

Item Position	Rationale	
1	Option C is correct	The phrases “buildings perched on columns high in the air” and “flies a small glass-domed vehicle” provide context for the meaning of the word <i>aerial</i> as it is used in paragraph 6 of the selection. The author states, “It does a quick aerial loop,” and because the event is happening in the air, Definition 3 best matches the use of the word <i>aerial</i> .
	Option A is incorrect	The description of “a space-age city” and flying a “glass-domed vehicle” are imaginary concepts that exist only in the cartoon that the author is describing. However, Definition 1 is not the best match for the meaning of <i>aerial</i> in paragraph 6 of the selection, because the author is describing the actual movement of the vehicle in the air.
	Option B is incorrect	In paragraph 6 of the selection, the author describes the scene in the cartoon where “buildings perched on columns high in the air” and explains that the vehicle “does a quick aerial loop.” Although it is possible that these buildings and the “space-age city” are suspended by a track or cable, there is no evidence in the selection to support this idea.
	Option D is incorrect	In paragraph 6 of the selection, the scene from the cartoon is happening in “a space-age city.” Although Definition 4 refers to the sky, the author’s use of the word <i>aerial</i> in paragraph 6 is describing the movement of the vehicle, which is happening in the air and is not reaching toward the sky.

Item Position	Rationale	
2	Option D is correct	In paragraphs 11 through 17 of the selection, the author describes how people have been waiting for flying cars to become a reality. In paragraph 11, the author quotes a columnist who says, " 'Our failure to produce flying cars seems like a particular betrayal.' " In the paragraphs that follow, the author describes people's interest in the invention of the flying car since the 1940s.
	Option A is incorrect	There is no mention of the Volante Tri-Athodyne model until paragraph 17 of the selection. In the preceding paragraphs, the author describes how transportation was modernized by the invention of the automobile and how "flying cars would do the same for the even faster-paced twenty-first century" (paragraph 15).
	Option B is incorrect	In paragraphs 1 and 2 of the selection, the author introduces the topic of the flying car by describing the invention of the AirCar. Although the AirCar had made flying cars a reality, the AirCar is not discussed in paragraphs 11 through 17.
	Option C is incorrect	Beginning in paragraph 18 of the selection, the author describes how "in the real twenty-first century, instead of getting flying cars, we got the internet." In the paragraphs that follow, the author explains that people who work from home will not need flying cars. Although this is an idea of the selection, it is not supported by the details in paragraphs 11 through 17.

Item Position	Rationale	
3	Option B is correct	In paragraphs 1 through 3 of the selection, the author describes the recent invention of the AirCar, which was expected to “have a ‘huge market.’ ” The author then states in paragraph 4 that “the brutal truth, however, is the flying car was already obsolete before it was even invented.” The author’s descriptions of the AirCar and the imaginary flying car in the cartoon help support the author’s claim that there is no need for a flying car because of the invention of the internet.
	Option A is incorrect	In paragraph 3 of the selection, the author notes that “the AirCar most likely will remain, at best, a high-priced novelty item.” Although this detail helps set up the author’s claim, the author goes beyond this point to show why flying cars are actually obsolete.
	Option C is incorrect	In paragraphs 13 through 15 of the selection, the author explores people’s anticipation of the flying car. In paragraph 14, the author says, “Just imagine if your car could fly, though. You couldn’t get any freer than that.” Here, the author explains why people in 1999 and earlier were excited by the idea of the flying car. However, the author goes on to say in paragraph 18 that “instead of getting flying cars, we got the internet.”
	Option D is incorrect	In paragraph 11 of the selection, the author describes a column written in 1999, expressing the columnist’s disappointment that flying cars were never produced for everyday use. Although the author continues in paragraphs 13 through 15 to explain why the columnist feels “betrayed,” this is the opinion of the columnist, not the author of the selection. The author of the selection later discounts the columnist, explaining in paragraph 18 that “instead of getting flying cars, we got the internet,” which made the need for flying cars obsolete.

Item Position	Rationale	
4	Option C is correct	In paragraph 13 of the selection, the author explains how the invention of the automobile modernized transportation and became “a symbol of freedom.” In the quotation from paragraph 14, the author highlights the ironic consequence that cars, which can give people more freedom, have caused people to feel more trapped.
	Option A is incorrect	The author explains in the quotation from paragraph 3 of the selection that the AirCar will never become a common mode of transportation. However, the author is not describing a negative consequence; rather, the author is detailing consumers’ lack of interest in flying cars today.
	Option B is incorrect	In paragraph 13 of the selection, the author explains why the automobile gained so much popularity in the mid-1900s: “a tremendous demand for housing” that led to rapidly growing suburbs, which resulted in “cars [becoming] all-important.” Although these details provide the cause of modernization, they are not the consequence of it.
	Option D is incorrect	In the quotation from paragraph 16 of the selection, the author emphasizes that the dream of flying cars and “a space-age city” was not realistic. However, this quotation does not describe a negative consequence of modernization but a lack of modernization.

Item Position	Rationale	
5	Option B is correct	In paragraph 11 of the selection, the author explains why in 1999 the question “ ‘what happened to the flying cars?’ ” was something that “resonated with a generation who grew up watching <i>Jetsons</i> reruns.” Thus, it is likely the author intended for the selection to appeal to people who, like the columnist, might still wonder whether flying cars will become a reality.
	Option A is incorrect	In paragraph 2 of the selection, the author states that “in 2022, the Slovak Transport Authority issued the AirCar a certificate of airworthiness.” Although there are probably many people who are concerned that flying cars could be dangerous, there is no indication that the author intended for the selection to appeal to these people, since safety concerns are not a key idea in the selection.
	Option C is incorrect	It is very likely that the invention of a flying car requires a lot of technical knowledge. However, this selection does not provide any details about how flying cars work, so the author did not intend for the selection to appeal to people interested in learning how flying cars work.
	Option D is incorrect	In paragraph 4 of the selection, the author states that “the brutal truth, however, is the flying car was already obsolete before it was even invented.” Although it is possible that the selection might appeal to people with a similar opinion, people who think the idea of a flying car is outdated would most likely not be interested in reading about flying cars. Thus, it is unlikely the author intended the selection to appeal to people like this.

