

English Language Arts

GRADE 7

Read the passage below.

The donut is a fried food enjoyed in many countries throughout the world. Donuts are usually deep fried from flour dough and come in many shapes and flavors. Typically, donuts are either ring-shaped with a hole in the middle or whole circles with filling. Bakers can top a ring-shaped donut with many glazes including sugar, chocolate or even maple bacon. Whole circles can be filled with many things including custard, frosting, or fruit preserves.

-Excerpted from On the Origin of Sweets by Swede Tooth

Question 1:

Which evidence from the passage does **not** support the claim that the donut comes in many varieties?

- a) Bakers can top a ring-shaped donut with many glazes.
- b) The donut is enjoyed throughout the world.
- c) Donuts come in many shapes and flavors.
- d) Whole circle donuts can be filled with many things

Question 2:

Which evidence supports the claim the Dutch probably created the donut?

- a) "Washington Irving's 1809 reference to donuts...is generally cited as the first written mention of the dessert."
- b) "Hanson Gregory claims to have invented the ring-shaped donut...while he was working aboard a lime-trading ship..."
- c) "Indeed, an early reference to doughnuts was the Dutch word oliekoek..."
- d) "Most likely, donuts owe their source to the Dutch who were responsible for introducing many American desserts..."

Question 3:

Read the passage below.

In 1978, the People's Republic of China introduced the one-child policy. Like its name says, the law states that couples living in cities could only have one child. The Chinese government claims that the law reduced the population by 400 million people, greater than the entire population of the United States. Other experts argue that the number is closer to 100 million.
-Adapted from "Overcrowded Earth" by Eric Hwang

What can you infer from the fact that the People's Republic of China introduced the one-child policy?

- a) Most national governments have been forced to consider how to reduce their nation's population.
- b) Countries facing over population often enact a one-child policy to stem uncontrolled growth.
- c) Chinese couples are typically satisfied with having only one child.
- d) The Chinese government wanted to stem the many social problems that accompany overpopulation

Question 4:

Read the passage below.

Schools across America are teaching this poem all wrong. How, you ask? Well, thanks to the past 100 years of education, you can find Robert Frost's iconic lines Two roads diverged in a wood, and I, I took the one less traveled by, And that has made all the difference. on T-shirts, inspirational posters, mouse pads, and art work praising those who take risks and choose not to follow the crowd. This would all be so inspiring, if only that was actually the message Frost wanted to convey in "The Road Not Taken."
-Adapted from "Why the Road Less Traveled Isn't All It's Cracked Up to Be" by Laura Kachelmeyer

What can you infer from the argument that schools are teaching this poem incorrectly?

- a) Poetry is usually straightforward with only one possible meaning.
- b) Poetry lends itself to many different interpretations.
- c) Students do not have the capacity to comprehend the poem's true meaning.
- d) Frost used confusing language to trick schools.

Question 5:

Read the passage below.

Heterochromia is a rare trait in which a person's eyes are different colors. There are many superstitions and stereotypes about people and animals with heterochromia. As with any difference that makes us unique, it is important to step into the shoes of the other person. In other words, you need to see the world from their eyes. Then, and only then, will people recognize that heterochromia is just another one of the many traits that makes the world so wonderfully diverse.

-Adapted from "Causes of Heterochromia Iridum" by Krista Garver

What can you infer from the many superstitions and stereotypes about people with heterochromia?

- a) People with heterochromia are desired for acting roles because their eye color is unique.
- b) People with heterochromia have two distinct personalities because of their unique eye color.
- c) People with heterochromia might be unfairly judged based on the colors of their eyes.
- d) People with heterochromia have a history of having supernatural powers.

Question 6:

Read the passage below.

In 1891, while teaching at the YMCA International School in Springfield, Massachusetts, Dr. James Naismith struggled to keep his rowdy students focused in the winter. The school could only hold gym indoors during the winter months, but there was no popular indoor team sport to keep them occupied. -Excerpted from "Basketball: Springfield's Sport" by Tim O'Malley

Which evidence from the text supports the inference that winters in Massachusetts are too cold to play outdoor sports?

- a) The YMCA International School is in Springfield, Massachusetts.
- b) Dr. James Naismith struggled with his rowdy students.
- c) The school could only hold gym indoors during the winter months.
- d) There was no popular indoor team sport to keep the students occupied.

Question 7:

Read the passage below.

Autodidacticism means “self-teaching.” Autodidacticism isn’t just reading a book about a topic. It involves doing on your own what you would normally do in school – reading, studying, working out problems, and practicing. It’s hard work to become an expert at something! Leonardo da Vinci (1452–1519) is considered one of the best artists who ever lived, but he was also a talented inventor, mathematician, and scientist. He designed parachutes, diving suits, and flying machines. He advanced the understanding of anatomy, botany, and other sciences. Da Vinci was formally trained in art, but the rest he learned on his own, including mathematics and Latin.

-Excerpted from Krista Garver's "The Power of Autodidacts"

Which evidence from the text supports the inference that Leonardo da Vinci was an autodidact?

- a) He designed parachutes, diving suits, and flying machines.
- b) He advanced the understanding of anatomy, botany, and other sciences.
- c) Leonardo Da Vinci is considered one of the best artists who ever lived.
- d) Da Vinci was formally trained in art, but the rest he learned on his own

Question 8:

Read the passage below.

