Chapter 6
Practice Set 3


Answer Key

1. E. — unsympathetic to
   Answer in Context: While not unsympathetic to the arguments in favor of the proposal for new highway construction, the governor nevertheless decided to veto the proposal.

2. A. — mercurial
   Answer in Context: The children’s mercurial natures were in sharp contrast to the even-tempered dispositions of their parents.
3. Blank (i) A. — aghast  
   Blank (ii) D. — shock  
   Answer in Context: The first major exhibits of modern art left the public **aghast**, its **shock** intensified by the response of art critics, who stooped to vituperation to express their disgust with the new art.

4. Blank (i) C. — prescience  
   Blank (ii) F. — foresight  
   Answer in Context: While many outside the company attributed the company’s success to its president’s **prescience**, insiders realized that this success owed more to the president’s inflexibility than to any **foresight** that the president might be supposed to have displayed.

5. Blank (i) C. — obsolescence  
   Blank (ii) D. — outdated  
   Answer in Context: With the rate of technological **obsolescence** accelerating — many people now consider a personal computer **outdated** after three years — the question of how to properly dispose of old equipment is no small matter.
6. Blank (i) A. — wide application of
Blank (ii) D. — marginalized
Blank (iii) I. — increasing
Answer in Context: In the nineteenth century the **wide application of** advanced mechanical printing techniques made it possible for newspaper owners to print newspapers cheaply and in mass quantities, but unlike many other mechanized industries, where machines **marginalized** workers, the new printing machines required trained compositors to run them, thereby **increasing** the demand for skilled printing labor.

7. Blank (i) B. — grow complacent
Blank (ii) E. — redouble
Blank (iii) G. — reversed
Answer in Context: It may be that a kind of pendulum is built into United States politics: if a particular interest group scores a major victory, its supporters **grow complacent** and its adversaries **redouble** their efforts, so that the victory is soon **reversed**.
8. A. — Earth and the Moon were formed at the same time
    B. — smaller objects joined together to form Earth and the Moon

9. C. — Where did the impactor that collided with Earth originate?

10. E. — A flawed hypothesis is introduced, and then an alternative hypothesis is presented.

11. E. — point out the basis for, and the limits of, an approach to the history of leisure

12. C. — Failure to take into account the complexity of certain features of European culture

13. A. — a way of calling historians’ attention to certain facts about the Industrial Revolution

14. B. — A hypothesis is presented and discussed, and a limitation to the hypothesis is identified.
15. **Sentence to be completed:** If big sums are to be spent on cleaning up environmental disasters, it is better to spend them on unglamorous but _______ problems such as unsanitary water in Third World countries.

   Answer C: pressing  
   Answer F: critical

16. **Sentence to be completed:** The process of establishing a literary canon is seen by some as, in part, an attempt by certain scholars to make their own labors central and to relegate the work of others to _______ status.

   Answer B: marginal  
   Answer F: peripheral

17. **Sentence to be completed:** The politician is more ideologically steadfast than is widely believed: her enduring commitments to social justice and economic equality, for example, are not indicative of _______.

   Answer B: capriciousness  
   Answer D: inconstancy
18. **Sentence to be completed:** At first glance Watkins Park, with its meandering stream and its thicket of greenery, seems_______; however, upon closer inspection one is quickly reminded that the park is in the middle of a major city.

   Answer A: bucolic
   Answer E: pastoral

19. **Sentence to be completed:** Although relying on much of the recent scholarship on the bison, Lott’s book is a distinctly ________ and even idiosyncratic contribution to the field.

   Answer B: original
   Answer C: innovative

20. B. — cursory

21. D. — Brandon at age 63 would not have portrayed himself in a painting as he had looked when he was a young man.
22. D. — more restricted than is the distribution of the genus *Varanus* as a whole

23. A. — The evidence that led Mertens to argue that *Varanus* originated in the Indo-Australian archipelago

24. B. — It cannot rule out either one of the theories about the origins of *Varanus* discussed in the passage.

25. E. — Ancient philosophers believed that there had to be a large landmass at the South Pole to balance the northern continents and make the world symmetrical.
Directions for questions 1 and 2:

Each of the following questions includes a short text with a blank, indicating that something has been omitted. Select the entry that best fits the corresponding blank in the text.

1. While not ________ the arguments in favor of the proposal for new highway construction, the governor nevertheless decided to veto the proposal.