Item Position	Rationale	
6	Option B is correct	The author introduces the topic of flying cars by sharing positive reactions to the idea of flying cars. In paragraph 1 of the selection, the author quotes the British news organization BBC and Dr. Stephen Wright, an associate professor in aerospace engineering, regarding the invention of the AirCar in 2021. Both quotations the author uses highlight the positive reaction of these sources to the invention of the flying car.
	Option A is incorrect	In paragraph 1 of the selection, the author notes that an investor “predicted the AirCar would have a ‘huge market.’ ” Although it is true that flying cars are still a futuristic concept, there are not enough details about the potential future of flying cars in paragraph 1 for this type of speculation to be the author’s intention.
	Option C is incorrect	In paragraph 1 of the selection, the author notes that an investor “predicted the AirCar would have a ‘huge market.’ ” Although it is possible that the author included this information to imply that flying cars would become widely available, it is more likely that the author included this detail to highlight the unexpected reality that flying cars would not build its consumer market.
	Option D is incorrect	Although the author mentions that the AirCar was developed by a small Slovakian startup, there are no details in the selection about the years of research required to develop the product. The author included details about the news article in paragraph 1 to emphasize the long-awaited invention of a flying car.

Item Position	Rationale	
7	Option D is correct	In paragraph 19 of the selection, the author contrasts an imaginary 2022 version of <i>The Jetsons</i> with its original version to highlight how inaccurate the cartoon creators' predictions were. The author describes how "George Jetson won't fly to work; he'll get online and work remotely." This description of the imaginary 2022 version reflects how modern society advanced in a much different way than the 1960s television show predicted.
	Option A is incorrect	In paragraph 19 of the selection, the author describes how a 2022 version of George Jetson would work remotely, and his wife would also be "glued to a screen." Although this reimagined version of the show portrays current technologies, there is no evidence in the selection that suggests that the author believes that modern audiences would probably prefer this 2022 version.
	Option B is incorrect	In the reimagined version of <i>The Jetsons</i> described in paragraph 19 of the selection, the author uses the same characters: George Jetson and his wife, Jane. However, the technologies described have changed. The author contrasts the technology while keeping the characters the same, which suggests that the technology is the focus. Thus, the appeal of the characters would not be relevant.
	Option C is incorrect	In paragraph 19 of the selection, the author has asked the audience to reimagine <i>The Jetsons</i> from the "vantage point of 2022." However, there is no evidence in the selection that suggests that the author believes that this imagined modern version of the cartoon would probably be more interesting than the original.

Item Position	Rationale	
8	Option B is correct	The sensory language in the quotation from paragraph 6 of the selection reveals how the show captured its audience's attention. The words "explosion of sound and color" and "space-age city" and "perched on columns high in the air" are all examples of sensory language that highlight the futuristic setting of <i>The Jetsons</i> .
	Option A is incorrect	Although the language in the quotation from paragraph 6 does present a fantastic world, the author includes no evidence in the selection that the show led to real technological innovations.
	Option C is incorrect	In paragraph 11 of the selection, the author notes that the question about what happened to flying cars "resonated with a generation who grew up watching <i>Jetsons</i> reruns." Although it is possible that the Baby Boom generation could have a nostalgic appreciation for the show, the sensory language used in paragraph 6 does not demonstrate this.
	Option D is incorrect	Although the sensory language in paragraph 6 accentuates the futuristic aspects of the cartoon's setting, the selection does not make a comparison to other shows on television.

Item Position	Rationale	
9	Option A is correct	In paragraph 9 of the selection, the author states that “the overriding theme of the show is how quick, convenient, and effortless things will be then.” As the author mentions repeatedly, this “fantasy” (paragraph 16) never became reality, because the fantasy became obsolete. In paragraph 18, the author explains that “in the real twenty-first century, instead of getting flying cars, we got the internet.” The author uses this real-life detail to demonstrate why George Jetson and his wife “might not even need to own a car, let alone a flying one” (paragraph 19).
	Option B is incorrect	Although the author makes connections in the selection between the Baby Boom lifestyle and the television show, these connections are not a rebuttal of the counterargument in paragraph 9 but an explanation for it.
	Option C is incorrect	In paragraph 17 of the selection, the author’s inclusion of the quotation, “ ‘Mark my word: a combination airplane and motorcar is coming,’ ” is not a rebuttal of the counterargument in paragraph 9. In fact, it is likely that Henry Ford would agree that the flying car would make life “quick, convenient, and effortless” (paragraph 9).
	Option D is incorrect	In paragraph 10, the author states, “Although the original viewers knew this vision of the future was a grand joke, on some level they believed it.” Although the sentence does highlight the naivete of people who believed the “fantasy” (paragraph 16) could become real, this is not an actual rebuttal as it does not provide evidence that the flying car would not be as beneficial as people imagined.

Item Position	Rationale	
10	Option B is correct	The author uses antithesis, or contrasting ideas within a sentence, in the quotation from paragraph 23 of the selection to emphasize the idea that the promise of technology is not always accurate. In the first part of the quotation, the author notes that people were expecting to get a flying car that would take them anywhere. In the second part of the quotation, the author explains that what people actually gained was the internet, which allows people to go nowhere.
	Option A is incorrect	The technology in the quotation from paragraph 23 of the selection does not specifically mean just the flying car. Although the first part of the quotation is referring to the flying car, the second part of the quotation is referring to the internet.
	Option C is incorrect	The quotation from paragraph 23 of the selection describes how we did not get the technology we imagined. Although this answer is partially accurate, there is no explanation in this answer for the second half of the quotation.
	Option D is incorrect	The technology in the quotation from paragraph 23 of the selection is not just about flying cars. Although the first part of the quotation refers to the flying car, the second part does not. Furthermore, the quotation offers no indication that people lack imagination but rather that people do not always create the technology that they imagined.

