is incorrect	The author explains that canning is "like stopping time," but there is no information about the steps to prepare the food for canning.

Item Position	Rationale	
13	Option C is correct	The author of the article "From Tin to Table" includes the photograph after paragraph 6 most likely to show how technology has improved the process of canning foods. In paragraph 6, the author describes how improvements in canning technologies allow machines to now "seal more than 2,000 cans each minute."
	Option A is incorrect	The author explains in paragraph 4 how improvements in glass jars led to some people canning at home. The photograph that follows paragraph 4 shows this practice. However, the author uses the photograph that follows paragraph 6 to show how the production of canned foods has improved with technological advances.
	Option B is incorrect	Although the photograph after paragraph 6 is used by the author to show canned foods in production, there is no evidence included in the image or the article to suggest that canned foods have become cheaper to buy.
	Option D is incorrect	The photograph after paragraph 6 was taken in a factory, not a store. The author includes the photograph most likely to show the reader how the process of canning foods has improved with technological advances, not that large supplies of canned foods are kept in stores.

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

Item Position	Rationale	
15	Option C is correct	Throughout the selection from <i>Clarence Birdseye: Frozen Food Innovator</i> , the author shows how Birdseye's experimentation led to solutions related to frozen food. In the article "From Tin to Table," the information the author provides about Appert's experiments and the work scientists have done to ensure that canning is safe also supports this conclusion. This is a similarity between the two selections.
	Option A is incorrect	Although scientists are known for experimenting, the authors show in these selections that non-scientists can also conduct experiments to find solutions to common problems. Birdseye, from the selection from <i>Clarence Birdseye: Frozen Food Innovator</i> , was an inventor and businessman, and Appert, from the article "From Tin to Table," was a chef.
	Option B is incorrect	In the selection from <i>Clarence Birdseye: Frozen Food Innovator</i> , the author describes Birdseye's experimentation with flash freezing and the machinery he used. The author of the article "From Tin to Table" describes experiments of canning with glass jars and tin cans. Although it is possible that the experiments discussed in both selections could cost a lot of money, the cost of experimenting is not specifically explored by either author.
	Option D is incorrect	In paragraph 8 of the selection from <i>Clarence Birdseye: Frozen Food Innovator</i> , the author explains how Birds Eye eventually became a large company. However, the author of the article "From Tin to Table" does not refer to any companies or make the argument that experimenting is important for big companies.

Item Position	Rationale	
16	Option C is correct	The author of the selection from <i>Clarence Birdseye: Frozen Food Innovator</i> emphasizes that Birdseye kept experimenting with frozen foods out of his own curiosity about improving how frozen food tasted, whereas the author of the article "From Tin to Table" explains that Nicolas Appert tried canning food to win a prize from the French government.
	Option A is incorrect	Although Birdseye became famous for his invention, the author of the selection from <i>Clarence Birdseye: Frozen Food Innovator</i> does not suggest that Birdseye's reason for inventing a different way to freeze foods was to become famous. Instead, the author explains that Birdseye's goal was to improve the freezing process to enhance the taste of frozen food.
	Option B is incorrect	The author of the article "From Tin to Table" refers to Appert's prize for inventing a canning process; however, the author of the selection from <i>Clarence Birdseye: Frozen Food Innovator</i> emphasizes that Birdseye kept experimenting with frozen foods out of his own curiosity about improving how frozen food tasted
	Option D is incorrect	Although both authors discuss ways to preserve food and how wartime affected food supplies, the author of the selection from <i>Clarence Birdseye: Frozen Food Innovator</i> explains that Birdseye was curious about how to improve the quality of frozen foods.

Item Position	Rationale	
17	Option D is correct	Both authors emphasize that great inventions are created in response to a need. In the selection from <i>Clarence Birdseye: Frozen Food Innovator</i> , the author explains that Birdseye had the idea to develop a better process for freezing foods because people did not like the taste of the frozen food available at the time. In the article "From Tin to Table," the author explains that people developed canned food in response to the need to preserve food and prevent it from spoiling.
	Option A is incorrect	Although the process of inventing something can be expensive, neither author discusses the financial costs of inventing. Instead, the authors of both selections mention the profits or rewards that Birdseye and Appert received because of their inventions.
	Option B is incorrect	The author of <i>Clarence Birdseye: Frozen Food Innovator</i> explains that Birdseye's extensive research in food freezing led to his expected success. Similarly, the author of the article "From Tin to Table" notes that Appert was a chef, which suggests he likely had an interest in preserving food.
	Option C is incorrect	Although both authors show that ideas can evolve and gain popularity over time, neither author focuses on challenges Birdseye or Appert faced in making their inventions widely accepted.