   A. optimistic about
   B. convinced by
   C. happy with
   D. sanguine about
   E. unsympathetic to
“Nevertheless” indicates that the governor’s action—vetoing the proposal—was done despite some inclination to act otherwise. The first part of the sentence, then, must show that the governor had some reason to support the proposal. Thus the correct response, when preceded by “not,” should describe an attitude toward the arguments in favor of the proposal that would lead the governor to support it. Four of the choices, “optimistic about,” “convinced by,” “happy with,” and “sanguine about,” indicate positive attitudes. When they are negated by the “not” that precedes the blank, then, they all indicate reasons that the governor would not support the proposal, so they are the opposite of what is called for. However, if the governor was not “unsympathetic to” the arguments for the proposal, he would have had a reason to support the measure he ultimately vetoed.

Thus the correct answer is **unsympathetic to** (Choice E).
2. The children’s _______ natures were in sharp contrast to the even-tempered dispositions of their parents.

A  mercurial
B  blithe
C  phlegmatic
D  apathetic
E  cunning
Explanation

The children’s natures are the opposite to those of their parents; since the parents are even tempered, the word that fills the blank must mean the opposite of even tempered. “Mercurial,” meaning quickly changing, exactly fits, so it is the correct choice. Although the other answer choices encompass a range of temperaments (“blithe” means happy, “phlegmatic” means unemotional, “apathetic” means uncaring), none suggest a tendency to change from one state to another, so none of them contrast as well with “even-tempered.”

Thus the correct answer is **mercurial** (Choice A).
Directions for questions 3 to 7:

Each of the following questions includes a short text with two or three blanks, each blank indicating that something has been omitted. Select one entry for each blank from the corresponding column of choices. Fill all blanks in the way that best completes the text.

3. The first major exhibits of modern art left the public (i) ________, its (ii) ________ intensified by the response of art critics, who stooped to vituperation to express their disgust with the new art.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Blank (i)</th>
<th>Blank (ii)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A aghast</td>
<td>D shock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B bemused</td>
<td>E apathy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C unsurprised</td>
<td>F empathy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Explanation

The sentence implies that the public and the art critics had similar negative reactions to the modern art exhibits; the words “vituperation” and “disgust” further suggest that this reaction was very intense. Thus answers to both Blank (i) and Blank (ii) must be synonymous with “strong negative reaction.” The only combination of the answer choices that matches this meaning is “aghast” and “shock,” so this answer is correct.

Thus the correct answer is aghast (Choice A) and shock (Choice D).
4. While many outside the company attributed the company’s success to its president’s (i) _______, insiders realized that this success owed more to the president’s inflexibility than to any (ii) _______ that the president might be supposed to have displayed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Blank (i)</th>
<th>Blank (ii)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A persevereance</td>
<td>D obduracy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B popularity</td>
<td>E caprice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C prescience</td>
<td>F foresight</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Explanation**

The second part of the sentence suggests that there is a contrast between a negative quality of the president ("inflexibility") that was the actual primary cause of the company’s success and a positive quality named by Blank (ii) that the outsiders took to be the cause. Among the answer choices for Blank (ii), only "foresight" denotes a positive quality, so it is the correct answer. The sentence as a whole implies that the answer to Blank (i) must be similar in meaning to the answer for Blank (ii); the only answer choice that is synonymous with "foresight" is "prescience," so it is the correct answer for Blank (i).

Thus the correct answer is **prescience** (Choice C) and **foresight** (Choice F).
5. With the rate of technological (i) _______ accelerating—many people now consider a personal computer (ii) _______ after three years—the question of how to properly dispose of old equipment is no small matter.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Blank (i)</th>
<th>Blank (ii)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A affordability</td>
<td>D outdated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B complexity</td>
<td>E familiar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C obsolescence</td>
<td>F inestimable</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Explanation

Since the last part of the sentence mentions the problem of disposing of old equipment, it is likely that the three-year-old personal computer described by Blank (ii) will be characterized by a word that suggests why it is being disposed of. Neither “familiar” nor “inestimable” suggests something that needs to be cast off, while “outdated” does; therefore, it is the correct response. Since the outdated three-year-old computer is presented as an example of the trend in technology mentioned in the first part of the sentence, Blank (i) must be completed with a word that characterizes this outdatedness. “Obsolescence” does exactly that, so it is the correct response. Neither “affordability” nor “complexity” is exemplified by computers that become quickly outdated, so they are incorrect.