Item Position	Rationale	
11	Option B is correct	In paragraph 2 of the story, the author describes Anna as “earthbound, her days unfolding in the stifling sameness of her neighborhood.” In paragraph 5, the author describes how in the neighbors’ windows, the “glow of televisions was as uniform as the yards.” Then in paragraph 8, the author describes the neighborhood at bedtime: “Identical lights went out in identical houses.” All these descriptions of the setting help the reader understand Anna’s desire to escape what she perceives as a stifling, dull life.
	Option A is incorrect	In paragraphs 2, 5, and 8 of the story, the author describes the setting of Anna’s neighborhood as having a “stifling sameness” and being “uniform” and “identical.” However, there is no mention of the people in her neighborhood.
	Option C is incorrect	In paragraph 13 of the story, the father asks Anna if she remembers collecting rocks. As the story progresses, the author explains how Anna became interested in rocks. However, the descriptions in paragraphs 2, 5, and 8 do not help the reader understand this characteristic of Anna.
	Option D is incorrect	The author does note in paragraph 12 that Anna and her father both enjoy the “still-dark part of the day.” Although this detail offers a shift in Anna’s attitude, the description of the setting in paragraphs 2, 5, and 8 does not help explain this.

Item Position	Rationale	
12	Option C is correct	In paragraph 10 through 17 of the story, the author uses the scene between Anna and her father to forward the plot by showing Anna’s renewed interest in her rock collection, which may help her feel less bored and restless. Anna’s father talks about her rock collecting, leading Anna to recall a fond memory of time spent with her grandfather. At the end of the story, Anna brings out her rock collection and studies her rocks.
	Option A is incorrect	In paragraph 15 of the story, Anna does reflect on a memory of finding a special rock with her grandfather. However, the most likely reason the author includes the scene in paragraphs 10 through 17 is to show the conversation between Anna and her father, not to focus on Anna’s relationship with her grandfather. As a result of this conversation, Anna has a renewed interest in the hobby that will quell her restlessness.
	Option B is incorrect	Although in paragraphs 10 through 17 of the story both Anna and her father look at articles in the newspaper, the author uses the discussion between the characters to advance the plot by helping Anna recall a childhood hobby she enjoyed. This causes Anna to bring out her rock collection, which soothes her restless mood.
	Option D is incorrect	Anna and her father both look at articles about the previous night’s moon landing during the scene in paragraphs 10 through 17 of the story. However, they do not discuss a desire to explore the moon. Instead, Anna’s father mentions her childhood rock collection, which helps Anna feel less restless when she brings out her rocks and examines them.

STAAR Spring 2025 English II Reading Language Arts Rationales

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

Item Position	Rationale	
14	Option A is correct	In paragraphs 18 through 21 of the story, Anna rediscovers her rock collection and feels more at peace, which supports the theme of finding contentment in one's own small world. The author reveals Anna's heavy feelings of boredom and restlessness throughout the story, but when Anna finds an interest to pursue once again, she feels more content.
	Option B is incorrect	In the story, Anna does have a conversation with her father, as well as fond memories of her grandfather, but she does not seek their approval. In paragraphs 18 through 21, the author shows that Anna finds contentment in small things, not approval from her elders.
	Option C is incorrect	Throughout the story, the author does include details about Anna being unhappy with her small-town life, but wanting to experience life away from home is not a theme developed in the story. Anna's characterization in paragraphs 18 through 21 helps develop a theme of finding contentment in one's own small world, when she discovers a renewed interest in her childhood rock collection.
	Option D is incorrect	In the story, Anna does spend time with her family watching the moon landing, and then she talks with her father and remembers a special time with her grandfather. However, the author does not develop Anna's characterization to support the theme of valuing time spent with family. In paragraphs 18 through 21, Anna's actions support a theme of finding contentment in small things.

STAAR Spring 2025 English II Reading Language Arts Rationales

Item Position	Rationale
15	The word <i>admonishes</i> in line 6 of the poem means “scolds or reprimands.” The word in line 6 that most helps the reader to understand the meaning of <i>admonishes</i> is “sternly.”

Item Position	Rationale	
16	Option D is correct	Based on lines 1 through 4 of the poem, the reader can infer that the speaker is probably a child who is watching a broadcast of the astronauts landing on the moon in real time. In line 1, the speaker recounts the sentence " <i>The Eagle has landed</i> ," which was spoken by the television broadcaster during the newscast. In line 4, the speaker refers to "the adults" mentioned in line 3 as "they," indicating a group in which the speaker is not a member. Lines 1 through 4 suggest that the speaker is in the room with parents or other adults during the moon landing broadcast.
	Option A is incorrect	The reader can infer from lines 1 through 4 of the poem that the speaker is probably a child, but the speaker is viewing the moon landing in real time along with adults, not being told about the event after the fact. The speaker's inclusion of the sentence " <i>The Eagle has landed</i> " suggests that he or she is repeating the sentence used during the live broadcast of the event.
	Option B is incorrect	Although the speaker in the poem does share reflections of watching the first moon landing, the speaker is a child telling the reader about the event in real time, not an adult looking back in time. In line 3, the speaker refers to "the adults," which suggests a child as the speaker.
	Option C is incorrect	In line 2 of the poem, the speaker says, "The great ship has dented the dusty surface of the moon," which may suggest that the spaceship's landing changed the moon in that area. However, the speaker is a child, not an adult. In line 3, the speaker refers to "the adults," which suggests the speaker is a child.

Item Position	Rationale	
17	Option C is correct	The poet's use of language in lines 19 through 21 of the poem contributes to a happy mood by emphasizing the speaker's pleasant associations with the times when the moon appears. Phrases such as "soft spring twilights" and "summer dreams" suggest warm relationships and happy times.
	Option A is incorrect	The speaker in the poem is captivated by the moon. However, the poet uses the language in lines 19 through 21 to emphasize the speaker's pleasant associations with the moon, not to suggest that the moon has the power to capture the speaker's attention during different seasons and events.
	Option B is incorrect	Although the poet does refer to different times of day in lines 19 and 20 of the poem, the poet does not use lines 19 through 21 to point out that the moon rises according to predictable patterns. Instead, the poet uses these lines to contribute to a happy mood by emphasizing the speaker's positive memories of these seasons.
	Option D is incorrect	Personification is a type of figurative language in which human or animal characteristics are applied to something that is not alive. Although the speaker personifies the moon in line 18 of the poem by saying that it "follows [their] station wagon," the poet is not suggesting in lines 19 through 21 that the moon is studying humans during the different seasons.