Item Position	Rationale	
18	Option C is correct	The author of the article "From Tin to Table" indicates that Nicolas Appert achieved a major discovery even though he did not fully comprehend the mechanics of the process, as highlighted in paragraph 3: "Appert did not fully understand it, but the combination of heating and sealing the jars eliminated bacteria and prevented new bacteria from entering." In contrast, the author of the selection from <i>Clarence Birdseye: Frozen Food Innovator</i> describes Birdseye as an inventor whose grasp of flash freezing enabled him to make a significant breakthrough in frozen food technology. This distinction marks a key difference between the subjects of the two selections.
	Option A is incorrect	According to the author of the selection from <i>Clarence Birdseye: Frozen Food Innovator</i> , frozen food was already a concept that Birdseye aimed to refine because "he believed people would eat more frozen food if it tasted better" (paragraph 1). In contrast, the author of the article "From Tin to Table" notes that although some methods of food storage existed as early as 1795, the specific practice of canning had not yet been developed when Appert was working on his process (paragraph 2). Therefore, this distinction does not accurately represent a difference between the subjects of the two selections.
	Option B is incorrect	The reader can assume that Appert in the article "From Tin to Table" had to share the details of his discovery upon claiming his prize, and Birdseye also shared the details of his discovery with businesspeople who "believed in his freezing method," as the author of the selection from <i>Clarence Birdseye: Frozen Food Innovator</i> explains in paragraph 5. This is not a difference between the subjects of the two selections.
	Option D is incorrect	In the selection from <i>Clarence Birdseye: Frozen Food Innovator</i> , the author notes that Birdseye worked on his freezing process over a span of many years. The author of the article "From Tin to Table" describes how Appert won a prize "after working on this idea for years" (paragraph 3), which suggests that he engaged in continued research that led to an important discovery. Therefore, this distinction does not accurately represent a difference between the subjects of the two selections.

Item Position	Rationale	
19	Part A	
	Option C is correct	The author uses details in paragraphs 1 through 3 to indicate to the reader that the elephants are often unaware of their surroundings. In paragraph 2, the elephants "stampeded through the grasses" and "didn't notice that they were trampling the burrows of Hare's friends beneath their huge feet. In paragraph 3, the "elephants' enormous feet crushed many of the tender grasses that Hare and her friends used for food." In both cases, the elephants are not paying attention to the hares' food or homes.
	Option A is incorrect	Although the author explains in paragraph 2 that the elephants are thirsty, the amount of water that they need is not specified and is not the focus of paragraphs 1 through 3.
	Option B is incorrect	In paragraph 1, the author mentions that Hare lives peacefully with her friends near the lake; however, there is not enough evidence to support the idea that the elephants enjoy making friends when they visit the lake.
	Option D is incorrect	The author includes the detail that "Elephant came crashing out of the jungle" in paragraph 2, but there is not enough information to suggest that they live in the jungle because it provides safety.
	Part B	
	Option D is correct	The author demonstrates the elephants' lack of awareness with this sentence in paragraph 3 by explaining that they are walking over the grasses that the hares rely on for food.
	Option A is incorrect	Although the author uses this sentence from paragraph 2 to indicate that the elephants are powerful because of their size, this quotation does not support the idea that the elephants are unaware of their surroundings.
	Option B is incorrect	Although the elephants' excitement over finding the lake may be part of the reason they fail to notice the hares' burrows, the author does not provide evidence in this sentence from paragraph 2 that the elephants are unaware of their surroundings. Instead, the author includes this detail to show that the elephants are thirsty and are not concerned with their actions when they find water.
	Option C is incorrect	The author describes what the elephants do after visiting the lake, but this quotation from paragraph 3 does not show that the elephants are unaware of their surroundings.