Thus the correct answer is **obsolescence** (Choice C) and **outdated** (Choice D).
6. In the nineteenth century the (i) _______ advanced mechanical printing techniques made it possible for newspaper owners to print newspapers cheaply and in mass quantities, but unlike many other mechanized industries, where machines (ii) _______ workers, the new printing machines required trained compositors to run them, thereby (iii) _______ the demand for skilled printing labor.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Blank (i)</th>
<th>Blank (ii)</th>
<th>Blank (iii)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A wide application of</td>
<td>D marginalized</td>
<td>G ignoring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B extensive resistance to</td>
<td>E intrigued</td>
<td>H anticipating</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C great expense of</td>
<td>F isolated</td>
<td>I increasing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Explanation**

The author states that in the nineteenth century great quantities of newspapers could be printed cheaply, and Blank (i) calls for something related to advanced mechanical printing techniques that allowed this to happen. Of the choices, “great expense of” contradicts the assertion that newspaper printing became cheap, while “extensive resistance to” advanced technology would likely result in no notable changes in the industry. Thus “wide application of” is the correct answer. Blank (iii) must describe the effect of new printing machines on the skilled labor market. Since the author states that these machines required trained workers, jobs would have been created that did not previously exist. Thus the correct answer is “increasing.” As for the other choices, there is no evidence that the demand for skilled printing labor was ignored and no mention of future demand for skilled labor that might have been anticipated. Blank (ii) requires a word that characterizes the effect of machines on workers in other mechanized industries, which the author contrasts to the newspaper industry’s need for trained operators. The implication is that the
mechanization of other industries did not require trained workers but rather that machines simply replaced human labor. This suggests that the answer to Blank (ii) is “marginalized.” Since the passage contains no references to workers’ interest in the machines or to their working conditions, neither “intrigued” nor “isolated” makes sense.

Thus the correct answer is **wide application of** (Choice A), **marginalized** (Choice D), and **increasing** (Choice I).
7. It may be that a kind of pendulum is built into United States politics: if a particular interest group scores a major victory, its supporters (i) ______ and its adversaries (ii) ______ their efforts, so that the victory is soon (iii) ______.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Blank (i)</th>
<th>Blank (ii)</th>
<th>Blank (iii)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A consider new possibilities</td>
<td>D abandon</td>
<td>G reversed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B grow complacent</td>
<td>E redouble</td>
<td>H augmented</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C become even more focused</td>
<td>F defend</td>
<td>I institutionalized</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Explanation

The colon indicates that the second half of the sentence will explain the first. What is being explained is an analogy between United States politics and a pendulum, so it follows that the second half of the sentence shows how momentum in politics swings back and forth.

Blank (iii) must be filled with a word that describes this seesawing effect; “reversed” does so. “Augmented” instead suggests momentum that builds upon itself, while “institutionalized” would characterize change that once made is difficult to undo, so neither of those choices fit. Blanks (i) and (ii) then must be filled with a pair of choices whose contrast explains why reversals in political momentum happen. “Grow complacent” and “redouble” do this, suggesting that the motivation of partisans on both sides of an issue is affected in opposite ways by a victory for either side. For Blank (i), “become even more focused” suggests that other victories for the winning side would follow the initial one, while “consider new possibilities” implies an expansion rather than a reversal of a political agenda.
For Blank (ii), neither “abandon” nor “defend” suggests the political will that could lead to the reversal of a defeat.

Thus the correct answer is grow complacent (Choice B), redouble (Choice E), and reversed (Choice G).
Questions 8 to 10 are based on the following passage:

The binary planet hypothesis—that Earth and the Moon formed simultaneously by the accretion of smaller objects—does not explain why the Moon’s iron core is so small relative to the Moon’s total volume, compared with Earth’s core relative to Earth’s total volume. According to the giant-impact hypothesis, the Moon was created during a collision between Earth and a large object about the size of Mars. Computer simulations of this impact show that both of the objects would melt in the impact and the dense core of the impactor would fall as molten rock into the liquefied iron core of Earth. The ejected matter—mantle rock that had surrounded the cores of both objects—would be almost devoid of iron. This matter would become the Moon.

**Description**

The passage discusses two hypotheses about the formation of Earth’s moon and explains why one of them appears to be more plausible than the other.
8. Consider each of the following choices separately and select all that apply.

According to the passage, the binary planet hypothesis holds that

A  Earth and the Moon were formed at the same time
B  smaller objects joined together to form Earth and the Moon
C  the Moon’s core is the same absolute size as Earth’s core
Explanation

Choices A and B are correct. The question asks what the binary planet hypothesis holds.

Choice A is correct: according to the first sentence of the passage, the binary planet hypothesis holds that “Earth and the Moon formed simultaneously,” that is, at the same time.