Item Position	Rationale	
18	Option B is correct	In lines 5, 16, and 22 of the poem, the speaker's repetition of the phrase "I imagine" contributes to the poem's meaning by contrasting the adults' focus on human accomplishment with the speaker's ideas about the relationship between humans and the moon. The speaker is a child, so imagining the moon with feelings, thoughts, and behaviors captures the lighthearted magic of the moon landing in comparison to the adults' focus on the incredible accomplishments of this first-time achievement.
	Option A is incorrect	The speaker is interested in the activities of the astronauts on the moon, but because the speaker is experiencing the event as a child, the speaker is also busily thinking about many aspects of the moon as it relates to his or her life.
	Option C is incorrect	The words "I imagine" in line 5 are used to indicate that the speaker does understand the adults' amazement that humans have traveled to the moon, because the speaker imagines that for the adults, "the moon feels invincible and immense." The speaker's repetition of the words "I imagine" in lines 5, 16, and 22 contributes to the meaning of the poem by contrasting childlike wonder and curiosity with the adults' focus on achievement.
	Option D is incorrect	The speaker does mention possible effects to the surface of the moon in line 2 of the poem, but the repetition of the words "I imagine" in lines 5, 16, and 22 does not suggest that the speaker is worried about human activities on the moon causing harm.

Item Position	Rationale	
19	Option D is correct	Both the story and the poem contain details that allow the reader to infer that the surface of the moon appears still and lifeless. In paragraph 1, the author of the story describes the moon as “a phantom stage,” and in lines 12 and 13 of the poem, the speaker describes “a waterless moon wave,/Their white spacesuits drooping like sails in a windless sea.”
	Option A is incorrect	Although both the author of the story and the poet include multiple references to the dust on the moon, neither the author nor the poet suggests that the dust is dangerous for the astronauts during their moon walk.
	Option B is incorrect	Both the author of the story and the poet include details suggesting that the surface of the moon appears still and lifeless, but neither the author nor the poet suggests that the scene on the moon is dull and dreary. Instead, the author and the poet depict viewers watching the televised moon walk as captivated by the stillness of the moon.
	Option C is incorrect	The author of the story and the poet both include descriptions of the astronauts walking on the moon for the first time. In paragraph 1, the author describes the astronauts in “unwieldy, white spacesuits,” and in lines 12 and 13, the poet describes them as “bouncing around” with “their white spacesuits drooping like sails in a windless sea.” However, neither the author nor the poet offers evidence that the astronauts have difficulty moving in their spacesuits.

Item Position	Rationale	
20	Row 1, "Anna" is correct	Based on details from the story, the reader can infer that Anna enjoys spending time with her family, since she watches the moon landing with them in the evening and then talks with her father the next morning. During this talk, she thinks about time spent with her grandfather in the past. The poet does not include details about the speaker's family.
	Row 2, "Poem's Speaker" is correct	Based on details from the poem, the reader can infer that the speaker notices the beauty of the moon. In line 17, the speaker describes how "it shimmers in our sky" and spends much of the poem trying to imagine what the moon sees when it "looks down at Earth" (line 22). In the story, the author does not include details that indicate that Anna notices the beauty of the moon.
	Row 3, "BOTH" is correct	The reader can infer that both Anna in the story and the speaker in the poem long for something that they think is out of reach. In paragraph 3, Anna longs for "the distance of the moon" as she wishes for new and different experiences in her life. In the final stanza, or verse, of the poem, the speaker expresses a desire for the moon to be able to witness "how we are that summer": riding bikes, making crafts, catching fireflies, and other activities.
	Row 4, "Poem's Speaker" is correct	Based on the final stanza, or verse, of the poem, the reader can infer that the speaker wants the moon to notice daily human life. In line 28, the speaker states, "I want the moon to see us" and then goes on to detail the activities that the speaker and friends do in the summertime: riding bikes, making lanyards out of string, crouching on curbs, catching fireflies, running, and making music with blades of grass. Anna from the story does not express this desire.

Item Position	Rationale	
21	Option B is correct	The most likely reason the author includes the quotation from paragraph 4 and the poet includes line 4 in the poem is to emphasize the idea that the moon landing holds historical importance. In paragraph 4 of the story, Anna's father allows the children to "stay up late to watch history being made." In line 4 the poem, the adults watching the moon landing are in awe, saying " <i>Just imagine</i> " to indicate their wonder at the event.
	Option A is incorrect	The idea that people in the story and the poem find the moon landing entertaining to watch downplays the awe that people feel during the event. In paragraph 4 of the story, Anna's father is solemn, or serious, when he says that the landing is " 'something to see,' " and in line 3 of the poem, the adults "shake their heads" as they try to comprehend such a monumental event.
	Option C is incorrect	Neither the author of the story nor the poet provides evidence to imply that people disagree about the value of the moon landing. Instead, in the story, Anna's father speaks "solemnly" about the importance of the event, which shows how serious he is about it, and in the poem, the adults are so awestruck by the moon landing that they struggle to comprehend it.
	Option D is incorrect	Although the author of the story includes a detail in paragraph 6 about the astronauts collecting rocks from the moon for further study, the poet does not include any details in the poem suggesting scientific advancements related to the moon landing.