Item Position	Rationale	
20	Option A is correct	The author's use of a nighttime setting plays a crucial role in the plot because the characters are able to see the moon's reflection on the lake's surface. This moment becomes essential to Hare's plan to trick Elephant and marks the climax, the story's most tense and pivotal point.
	Option B is incorrect	Although Hare is struggling to get Elephant's attention in paragraph 6, the author suggests that Elephant cannot hear Hare because she is so much smaller than him, not because of the setting of the story.
	Option C is incorrect	The author mentions that the elephants travel to the lake during the day, which is when they trample the burrows. Therefore, the nighttime setting is not the cause of the damage to the burrows.
	Option D is incorrect	The author suggests that Hare is worried about the burrows being trampled by the herd of elephants, not about the darkness of night. Instead, Hare uses the dark of night to trick Elephant into being more careful.

Item Position	Rationale	
21	Option D is correct	The author uses a third-person point of view, a narrative perspective in which the narrator can see into the thoughts and feelings of every character in a story or text using pronouns such as he, she, and they. Throughout the story, the narrator describes what the characters think and feel, such as in paragraph 4 when the narrator describes Hare as “frantic with worry” and in paragraph 17 when Elephant “thought this was a silly thing to do, but he agreed.”
	Option A is incorrect	Even though Elephant and his herd play a significant role in the narrative, the author recounts their activities from an external, third-person point of view rather than through the perspective of the herd.
	Option B is incorrect	Hare features prominently as a main character, but the author’s storytelling shows what both main characters think and feel instead of focusing solely on Hare’s viewpoint.
	Option C is incorrect	Although the story is told in third person, the author uses language that suggests someone from outside the story is telling it. It is never indicated by the narrator that one of Hare’s friends is telling the story to the reader.

Item Position	Rationale	
22	Option C is correct	In paragraph 17, the author includes imagery, or the use of vivid language to represent objects, actions, or ideas, to contrast the initial appearance of the lake's smooth surface with the ripples Elephant creates when he touches the water. In paragraph 15 the author notes "the reflection of the full moon in the still water." When the water begins to quiver and ripple, Elephant becomes startled by the extraordinary transformation and believes Hare's story.
	Option A is incorrect	The author uses imagery to describe the "hundreds of shimmering pieces" in the water, which contributes to Elephant's shock as he watches the rippling lake in paragraph 17. Although Elephant sees the moon's reflection clearly, Hare deceives him into believing it is something else.
	Option B is incorrect	Although the account of the moon god may appear to be an ancient narrative, in paragraphs 4 and 5, the author reveals that Hare created the story earlier that day as part of a plan to prevent the elephants from returning to the lake.
	Option D is incorrect	The author states that the lake area matters to Hare because it is her home, not because of the moon's reflection that is described in paragraph 17.

Item Position	Rationale	
23	Option D is correct	The author provides details to indicate that Elephant believes Hare, and the story ends with Elephant fearfully promising to obey the moon god's wishes in paragraph 19. Based on these details, Elephant will most likely share his experience with his herd, and they will leave the jungle.
	Option A is incorrect	Although Elephant is careful to avoid crushing the hares' burrows on the way back to the jungle, the author makes it clear in the conclusion of the story that it is out of fear and not because of friendship with Hare. Elephant will most likely tell the herd that they must leave the jungle.
	Option B is incorrect	The author describes Elephant's fearful reaction to Hare's story in paragraph 19, which leads to the conclusion that he is afraid of the moon god and will not want to anger or scare the moon god again in the future.
	Option C is incorrect	The author describes Elephant "shaking with fear" in paragraph 19, so it is unlikely that the herd will come back to ask Hare more questions. Instead, Elephant will most likely tell his herd what he saw, and they will leave the jungle.

Item Position	Rationale	
24	Option A is correct	The idea that should be included in a summary is that Hare crafts a plan to deceive Elephant through her tale about the moon god. This element of the story highlights how the protagonist reacts to the central challenge and marks the beginning of the rising action, the sequence of events intensifying the main conflict.
	Option B is incorrect	Although the author notes that Elephant is initially confused by Hare's shouting in paragraph 6, this is not a crucial detail for a summary since it does not directly affect the story's plot.
	Option C is incorrect	Although the author indicates Elephant is initially perplexed by Hare's loud call in paragraph 6, this is not an essential detail to include in a summary, because it does not directly contribute to the plot of the story.
	Option D is incorrect	Hare's message in paragraph 10 plays a key role in setting her scheme into motion; however, Elephant's courteous reply can be omitted from a summary of the story because it is a small detail that does not drive the larger plot.