Choice B is correct: according to the first sentence of the passage, the binary planet hypothesis holds that Earth and the Moon formed “by the accretion of smaller objects,” that is, by smaller objects joining together.

Choice C is incorrect: the passage does not mention the absolute sizes of Earth’s core and the Moon’s core; it only compares their sizes relative to the volumes of the two objects.
9. Select and indicate the best answer from among the five answer choices.

The giant-impact hypothesis as described in the passage answers all of the following questions EXCEPT:

A What happened to the rock that surrounded the impactor’s core after the impactor hit Earth?
B What happened to the impactor’s core after the impactor hit Earth?
C Where did the impactor that collided with Earth originate?
D Why is the Moon’s iron core small relative to that of Earth?
E What was the size of the impactor relative to that of Mars?
The questions in Choices A, B, D, and E are all answered by the giant-impact hypothesis: for Choice A, the rock that surrounded the impactor’s core “would become the Moon”; for Choice B, the impactor’s core “would fall as molten rock into the liquefied iron core of the Earth”; for Choice D, the Moon’s iron core is small relative to the Earth’s core because the matter that formed the Moon was “almost devoid of iron”; and for Choice E, the passage states that the impactor was “a large object about the size of Mars.” But nothing in the passage refers to the origin of the impactor, so **Choice C** is the correct answer.
10. Select and indicate the best answer from among the five answer choices.

Which of the following best describes the organization of the passage?

A) The development of one theory into another is outlined.
B) Two explanations are provided, both of which are revealed as inadequate.
C) A theory is presented, and then evidence that undermines that theory is discussed.
D) Similarities and differences between two theories are described.
E) A flawed hypothesis is introduced, and then an alternative hypothesis is presented.
The passage begins by presenting the binary planet hypothesis about the formation of Earth and the Moon and claiming that the hypothesis fails to explain the disparity in the sizes of Earth’s iron core and the Moon’s iron core relative to their volumes. The passage then introduces an alternative—the giant-impact hypothesis—and argues that this alternative explains the disparity better. Thus, Choice E is correct. The second theory is not presented as having been developed out of the first, so Choice A is incorrect; only the first theory is revealed as inadequate, so Choice B is incorrect; and the two theories are not compared extensively, so Choice D is incorrect. Although “a theory [the binary planet hypothesis] is presented, and then evidence that undermines that theory [the disparity related to iron cores] is discussed,” that description fails to capture the organization of the passage as a whole, so Choice C is incorrect.
Questions 11 to 14 are based on the following passage. (A word and a phrase are underlined and boldfaced in lines 44-45 for reference in answering questions 12 and 13.)

Most recent work on the history of leisure in Europe has been based on the central hypothesis of a fundamental discontinuity between preindustrial and industrial societies. According to this view, the modern idea of leisure did not exist in medieval and early modern Europe: the modern distinction between the categories of work and leisure was a product of industrial capitalism. Preindustrial societies had festivals (together with informal and irregular breaks from work), while industrial societies have leisure in the form of weekends and vacations. The emergence of leisure is therefore part of the process of modernization. If this theory is correct, there is what Michel Foucault called a conceptual rupture between the two periods, and so the very idea of a history of leisure before the Industrial Revolution is an anachronism.

To reject the idea that leisure has had a continuous history from the Middle Ages to the present is not to deny that late medieval and early
modern Europeans engaged in many pursuits that are now commonly considered leisure or sporting activities—jousting, hunting, tennis, card playing, travel, and so on—or that Europe in this period was dominated by a privileged class that engaged in these pursuits. What is involved in the discontinuity hypothesis is the recognition that the people of the Middle Ages and early modern Europe did not regard as belonging to a common category activities (hunting and gambling, for example) that are usually classified together today under the heading of leisure. Consider fencing: today it may be considered a “sport,” but for the gentleman of the Renaissance it was an art or science. Conversely, activities that today may be considered serious, notably warfare, were often described as pastimes.

Serious pitfalls therefore confront historians of leisure who assume continuity and who work with the modern concepts of leisure and sport, projecting them back onto the past without asking about the meanings contemporaries gave to their activities. However, the discontinuity hypothesis can pose problems of its own. Historians holding this view attempt to avoid anachronism by means of a simple dichotomy, cutting European history into two eras,
preindustrial and industrial, setting up the binary opposition between a “festival culture” and a “leisure culture.” The dichotomy remains of use insofar as it reminds us that the rise of industrial capitalism was not purely a phenomenon of economic history, but had social and cultural preconditions and consequences. The dichotomy, however, leads to distortions when it reduces a great variety of medieval and early modern European ideas, assumptions, and practices to the simple formula implied by the phrase “festival culture.”