Item Position	Rationale	
22	Option D is correct	The author and the poet use the language in these quotations to create different effects on the reader. Describing Anna's days as "stifling sameness" emphasizes that she dislikes her dull routine. In contrast, the poet describes the speaker riding a bike through "rainbow puddles in the street," which shows that the speaker feels joy in his or her routine.
	Option A is incorrect	The author's description of Anna as "fifteen and earthbound" suggests that she feels stuck, not that she avoids taking risks. The speaker's statement "I want the moon to see us" suggests that the speaker feels positively about life, but not that he or she lives fearlessly.
	Option B is incorrect	In the quotation from the story, the author's words "her days unfolding" do not emphasize that Anna prefers to react to events as they happen; instead, these words suggest that she is not in control of the monotony of her days. The poet uses the phrase "we ride our bikes" to describe one of the typical summer activities that the speaker finds joyful, but there is no suggestion that the speaker seeks out new experiences.
	Option C is incorrect	In the quotation from the story, the author uses the language "beginning to weigh her down" to describe how heavy and listless Anna feels experiencing the same activities every day. There is no suggestion that Anna needs the advice of her friends based on this language. The poet uses the language "how we are that summer" to emphasize the joy the speaker feels about typical summer activities, not to emphasize that the speaker values the company of friends.

Item Position	Rationale	
23	Option D is correct	There are numerous details in the article that express the idea that human history is shaped by the natural world. In paragraph 8, the author explains how “the fall line formed a natural border between different groups of people.” Also, in paragraph 9, the author describes how European settlers “who bumped up against the fall line stayed there.” Through the various examples, the author shows how the geological formation of the fall line influenced where people were most likely to live.
	Option A is incorrect	In paragraphs 8 through 10 of the article, the author does describe how indigenous peoples first identified the fall line as “a desirable place to live” and how European settlers reached the same conclusion in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. However, these explanations of where people settled do not provide answers to life questions.
	Option B is incorrect	Although in paragraphs 8 through 11 the author provides a historical explanation of why people chose to settle along the Atlantic Seaboard Fall Line, there is no indication in the article that people made better choices after past mistakes. The author describes how each settlement was influenced by the geological formation, not by past mistakes.
	Option C is incorrect	In the article, the author clearly recognizes the Atlantic Seaboard Fall Line as a natural beauty. In paragraph 12, the author explains that “picnickers flock to riverside parks along the fall line.” However, the author does not address the idea that people work hard to protect nature.

Item Position	Rationale	
24	Option B is correct	In paragraph 8 of the article, the author describes how various groups “were drawn to it by the abundance of fish around the many falls.” The author goes on to discuss the different groups and how the fall line influenced where each group settled. The quotation shows how the fall line affected the various groups of American Indians.
	Option A is incorrect	Although the quotation does suggest that the fall line played a role in people’s decision to live near it, the quotation does not specifically explain how the fall line influenced American Indian groups.
	Option C is incorrect	In the quotation, the author explains how the fall line influenced where European settlers established themselves in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Although the quotation shows how the fall line influenced European settlers, it does not show how the fall line affected American Indian groups.
	Option D is incorrect	In the quotation, the author is describing how the fall line influenced European settlers, not American Indian groups.

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25	Option A is correct	In paragraph 5 of the article, the author uses the phrase “plateau region” to describe the higher area of land between the Atlantic Ocean and the Appalachian Mountains. In this context, Definition 1 best matches the use of the word in the article.
	Option B is incorrect	The author’s use of the word <i>plateau</i> in paragraph 5 of the article refers to a large, raised area of land called the Piedmont. The author describes land, not a period or state of time where nothing increases or declines.
	Option C is incorrect	In paragraph 5 of the article, the author uses the word <i>plateau</i> to describe a large, raised area of land between the Atlantic Ocean and the Appalachian Mountains. The author is describing flat, raised land, not a period of time where minimal progress toward a person’s learning occurs.
	Option D is incorrect	The author’s use of the word <i>plateau</i> in paragraph 5 of the article refers to a large, raised area of land, not a level of achievement that a person or group can achieve.

Item Position	Rationale	
26	Option B is correct	The idea that geography has played an important role in where cities are established should be included in a summary of the article. The author discusses this key idea throughout the article.
	Option D is correct	The idea that the fall line provided many natural resources that attracted settlers should be included in a summary of the article. The author focuses on this key idea in paragraphs 8 through 10.
	Option A is incorrect	In paragraph 1 of the article, the author mentions that the lights from cities can be seen from space as forming a web of lines across Earth, but this is a detail. It is not a key idea that needs to be included in a summary of the article.
	Option C is incorrect	In paragraphs 5 through 7 of the article, the author discusses the fact that older metamorphic rocks are harder than the sediments found in the coastal plain. However, this is a detail, not a key idea that must be included in a summary of the article.
	Option E is incorrect	In paragraph 10 of the article, the author details how several types of mills were built along rivers in the Piedmont fall line because the fast-flowing water provided a power source. However, this is a detail, not a key idea, so it does not need to be included in a summary of the article.

Item Position	Rationale	
27	Option B is correct	The author uses a chronological structure in the section “Piedmont Meets Plain” to help develop the thesis of the article by explaining the geologic events that formed the fall line. The author describes the events in order, starting with shifting of tectonic plates causing continents to push into each other, through formations of hard bedrock, and then erosion of these rock layers until an escarpment, or bluff, is formed. These formations are the reason why the Piedmont fall line forms a visible line on our planet where people settle and live for generations, which is the thesis of the article.
	Option A is incorrect	In paragraph 6 of the article, the author does describe how the tectonic shift began 200 million years ago, but this is a detail and not a key idea that helps the author develop the thesis through a chronological recounting in the “Piedmont Meets Plain” section.
	Option C is incorrect	In paragraph 5 of the article, the author details how metamorphic rocks are created. This is a detail that contributes to the understanding of how the fall line formed, but the author does not rely on this detail to develop the thesis through a chronological recounting in the “Piedmont Meets Plain” section.
	Option D is incorrect	In paragraph 7 of the article, the author explains the formation of an escarpment, or bluff, and shows that the escarpment causes water to flow downhill in the fall line. These are important details, but the author does not rely on them to help develop the thesis through the chronological recounting in the section “Piedmont Meets Plain.”