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 5 scoring guide available on the STAAR Reading Language Arts Resources webpage. Have you ever used trickery to solve a problem? Well hare sure has. Hare was right to solve her problem the way she did because it was not just only her problem but her friends' too. Trickery was the right way to solve her problem because Elephant might not have listened to her, their burrows and food sources were getting destroyed and the problem could worsen. There are many things that support what Hare did because Elephant might not have listened to her. According to the text, Hare had jumped in the middle of the herd and started shouting at the top of her lungs but no one noticed because she was so small. This evidence shows that if Hare hadn't tried tricking the elephants they might have not noticed because her voice was so tiny. Another thing that supports what Hare had done was the fact that all their burrows and food sources were getting destroyed. The text states, that when the elephants were rushing to get water they had trampled almost all the hares' burrows. When the elephants were returning the had crushed the tender grasses that the hares used for food. This evidence shows that if Hare had not tricked the elephants this would have happened again, this time destroying everything. One more thing that shows that what hare did was not wrong is that if she hadn't acted sooner the problem might have worsened. The author states that "Hare was frantic with worry. She knew the elephants would return to the the lake the next day." This evidence shows that if hare hadn't used trickery to solve her problem the elephants would return ruining everything in their path. In conclusion if Hare hadn't used trickery to solve her and her friends' problem Elephant might not have listened to her, their burrows and food sources would have gotten destroyed, and the problem would have worsened. The next time you find yourself in a sticky situation remember Hare and her unique problem solving method.

Item Position	Rationale	
26	Option D is correct	The writer needs to use a transition word or phrase that appropriately connects the idea in sentence 8 to the ideas in the preceding sentences. Since the writer has already made it clear that Carlos loves bears, the phrase “of course” provides the best transition.
	Option A is incorrect	Using the word “Besides” as the transition would indicate that the writer is presenting some additional fact about Carlos in sentence 8. However, sentence 8 is used mainly to restate what is already known about Carlos and his interest in seeing bears. The transition word “Besides” does not fit this context.
	Option B is incorrect	The phrase “By the way” is used to signal that a sentence will convey an interesting new detail or idea that is not essential to the writer’s main point. Since sentence 8 captures the overall idea of the second paragraph, “by the way” is not an appropriate transition into the sentence.
	Option C is incorrect	Beginning sentence 8 with the transition word “Lastly” would suggest that the sentence will state the final item in some series or sequence of facts. “Lastly” is not the appropriate transition for this context.

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

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28	Option A is correct	Substituting the word “confident” helps the writer express why Jessica “spoke her mind” even though she knew her family would question her suggestion. Jessica’s research had given her good reasons for her choice, and she felt sure she could answer their questions and provide support for her proposal.
	Option B is incorrect	There is no indication here that Jessica’s idea came to her from someone else, so there is no support for the claim that she is “grateful” for it.
	Option C is incorrect	The word “lively” can be used to describe a conversation or event that is full of activity and excitement. But the phrase “felt lively about the idea” does not have any clear meaning. This would not be a good replacement for “happy” in sentence 17.
	Option D is incorrect	It is true that Jessica has done research and thought carefully about visiting Kentucky. However, stating that she felt “thoughtful” would not support her being sure that she could speak her mind and defend her idea with the family. The word “confident” is still the most effective replacement for “happy.”

Item Position	Rationale	
29	Option B is correct	An effective closing sentence captures the overall meaning of the paper. This statement achieves that by reminding the reader of all the activities the family will enjoy together by accepting Jessica’s proposal as their vacation plan.
	Option A is incorrect	This exclamation from Carlos does not bring attention to the discussion or the plan the family has agreed to. It is not an appropriate closing sentence for the paper.
	Option C is incorrect	Replacing sentence 35 with this sentence would introduce an idea that is not directly related to the subject of the paper. It cannot serve as an effective closing sentence.
	Option D is incorrect	Using this sentence to close the paper would confuse or mislead the reader since the family is no longer considering whether to travel to Alaska. Instead of closing the paper, the sentence would introduce uncertainty about whether Carlos really understands and agrees with the plan.