Description

The passage deals with the historical study of leisure in Europe and discusses the view that the concept of leisure underwent a fundamental change at the time of the Industrial Revolution (the “discontinuity” hypothesis). The second paragraph explains how the hypothesis can accommodate certain historical data, and the third paragraph discusses the usefulness of the hypothesis while at the same time outlining some potential drawbacks.
11. Select and indicate the best answer from among the five answer choices.

The primary purpose of the passage is to

A. refute the idea that the history of leisure is discontinuous
B. show why one of two approaches is more useful in studying the history of leisure
C. suggest the need for a new, more inclusive concept to replace the concept of leisure
D. trace the development of a theory about the history of leisure
E. point out the basis for, and the limits of, an approach to the history of leisure
Explanation

The first paragraph of the passage tells us that the difference between the preindustrial and industrial society in Europe was so great that “the modern distinction between the categories of work and leisure” (lines 6-7) cannot be meaningfully applied to the former, implying that there exists a discontinuity between the two periods. The second paragraph argues that the discontinuity approach can accommodate historical data. Finally, the third paragraph admits that, while useful in some respects, this approach “can pose problems of its own” (lines 42-43) and briefly describes these problems. All this points to Choice E as correct.
12. Select and indicate the best answer from among the five answer choices.

The word “dichotomy” is underlined and boldfaced near the middle of the third paragraph (line 45). The author of the passage asserts that the “dichotomy” can lead to which of the following?

- A Reliance on only one of several equally valid theoretical approaches
- B The imposition of modern conceptions and meanings on past societies
- C Failure to take into account the complexity of certain features of European culture
- D Failure to utilize new conceptual categories in the study of the history of leisure
- E Failure to take account of the distinction between preindustrial and industrial societies
Explanation

The word “dichotomy” appears only in the last paragraph of the passage. One of the key claims there is that the dichotomy “reduces a great variety . . . to the simple formula” (lines 53-55). Therefore **Choice C** is correct.
13. Select and indicate the best answer from among the five answer choices.

The phrase “simple dichotomy” is underlined and boldfaced near the middle of the third paragraph (lines 44-45). According to the passage, the “simple dichotomy” is useful primarily because it serves as

- **A** a way of calling historians’ attention to certain facts about the Industrial Revolution
- **B** an antidote to the oversimplification encouraged by such terms as “festival culture”
- **C** a device for distinguishing between the work and the leisure activities of preindustrial Europeans
- **D** a way of understanding the privileged class of medieval Europe by viewing its activities in modern terms
- **E** a tool for separating social history, including the history of leisure, from economic history
Explanation

“Simple dichotomy” is mentioned in lines 44-45. The passage states that this dichotomy “remains of use insofar as it reminds us that the rise of industrial capitalism” (lines 48-49) was not just an economic phenomenon, but also a social and a cultural phenomenon. This points to Choice A as correct.
14. Select and indicate the best answer from among the five answer choices.

Which of the following best describes the organization of the passage as a whole?

A Two hypotheses are discussed, and evidence in support of one is presented.

B A hypothesis is presented and discussed, and a limitation to the hypothesis is identified.

C A hypothesis is proposed, its supposed advantages are shown to be real, and its supposed disadvantages are shown to be illusory.

D A problem is identified, two hypotheses are advanced to resolve it, and both are rejected.

E A problem is identified, two resolutions are proposed, and a solution combining elements of both is recommended.
Explanation

The main purpose of the passage is to discuss the idea of “the central hypothesis of a fundamental discontinuity between preindustrial and industrial societies” (lines 2-4) in terms of the development of the concept of leisure. Most of the passage is focused on demonstrating the usefulness of this hypothesis; however, the second part of the third paragraph mentions some “distortions” (line 53) that may result if the hypothesis is accepted. Therefore Choice B is correct. Choices A, D, and E are incorrect, as only one hypothesis/solution is discussed in the passage. Choice C is incorrect, as the passage does not mention that the “distortions” (line 53) caused by accepting the hypothesis are illusory.
Directions for questions 15 through 19:

Each of the following questions includes a sentence with a blank indicating that something has been omitted. Following the sentence will be a list of six words or phrases, each of which could be used to complete the sentence. Select the two answer choices that, when used to complete the sentence, fit the meaning of the sentence as a whole and produce completed sentences that are alike in meaning.

15. If big sums are to be spent on cleaning up environmental disasters, it is better to spend them on unglamorous but _______ problems such as unsanitary water in Third World countries.