Item Position	Rationale	
28	Option D is correct	The author includes the details in paragraph 12 of the article most likely to explain how the former Piedmont fall line continues to attract people to the region today. The author shares ways the area, now called the Atlantic Seaboard Fall Line, attracts picnickers and kayakers, as well as anyone who enjoys viewing waterfalls.
	Option A is incorrect	In paragraph 12 of the article, the author details the ways the land can be enjoyed. The author does not emphasize the importance of the fall line in the developing of American society. These points were discussed in earlier paragraphs.
	Option B is incorrect	In paragraph 12 of the article, the author does include references to people enjoying outdoor activities, such as “riverside parks” and “kayakers [paddling] the rivers.” These are enjoyable activities for many, but the author includes paragraph 12 to explain the fall line’s continued attraction today, not to encourage outdoor sports and activities.
	Option C is incorrect	In paragraph 12 of the article, the author does state that “people who live and travel along Interstate 95 are still feeling [the influence of the fall line] today.” However, the author does not mention driving along Interstate 95 because it is fun.

Item Position	Rationale	
29	Option C is correct	In paragraph 10 of the article, the author provides examples of how the fall line provided settlers with opportunities to improve and grow their settlements. For example, the author states that “the churning rapids and falls offered plenty of potential to power other fledgling industries.” In paragraph 11, the author gives examples of how the fall lines also created obstacles, such as how it “imposed barriers to upstream settlement.” The author presents this information using an advantages-and-disadvantages structure to give a balanced description of the benefits and challenges people experienced along the fall line.
	Option A is incorrect	Although the author does describe the desirability of the fall lines for native peoples, this information is shared in paragraph 8 of the article, not paragraphs 10 and 11, and it is not presented in a clear organizational structure of advantages and disadvantages.
	Option B is incorrect	In paragraph 9 of the article, the author explains the reason why European settlers were attracted to the fall line. This information is not presented in paragraphs 10 or 11, and to present this information, the author uses a descriptive organizational structure, not an advantages-and-disadvantages structure.
	Option D is incorrect	Although the author explains that the fall line created a “natural border between different groups of people,” this information is provided in paragraph 8 of the article. Additionally, this information is presented using a categorical organizational structure.

Item Position	Rationale	
30	Option A is correct	In paragraph 12 of the article, the author uses language to show enthusiasm for the subject. For example, the sentence “But this fall line’s influence is not confined to history” emphasizes how this geological formation is still influencing people today. The author follows this sentence with visual details, using phrases such as “flock to riverside parks” and “views [of] a spectacular waterfall,” which highlight the author’s passion for this topic.
	Option B is incorrect	Although the author uses words such as “picnickers flock” and “paddle the rivers that tumble over it,” the sentence structure and use of phrases such as “powerfully influenced by geology” and “confined to history” create a more formal tone in paragraph 12.
	Option C is incorrect	Although paragraph 12 and the article have a positive tone, there is no suggestion that the author is hopeful that people will be more protective of nature in the future. The author is passionate about explaining the way geology influences human experience but does not offer any opinions about protecting nature.
	Option D is incorrect	Although it is true that the subject of geology may be less engaging for some people, the author does not use language in paragraph 12 to convey a casual tone. The author uses language that appeals to people’s senses, such as “flock to riverside parks” and “views a spectacular waterfall.” In fact, most of the article, including paragraph 12, shows the author’s vast knowledge and enthusiasm about geology.

Item Position	Rationale
31	<p>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 English II scoring guide available on the STAAR Reading Language Arts Resources webpage.</p> <p>Throughout history, geology has always been a factor in successes or failures of human civilization as they build upon mountains, brave the treacherous seas, or develop agricultural methods. From valleys to tectonic plates, humanity has always been influenced by geology and the natural ways of earth. Over the years, people have changed and adapted accordingly, creating the world lived in today. Geological features have helped shape the history of human civilizations by influencing where people live and forming a natural border between different groups of people. Geological features have helped shape the history of human civilizations by influencing where people reside. For example, modern cities such as Trenton, New Jersey; Washington, D. C.; Richmond, Virginia; and Augusta, Georgia were built in their specific locations because of the Atlantic Seaboard Fall line. This fall line was an advantageous place to live, as seen by the abundance of natural resources of the Tidewater coastal plains and Piedmont plateau. Many people settled down near rivers and towns that later became cities were established. Without the Atlantic Seaboard Fall Line, the modern cities today that hold impact to the world may not have been formed, and the history of civilizations would've been altered. By influencing where people resided, the Atlantic Seaboard Fall line shows that geological features have aided in shaping the history of human civilizations. Another way that human civilizations have been influenced by geological features is that a natural border has been formed between groups of people. Geological features have influenced the history of human civilizations by forming a natural border between different groups of people. In the Southeast, people who spoke Algonquian languages, such as Powhatan, lived east of the fall line, while those who spoke Siouan languages, including the Monacan, lived to its west. The natural border of the fall line allowed for these groups of people to be separated and form their own cultures, traditions, and languages that they wouldn't have had otherwise. The fall line gave people an opportunity to expand in diversity and become unique culturally, proving that geological features change human civilizations. By forming a natural border between different groups of people and influencing where people resided, geological features are shown to shape human civilizations. The Atlantic Seaboard Fall line is only one example of how humanity has been influenced by geological features, not just in history, but in daily life. There's no doubt that geology has always and will remain an essential part of shaping human civilizations.</p>

Item Position	Rationale	
32	Option C is correct	The writer puts the phrase "By the late 1800s" at the beginning of the sentence. The writer then identifies who the sentence is about (John Kellogg and Charles Post) and adds a clause that gives more information about them. With these revisions, the writer effectively combines sentences 19, 20, and 21 in a clear way.
	Option A is incorrect	By joining the sentences in this way, the writer separates the phrase "by John Kellogg and Charles Post" from the verb "was promoted." This makes the new sentence awkward and confusing.
	Option B is incorrect	Using "Although" at the beginning of the new sentence would suggest an inaccurate relationship between the ideas in the sentences.
	Option D is incorrect	In this revision, the writer uses the conjunctions "and" and "so" to combine the ideas in the original three sentences. This revision repeats the idea that John Kellogg and Charles Post promoted the concept of eating healthy cereal, resulting in an ineffective way to combine sentences.