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30	Option A is correct	Here the writer eliminates the unneeded repetition of “and her” in sentence 9. The result is a sentence that is concise and effective.
	Option B is incorrect	This revision misrepresents the facts by indicating that Camille’s high school and college graduations were a single event. That does not capture the meaning of sentence 9, so it cannot be the best revision of the sentence.
	Option C is incorrect	In this revision, the writer creates a series of expressions (“graduation,” “graduating,” and “shower”) that are not parallel to one another. This is not an effective revision of sentence 9.
	Option D is incorrect	In this case, the phrase “what was” suggests that the family attended one event that was Camille’s high school graduation, college graduation, and baby shower. This revision distorts the meaning of sentence 9.

Item Position	Rationale	
31	Option B is correct	A coordinating conjunction joins words, phrases, or clauses of equal importance. With this revision, the writer correctly uses the coordinating conjunction “and” to join the verb phrases “had broken” and “wouldn’t be fixed.” The result is an effective statement about Camille and Luca’s air conditioner.
	Option A is incorrect	The phrase “had broken of no repair” indicates that the lack of repair caused the air condition to break. But the context makes it clear that this is not the writer’s point in sentence 14.
	Option C is incorrect	The phrases “their air conditioner” and “the air conditioner” create unnecessary repetition and an ineffective revision.
	Option D is incorrect	In this revision, the phrase “for two weeks” is misplaced and thus applies to the verb “had broken.” But the writer’s intent is to state that the repair will take two weeks, not that the air conditioner has been broken for that long. This revision does not express the meaning of sentence 14.

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Item Position	Rationale	
32	Option D is correct	Sentence 20 is written correctly and effectively. It does not need to be revised.
	Option A is incorrect	By adding the phrase “and until” to sentence 20, the writer creates a redundant statement. The prepositions “before” and “until” convey the same idea in this context.
	Option B is incorrect	Moving the phrase “on the carpet” to the end of the sentence misleads the reader by indicating that that is where the bus arrives, rather than where the writer joins Luca to play.
	Option C is incorrect	This revision leaves out the pronoun “him,” so it is not clear who the narrator joins on the carpet. It also mistakenly introduces the word “but,” which is confusing since no contrast is being made in sentence 20.

Item Position	Rationale	
33	Option C is correct	A transition sentence connects the ideas in one paragraph to the ideas in the next paragraph. This option provides an effective transition into the sixth paragraph because it signals that the writer is moving from describing the fun he has with Luca to describing some moments when life with Luca can be more difficult.
	Option A is incorrect	This is not an appropriate transition sentence since it does not fit the topic of the sixth paragraph—the times when Luca is fussy and needs to be calmed.
	Option B is incorrect	This option does not provide a suitable transition. Instead, it reports a detail about dinnertime that is not related to the ideas that follow in the sixth paragraph.
	Option D is incorrect	This sentence cannot be used as an effective transition into the sixth paragraph. This paragraph is not aimed at explaining how happy Luca makes others. The writer instead gives details of how Luca is sometimes fussy and challenging to deal with.

Item Position	Rationale	
34	Option C is correct	A subordinating conjunction is a word that joins a dependent clause to an independent clause and shows the relationship between the two ideas in a sentence. By using the subordinating conjunction “as,” which means “occurring at the same time,” the writer tells us what is happening in the sky while the family sits and watches.
	Option A is incorrect	The conjunction “although” means “in spite of the fact.” This word joins the clauses in a misleading way, as though it is unusual or strange for the family to watch the sky when its colors are changing. This is not true, so “although” needs to be replaced.
	Option B is incorrect	Using “if” in this context would indicate that the family sits outside only when the sky is changing colors. But sentence 1 makes it clear that the family “enjoys time together outside most evenings.” This cannot be the correct answer.
	Option D is incorrect	Replacing “although” with “unless” would change the meaning of sentence 2. It would suggest that the family does not look at the sky when its colors are changing, which is contrary to the writer’s intent.