   A  futile
   B  ephemeral
   C  pressing
   D  controversial
   E  transitory
   F  critical
Explanation

The blank calls for words that characterize the types of environmental problems worth spending large sums on. Among the choices are two sets of near synonyms: “ephemeral/transitory” and “pressing/critical.” Of these two pairings, only the latter makes sense in the context of the rest of the sentence—it would be unlikely for anyone to advocate spending large sums on problems that will be quickly gone without any intervention, as “ephemeral” and “transitory” imply, nor would unsanitary water likely be characterized as a merely temporary dilemma. Of the other two options, neither “futile” nor “controversial” has a synonym among the answer choices, so they can be ruled out on that account; in addition, neither would be used to justify the expenditure of large sums of money.

Thus the correct answer is pressing (Choice C) and critical (Choice F).
16. The process of establishing a literary canon is seen by some as, in part, an attempt by certain scholars to make their own labors central and to relegate the work of others to _______ status.

A  orthodox
B  marginal
C  mainstream
D  definitive
E  conditional
F  peripheral
**Explanation**

The attempt by certain scholars to make their own work central is contrasted to the way they treat the work of others. The blank, then, must be completed with a pairing whose meaning is the opposite of central. Of the choices, “orthodox,” “mainstream,” and “definitive” are all too close in meaning to “central” to provide the necessary contrast; therefore they are incorrect. “Conditional” suggests a status that is yet to be determined, a nuance unsupported by anything else in the sentence; therefore it is also incorrect. The two remaining answers, “marginal” and “peripheral,” are synonyms with meanings that contrast nicely with “central.”

Thus the correct answer is **marginal** (Choice B) and **peripheral** (Choice F).
17. The politician is more ideologically steadfast than is widely believed: her enduring commitments to social justice and economic equality, for example, are not indicative of _______.

A  perspicacity  
B  capriciousness  
C  callousness  
D  inconstancy  
E  clearheadedness  
F  insensitivity
The first part of the sentence suggests that the politician is widely believed to be the opposite of ideologically steadfast, while the portion of the sentence following the colon provides support for the assertion that her reputation for wavering is undeserved. The blank, then, must be completed with words that mean the opposite of ideological steadfastness. “Capriciousness” and “inconstancy” are both opposites of steadfastness, so they are the correct answers. Of the other possible responses, one other pairing—“insensitivity” and “callousness”—are synonyms that would yield sentences alike in meaning, while the other two choices are also close in meaning. But neither of these pairs provides the necessary contrast to steadfastness that the sentence’s structure calls for.

Thus the correct answer is **capriciousness** (Choice B) and **inconstancy** (Choice D).
18. At first glance Watkins Park, with its meandering stream and its thicket of greenery, seems_______; however, upon closer inspection one is quickly reminded that the park is in the middle of a major city.

A  bucolic  
B  remarkable  
C  urban  
D  noteworthy  
E  pastoral  
F  spurious
Explanation

The sentence characterizes certain physical features of the park and contrasts them with the park’s location within a major city. The blank must describe those features so as to provide that contrast, which “urban” and “spurious” do not. While “remarkable” and “noteworthy” produce sentences with the same meaning, they also do not provide the required contrast between the park’s features and its location.

Thus the correct answer is **bucolic** (Choice A) and **pastoral** (Choice E).
19. Although relying on much of the recent scholarship on the bison, Lott’s book is a distinctly _______ and even idiosyncratic contribution to the field.

A derivative
B original
C innovative
D imitative
E insightful
F surprising
The “although” that begins the sentence indicates that the words that fill the blank will contrast with the author’s reliance on recent scholarship. Of the choices, “derivative” and “imitative” both describe works that lean too heavily on the work of others; since these would not form a contrast with the first part of the sentence, they do not fit the blank. “Original” and “innovative” do describe qualities that are the opposite of reliant on the work of others, and they also yield sentences that are alike in meaning, so they are the correct answers. Of the other two responses, while both “insightful” and “surprising” contrast in some ways with the first part of the sentence, neither has a synonym among the other choices.