Item Position	Rationale	
33	Option D is correct	In this paragraph, the writer is detailing some of the events that led to breakfast as we know it today. The word “development” is the most effective word to describe this process that took place over time.
	Option A is incorrect	Using the word “unfolding” would imply that the concept of breakfast was slowly being revealed or understood. This does not fit in the context of this paragraph.
	Option B is incorrect	“Growth” is used to indicate that something or someone is increasing in size, and that is not what the writer intends to convey in this sentence.
	Option C is incorrect	Using the word “progress” would suggest a movement toward something better. This would not be the most effective word to use, since this paper is about change and adaptation, not improvement.

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Item Position	Rationale	
34	Option A is correct	With this sentence, the writer gives information about another breakfast drink and its essential vitamin content. This sentence would best follow sentence 26 and support the ideas in this paragraph.
	Option B is incorrect	Although this fact about alternatives to milk may be true, it would not support the ideas in this paragraph.
	Option C is incorrect	Inserting this sentence would inform the reader about another source of vitamin D, but it would not add to the reader's understanding of events that changed breakfast around the world.
	Option D is incorrect	Adding this sentence after sentence 26 would not support the fifth paragraph because the paragraph is not primarily about promoting milk consumption.

Item Position	Rationale	
35	Option B is correct	In sentence 29, the writer introduces the need for “quick and convenient” foods at midday. In the new sentence, the writer notes that the sandwich provided a perfect lunch for students and workers because “it was portable, and you could eat it cold with your hands.” Thus, the new sentence properly follows sentence 29.
	Option A is incorrect	In sentence 28, the writer has not yet mentioned the need for “quick and convenient” foods, so it would not make sense to add the new sentence here.
	Option C is incorrect	The writer mentions the need for larger evening meals in sentence 31. Giving an example of a “portable” food that “could be eaten with your hands” would not logically follow sentence 31.
	Option D is incorrect	In sentence 33, the writer gives information about the timing and importance of dinner. It would be awkward to add a sentence about what people eat at work and school here.

Item Position	Rationale	
36	Option D is correct	Throughout the paper, the writer has provided information about how the current practice of having breakfast, lunch, and dinner developed. Therefore, this sentence about our established “habit” of eating three meals a day captures the overall meaning of the paper and would be the most effective concluding sentence.
	Option A is incorrect	In this suggested replacement, the writer describes the meal schedule as an “upward trend.” There is no evidence in the paper that the current number of meals per day is likely to go higher, so this would not be an effective concluding sentence for this paper.
	Option B is incorrect	With this sentence, the writer addresses the reader, using the pronoun “you.” This has not occurred previously in the paper, so it is inconsistent and surprising. This would not be an effective concluding sentence.
	Option C is incorrect	Here the writer offers a personal feeling and an incidental detail about his own family’s meals. This does not fit with the factual content of the paper and would not serve as an effective concluding sentence.

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

Item Position	Rationale	
38	Option A is correct	In this revision, the writer removes the phrase “and challenging,” which eliminates the redundant idea since “difficult” and “challenging” have the same meaning. This change creates a more concise and effective sentence.
	Option B is incorrect	With this option, the writer has added the phrase “to make it difficult” after the verb “was structured.” This would indicate that the organization’s structure was meant to create difficulty, which is not the writer’s intent.
	Option C is incorrect	Using the phrase “was what made it difficult and challenging” results in a needlessly wordy sentence that is still redundant.
	Option D is incorrect	In this revision, the writer indicates that the structure “was” difficult rather than that it “made” decision-making difficult. The result is a misleading sentence that still features the original redundant wording.

Item Position	Rationale	
39	Option A is correct	With this revision, the writer correctly places the phrase “on a resolution” after the verb “agreed,” where it indicates the object of the agreement, or what was agreed on.
	Option B is incorrect	The revision of this sentence is confusing because the pronoun “it” now comes before the noun “resolution,” making the sentence’s meaning unclear.
	Option C is incorrect	By inserting the phrase “and follow” after the phrase “adhere to” (which has the same meaning as “follow”), the writer creates unnecessary redundancy in this revision.
	Option D is incorrect	This option is incorrect because the first clause in sentence 21 is awkward and needs to be revised.

Item Position	Rationale	
40	Option B is correct	By replacing "They" with "Tensions around the world," the writer makes it clear that the tensions described in the preceding sentences are what "continued to escalate."
	Option A is incorrect	Replacing "They" with "Decisions made by leaders" would not make sense because a decision is fixed and does not "escalate."
	Option C is incorrect	Here again, the writer offers a phrase involving "decisions," which would not make sense with the word "escalate."
	Option D is incorrect	Even though the league did consist of a group of nations, this is not what "continued to escalate," so substituting this phrase would not improve the clarity of the sentence.

Item Position	Rationale	
41	Option B is correct	The phrase "Despite its failure to prevent World War II" draws an appropriate contrast between the failure of the league that the writer mentions in the sixth paragraph and the accomplishments of the league she discusses in the seventh paragraph.
	Option A is incorrect	Adding the phrase "Regardless of the time in history" would not improve the transition between these two paragraphs because the writer has been using the sixth paragraph to describe a particular sequence of historical events.
	Option C is incorrect	Using "As an example to smaller countries" would not improve the transition because the writer is not describing the impact of the league on individual countries or their policies.
	Option D is incorrect	Inserting the phrase "When compared with other organizations" would be inappropriate here because the writer is noting that the league was "the first organization of its kind." No comparison with the achievements of other, later organizations has been made yet, so this would not be an effective transition into the seventh paragraph.

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Item Position	Rationale	
42	Option D is correct	This sentence is written correctly and does not need to be revised.
	Option A is incorrect	With this revision, the writer misplaces the phrase “the United Nations,” which incorrectly implies that this is another name for the league.
	Option B is incorrect	In this revision, the writer inappropriately places the phrase “as a precursor” at the end of the sentence. The resulting sentence is awkward and seems to indicate that the United Nations was a precursor, not the league.
	Option C is incorrect	The writer moves the phrase “it also served” from the beginning of the sentence to the end, which leaves the pronoun “it” with no clear meaning.