Item Position	Rationale	
35	Option B is correct	A subordinate clause is a clause that cannot stand alone as a complete sentence. A comma is required after a subordinate clause at the beginning of a sentence. Since the clause "While the view is usually spectacular" is a subordinate clause, the writer needs to insert a comma after "spectacular."
	Option A is incorrect	Changing "while" to "when" would change the meaning of sentence 3. It would indicate that sitting outside has other benefits only at times when the view of the sky is spectacular, which is not the writer's intent.
	Option C is incorrect	In this paper, the writer uses present-tense verbs to describe what his family learns by spending time outside. Changing "is not" (present tense) to "was not" (past tense) would not be consistent with this context.
	Option D is incorrect	"Benifit" is not the correct spelling of the word "benefit," so it cannot be the correct answer.

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Item Position	Rationale	
36	Option B is correct	Throughout this paper, the writer uses verbs in the present tense to describe his family’s current activities. For consistency, the writer should change the past-tense verb “knew” to its present-tense form, “know.”
	Option A is incorrect	Changing “We” to “And” would leave sentence 4 without a subject. This would produce a sentence fragment, or incomplete sentence.
	Option C is incorrect	The plural noun “neighbors” is correct in this sentence. Its singular possessive form (“neighbor’s”) would not make sense here.
	Option D is incorrect	Sentence 4 contains a verb-tense error, so a correction is required.

Item Position	Rationale	
37	Option A is correct	A compound sentence uses a coordinating conjunction like “and” to join two or more independent clauses that each could stand as a complete sentence. By inserting the conjunction “and” after the comma, the writer creates a correct and effective compound sentence.
	Option B is incorrect	Here the second punctuated phrase (“And to chat”) is a sentence fragment, or incomplete sentence. This is not an acceptable way to write sentence 6.
	Option C is incorrect	This option is another sentence fragment. It does not express a complete statement because it lacks a complete verb.
	Option D is incorrect	Here again, the second punctuated phrase (“Stopping to chat”) is not a complete sentence. It is a sentence fragment.

Item Position	Rationale	
38	Option B is correct	A subordinating conjunction is a word that joins a dependent clause to an independent clause and shows the relationship between the two ideas in a sentence. Replacing “while” with “when” as the subordinating conjunction in sentence 2 gives the reader a clearer understanding of the relationship between the ideas in the two clauses. The word “while” means “during the time of,” whereas “when” means “at the time of.”
	Option A is incorrect	The word “important” is spelled correctly in this sentence and should not be replaced by the misspelling “importent.”
	Option C is incorrect	The past-tense verb phrase “was launched” is correct in sentence 2 because the writer is describing an event that happened at an earlier time.
	Option D is incorrect	There is no need for a comma after the name “Buzz Aldrin” in this sentence.

Item Position	Rationale	
39	Option B is correct	Changing “journy” to “journey” corrects the misspelling in this sentence.
	Option A is incorrect	The singular possessive noun “trio’s” is correct since it shows ownership. The journey was the one taken by the trio of astronauts—Armstrong, Aldrin, and Collins.
	Option C is incorrect	The plural pronoun “them” is used here to refer to the three astronauts. Changing the pronoun to “us” would mistakenly indicate that we readers were taken far from Earth, which is not what the writer intends.
	Option D is incorrect	Because the writer is referring to many, many miles in sentence 3, the singular noun “mile” is not appropriate for this context.

Item Position	Rationale	
40	Option A is correct	In sentence 8, the word “commander” is not being used as a proper noun, a noun that refers to a specific person, place, idea, or event. Therefore, it should not be capitalized.
	Option B is incorrect	Changing the comma after “mission” to a period would create a sentence fragment, a group of words that is not a complete sentence.
	Option C is incorrect	“Stepped” is the correct way to spell the past-tense form of the verb “step.” This word should not be changed to the misspelling “stepped.”
	Option D is incorrect	A change in sentence 8 is required because the sentence includes a capitalization error.

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Item Position	Rationale	
41	Option C is correct	Quotation marks are required after “mankind” to close the quoted words from Neil Armstrong in sentence 10.
	Option A is incorrect	The apostrophe in “That’s” is correctly used to signal that the word is a contraction of the phrase “That is.” The apostrophe should not be removed from this word.
	Option B is incorrect	The word “leap” is spelled correctly in sentence 10 and should not be changed.
	Option D is incorrect	Changing the verb “commented” to “commenting” would produce a sentence fragment, or incomplete sentence.