Thus the correct answer is original (Choice B) and innovative (Choice C).
James W. Coleman’s book on John Edgar Wideman’s literary career addresses the needs of a general, if well-read, public rather than the esoteric vanities of scholarly specialists, whom he neither ignores nor flatters. To assume the former audience was familiar with every work Wideman ever penned would have been pretentious. Instead, Coleman furnishes more than ample descriptive criticism and background information, avoiding the cryptic allusiveness that is favored by some academic critics but that discourages the undergraduate audience he likely envisioned. Unfortunately, this accent on bringing serious Wideman criticism to a broader audience often frustrates the reader who wishes that announced themes, techniques, and stylistic devices would not whisk by as quickly as world capitals on a seven-day package tour of the globe.
Description

The passage discusses Coleman’s approach to writing John Edgar Wideman’s literary biography and claims that it was intended for the general public rather than for the academic community. The passage also describes the book’s weak and strong points from the point of view of its intended audience.
20. Select and indicate the best answer from among the five answer choices.

The phrase “a seven-day package tour of the globe” is underlined and boldfaced at the end of the passage (line 18). The reference to “a seven-day package tour of the globe” is most likely meant to suggest a treatment that is

- [A] inclusive
- [B] cursory
- [C] focused
- [D] broad based
- [E] substantial
**Explanation**

**Choice B** is correct. The phrase occurs in the last sentence of the passage; this sentence claims that Coleman’s narrative progresses too fast, and the analogy with the “seven-day package tour of the globe” is meant to emphasize the fact that Coleman does not spend enough time on describing important aspects of Wideman’s work. Therefore the correct answer choice is “cursory.”
The painter Peter Brandon never dated his works, and their chronology is only now beginning to take shape in the critical literature. A recent dating of a Brandon self-portrait to 1930 is surely wrong. Brandon was 63 years old in 1930, yet the painting shows a young, dark-haired man—obviously Brandon, but clearly not a man of 63.
21. Select and indicate the best answer from among the five answer choices.

Which of the following, if justifiably assumed, allows the conclusion to be properly drawn?

A) There is no securely dated self-portrait of Brandon that he painted when he was significantly younger than 63.

B) In refraining from dating his works, Brandon intended to steer critical discussion of them away from considerations of chronology.

C) Until recently, there was very little critical literature on the works of Brandon.

D) Brandon at age 63 would not have portrayed himself in a painting as he had looked when he was a young man.

E) Brandon painted several self-portraits that showed him as a man past the age of 60.
Explanation

The passage concludes that the self-portrait must be improperly dated and cites as proof the discrepancy between Brandon’s actual age (63) in 1930 and his youthful appearance in the painting. The assumption is that a self-portrait depicts the artist’s current appearance; therefore, Choice D is the correct answer. Since the argument does not depend on the existence or absence of other self-portraits, Choices A and E are incorrect. The argument also does not depend upon Brandon’s motivations for not dating his works or upon the lack of critical literature about his work, so Choices B and C are incorrect.
Questions 22 to 24 are based on the following passage. (A phrase is underlined and boldfaced in line 10 for reference in answering question 24.)

Experts have differed about where the genus *Varanus* (monitor lizards) originated. Because most existing species live in Australia, early researchers concluded that *Varanus* originated in Australia and subsequently island hopped westward along the Indo-Australian archipelago. Herpetologist Robert Mertens later argued that *Varanus* probably originated in the archipelago. Chromosomal analysis has since supported Mertens’ contention, and in addition, **geologic evidence** points to a collision between the archipelago and the Australian landmass after *Varanus* evolved—a fact that could account for the genus’ present distribution.

A related puzzle for scientists is the present distribution of *Varanus*’ largest surviving species, the Komodo dragon. These carnivores live only on four small islands in the archipelago where, scientists note, the prey base is too small to support mammalian carnivores. But the Komodo dragon has recently been shown to manage body temperature...
much more efficiently than do mammalian carnivores, enabling it to survive on about a tenth of the food energy required by a mammalian carnivore of comparable size.

**Description**

The passage begins by identifying a question that has long puzzled scientists. The first paragraph is devoted to considering two possible answers to the question. The second paragraph introduces a question that is related to the question discussed in the first paragraph. It then provides a possible answer to it.
22. Select and indicate the best answer from among the five answer choices.

It can be inferred from the passage that the geographical distribution of the Komodo dragon is

(A) currently less restricted than it was at the time researchers first began investigating the origins of the genus *Varanus*

(B) currently more restricted than it was at the time researchers first began investigating the origins of the genus *Varanus*

(C) less restricted than is the distribution of the genus *Varanus* as a whole

(D) more restricted than is the distribution of the genus *Varanus* as a whole

(E) viewed as evidence in favor of the hypothesis that the genus *Varanus* originated in the Indo-Australian archipelago
Explanation

**Choice D** is correct. Because the Komodo dragon, a species of *Varanus*, is restricted to “four small islands in the archipelago” but “most existing species” of the genus *Varanus* as a whole live in Australia, the geographical distribution of the genus includes species in both places. The distribution of the Komodo dragon is restricted to only one of these places and is thus more restricted than the genus as a whole, not less restricted. Thus, Choice C is incorrect. Choices A and B are incorrect because the passage does not describe the specific change in the geographic distribution of the Komodo dragon, but rather just describes its present distribution. Choice E is incorrect because the passage does not present its discussion of the Komodo dragon as evidence for either hypothesis of the origin of *Varanus* but rather as a “related puzzle.”
23. Select and indicate the best answer from among the five answer choices.