Item Position	Rationale	
43	Option B is correct	The eighth paragraph is about the United Nations and the way it functions. The fact that students “learn about this organization in their history classes” is incidental to the paper, so this sentence should be removed.
	Option A is incorrect	Sentence 29 serves as the topic sentence that captures the meaning of this paragraph, so it should not be removed.
	Option C is incorrect	In sentence 31, the writer gives details to support the overall idea that the United Nations is a stronger organization than the League of Nations was. Therefore, this sentence should not be removed.
	Option D is incorrect	With sentence 32, the writer continues to provide support for the overall idea of the paper. This sentence should remain in the paragraph.

Item Position	Rationale	
44	Option A is correct	Sentence 6 is a sentence fragment, or an incomplete sentence. Here the writer correctly combines sentence 5 with sentence 6 to form a complete sentence.
	Option B is incorrect	In this suggested change, the second punctuated phrase is a fragment because it has no subject. Therefore, this is not an acceptable way to write sentences 5 and 6.
	Option C is incorrect	In this sentence, the writer has used an incorrect verb form ("loving"), which has created a sentence fragment.
	Option D is incorrect	The second punctuated phrase is a sentence fragment. It does not contain a subject.

Item Position	Rationale	
45	Option A is correct	"Grandparents" is not being used as a proper noun, or a noun that refers to a specific person, place, idea, or event. In this context, it is a common noun, so it is not capitalized.
	Option B is incorrect	The comma after "Amarillo" is necessary in this sentence because it closes a subordinate clause at the beginning of this sentence.
	Option C is incorrect	An apostrophe is not needed in "always" because this word is an adverb, not a possessive noun that shows ownership.
	Option D is incorrect	"Visit" is a present-tense verb, which is correct in this sentence because the writer is describing actions that are still taking place.

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Item Position	Rationale	
46	Option D is correct	No change is needed in this sentence because the sentence is complete and contains no grammatical or spelling errors.
	Option A is incorrect	The phrase "bubble gum" is not being used as a part of a proper noun phrase, a phrase that refers to a specific person, place, idea, or event, so it does not need to be capitalized.
	Option B is incorrect	"Several" is the correct spelling of the word being used in this sentence.
	Option C is incorrect	A double negative occurs when two negative words are used in the same sentence. This change would introduce a double negative ("haven't no") into the sentence, which is grammatically incorrect.

Item Position	Rationale	
47	Option C is correct	"Me" is the correct pronoun to use in this sentence because the writer is referring to herself, rather than to her readers.
	Option A is incorrect	Because "Mom" is used here as a singular noun that refers to one specific person, the writer has correctly placed the apostrophe before the letter s.
	Option B is incorrect	In changing "when" to "then," the writer would create a run-on sentence, an error in which two or more main clauses are joined incorrectly. This cannot be the correct change to make.
	Option D is incorrect	"Delicious" is the correct spelling of the word being used in this sentence.

Item Position	Rationale	
48	Option C is correct	This story is being written using past-tense verbs, so “was now submerged” is the correct form of the verb for this sentence.
	Option A is incorrect	Here the writer changes “that” to a pronoun (“it”). This is unnecessary and would make the sentence grammatically incorrect.
	Option B is incorrect	In this sentence, "the natural bridge that had connected the island to the mainland" is what the sentence is about (subject) and "is" describes its current state (verb). The subject of the sentence should not be separated from the verb by a comma. A comma after "mainland" would not be appropriate.
	Option D is incorrect	Sentence 4 mistakenly features a present-tense verb, so a change is needed for consistency with the rest of the story.

Item Position	Rationale	
49	Option A is correct	Commas are required to set off the phrase “which had been low . . . that morning” in the middle of the sentence. By placing a comma after “tide,” the writer supplies the correct punctuation for this sentence.
	Option B is incorrect	A dash is not the correct punctuation to use here because it does not match the comma at the end of the phrase.
	Option C is incorrect	A colon is used to give emphasis, present dialogue, or introduce a list. It would not be the correct punctuation to use in this sentence.
	Option D is incorrect	A semicolon is used between two independent clauses, which are clauses that can stand alone as complete sentences. In this case, the semicolon would separate the subject from the rest of the sentence, which would not be correct.

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Item Position	Rationales	
50	Option C is correct	The conjunction "since" is inaccurate here because the tide hasn't gone back out yet. "Until" is the correct conjunction to use because the writer is indicating that Shae and her dad must wait before returning to the mainland.
	Option A is incorrect	This change would create an unacceptable sentence fragment, or an incomplete sentence.
	Option B is incorrect	Because a semicolon is used to separate two related independent clauses (clauses that that can stand alone as complete sentences), it would not be correct here.
	Option D is incorrect	"Went" is the correct past-tense form of the verb being used in this sentence. Replacing it with "goes" would introduce an inconsistent, present-tense verb.

Item Position	Rationale	
51	Option D is correct	Changing “antisipated” to “anticipated” corrects the spelling error in this sentence.
	Option A is incorrect	A comma is not needed after “charts” because this is not a compound sentence. The words after “and” do not form an independent clause (a clause that can stand alone as a complete sentence).
	Option B is incorrect	A change from “that” to “this” would create an unacceptable run-on sentence, an error in which two or more main clauses are joined incorrectly.
	Option C is incorrect	“They” is the correct pronoun to use in the sentence because the writer is referring to Shae and her dad.

Item Position	Rationales	
52	Option A is correct	Sentence 11 is a run-on sentence, an error in which two or more main clauses are joined incorrectly. With this change, the writer corrects the run-on by removing the second comma and replacing "they could" with the word "to."
	Option B is incorrect	The first punctuated phrase is a fragment, or an incomplete sentence.
	Option C is incorrect	Here the writer corrects the original run-on but introduces a new error when he adds the word "which" after "shared." This creates an unacceptable sentence fragment.
	Option D is incorrect	The second punctuated phrase is a fragment. Therefore, this cannot be the correct way to write sentence 11.