Which of the following elements in the debate over the origin of Varanus is NOT provided in the passage?

A. The evidence that led Mertens to argue that Varanus originated in the Indo-Australian archipelago
B. The evidence that led early researchers to argue that Varanus originated in Australia
C. A possible explanation of how Varanus might have spread to the Indo-Australian archipelago if it had originated in Australia
D. A possible explanation of how Varanus might have spread to Australia if it had originated in the Indo-Australian archipelago
E. An indication of the general present-day distribution of Varanus species between Australia and the Indo-Australian archipelago
Explanation

Choice A is correct. The passage provides support for Mertens’ argument by providing later chromosomal evidence as well as geologic evidence but it does not provide nor describe the evidence with which Mertens originally argued. Choices B and E are incorrect because the passage states that early researchers argued for a specific origin for *Varanus* “because most existing species live in Australia,” which indicates the present-day distribution of species. Choices C and D are incorrect because the passage provides geologic evidence to suggest a possible explanation for how *Varanus* may have spread to either Australia or the archipelago regardless of its origin.
24. Select and indicate the best answer from among the five answer choices.

The phrase “geologic evidence” is underlined and boldfaced near the end of the first paragraph (line 10). It can be inferred that which of the following is true of the “geologic evidence”?

A It was first noted by Mertens as evidence in favor of his theory about the origins of Varanus.
B It cannot rule out either one of the theories about the origins of Varanus discussed in the passage.
C It accounts for the present distribution of the Komodo dragon.
D It has led to renewed interest in the debate over the origins of Varanus.
E It confirms the conclusions reached by early researchers concerning the origins of Varanus.
Explanation

**Choice B** is correct. The passage presents the “geologic evidence” so as to provide a possible explanation for the prevalence of the various species of *Varanus* in Australia if indeed Mertens’ theory is correct. But the evidence itself does not rule out the possibility that the earlier theory is correct and that Mertens is not, so the “geologic evidence” cannot rule out either theory. Choice A is incorrect because there is no specific indication that Mertens first provided this evidence, and the chronology of the presentation suggests that he did not. Choice C is incorrect as there is no mention in the passage of a specifically renewed interest in the debate. Choice D is incorrect since the “geologic evidence” does not rule out nor confirm either Mertens’ conclusions or those of earlier researchers.
Question 25 is based on this passage.

Geographers and historians have traditionally held the view that Antarctica was first sighted around 1820, but some sixteenth-century European maps show a body that resembles the polar landmass, even though explorers of the period never saw it. Some scholars, therefore, argue that the continent must have been discovered and mapped by the ancients, whose maps are known to have served as models for the European cartographers.
25. Select and indicate the best answer from among the five answer choices.

Which of the following, if true, is most damaging to the inference drawn by the scholars?

- The question of who first sighted Antarctica in modern times is still much debated, and no one has been able to present conclusive evidence.
- Between 3,000 and 9,000 years ago, the world was warmer than it is now, and the polar landmass was presumably smaller.
- There are only a few sixteenth-century global maps that show a continental landmass at the South Pole.
- Most attributions of surprising accomplishments to ancient civilizations or even extraterrestrials are eventually discredited or rejected as preposterous.
- Ancient philosophers believed that there had to be a large landmass at the South Pole to balance the northern continents and make the world symmetrical.
Explanation

The inference that Antarctica was discovered by the ancients would be weakened if there were an alternative explanation of why the ancients might have drawn a landmass in that area on their maps. **Choice E** provides just such an explanation, so it is the correct answer. Choice A is incorrect because the identity of the modern discoverer of the Antarctica has no bearing on why the continent was included on sixteenth-century maps. Since the ancients referred to in the passage likely postdate the warm period mentioned in Choice B, that option is also incorrect. The passage never mentions how many sixteenth-century maps show a southern polar landmass, and the argument does not depend upon any particular quantity, so Choice C is incorrect. Choice D comments upon the conclusion but does not pertain to the argument itself, so it is also incorrect.

End of Practice Set 3