Jupiter is the largest planet in our solar system. The fourth planet from the sun has been recognized in the night sky since ancient times. It is, in fact, the second brightest object in Earth's night sky. (The moon and Venus are the brightest celestial objects that can be observed from Earth.) Like Saturn, Uranus, and Neptune, Jupiter is a gas giant that lacks a well-defined surface. Its mass is so large, however, that all of the other planets in the solar system could fit inside of it. Scientists hypothesize that because Jupiter is composed primarily of helium, the planet started as a cloud of gases that almost formed a star. In fact, if Jupiter was just 80 times bigger, it most likely would have developed into the second star in our solar system. A prominent feature of Jupiter is the Great Red Spot. First observed in the 17th century, the Great Red Spot is a massive storm system on Jupiter’s surface. About three and a half Earths would fit inside the spot.

-Excerpted from "The King of Planets" by Stephen Gallily

Which of the following choices is weak evidence for the claim that Jupiter is the largest planet in our solar system?

- a) Jupiter is the third brightest celestial object in the night sky.
- b) All of the planets in the solar system could fit inside of Jupiter.
- c) If Jupiter was just 80 times larger, it probably would have become a star.
- D] Three and a half Earths could fit into Jupiter's Great Red Spot alone.

Question 9:

Read the passage below.

Will planting an oak tree's acorn grow into an oak tree? What would happen to the tree and the world around it? One thing is for sure: an oak tree is very useful to the life forms surrounding it. First of all, this oak tree would mean an enormous amount to a number of animals. If it makes it to maturity, an oak tree grows to be many stories tall, and has long, strong branches that provide a lot of shade. Many birds can nest there, and many squirrels can, too. Mature oaks produce thousands of acorns, and squirrels and other animals feast on these. This oak tree wouldn't just help animals. Oak trees help the environment, too. Their roots stop soil from being washed away by heavy rains. Their wide branches help with this, too. The branches and leaves slow rainwater down before it reaches the ground. This means that more of the rain stays to nurture the plants around the tree. People might use the oak tree to make useful things. Sometimes the wood from oak trees is used to make barrels to store wine and other drinks. And the bark from a special kind of oak is used to make corks for bottles. Cork trees can produce cork for 200 years! This oak tree could also be an important symbol as well. Throughout history people have revered oaks. The ancient Greeks, Vikings, and other cultures associated oaks with the great thunder gods like Zeus and Thor. This may be because, as studies have shown, oaks attract lightning more than any other tree. The ancient Romans would crown with oak leaves and branches someone who saved a comrade's life in battle. These days, oaks are revered because a mature oak has to have been growing for a long time. Many have become important landmarks and historical sites.

-Excerpted from "What Does an Oak Tree Mean?" by George Gibson

Which is weak evidence for the claim that oak trees are useful to the life forms surrounding it?

- a) According to studies, oak trees attract more lightning than any other tree.
- b) Oak trees stop soil from being washed away by heavy rains.
- c) Oak tree branches help to slow rain reaching the ground, providing more nurturing water.
- d) Ancient Romans use oak leaves and branches to crown soldiers who saved their comrade's lives.

Question 10:

Read the passage below.

The Bermuda Triangle is an area of the Atlantic Ocean between three points—Miami, Florida, Puerto Rico, and the island of Bermuda. Many strange occurrences have been reported in the Bermuda Triangle, including mysterious disappearances, abnormal weather patterns, and sightings of unidentified aircraft. While supernatural theories abound, some researchers offer more ordinary explanations. Lawrence David Kusche, a research librarian from Arizona State University, found that many of the reports of disappearances in the Bermuda Triangle were false or exaggerated. Kusche claims that the disappearances in the Bermuda Triangle are not any more frequent than in other parts of the ocean. Many normal explanations may account for the strange aircraft sightings. Many of the stories can be attributed to people who were bored and simply imagined a sighting to entertain them. Also, the area is popular for U.S. Navy training exercises, which may account for the high amount of unidentified aircraft there. This high amount of aerial traffic may disorient some pilots. There are also many similarly shaped islands in the Bermuda Triangle area, which can confuse pilots and sailors.

-Adapted from "The Bermuda Triangle" by Kerry Hogan

Which of the following is weak evidence for the claim that strange stories of the Bermuda Triangle can be explained by normal events?

- a) Many of the stories can be attributed to people who were bored and simply imagined a sighting to entertain them.
- b) There are many similarly shaped islands in the Bermuda Triangle area, which can confuse pilots and sailors.
- c) The area is popular for U.S. Navy training exercises, which may account for the high amount of unidentified aircraft there.

- d) Lawrence Kusche found that the number of disappearances in the Bermuda Triangle are not any higher than other parts of the ocean. Lesson Topic: Evaluate sources

Question 11:

Read the passage below.

Ukraine is a country in Eastern Europe. It is a former state of the United Soviet Socialist Republic, or the USSR. Since the Middle Ages, Ukraine has been a contested territory of Russian and European power. According to The CIA World Factbook, in 1991, Ukraine achieved national independence from the Soviet Union and established its own government. One of the keys to this independence was altering the country's name from The Ukraine to just Ukraine. Adam Taylor, a US business reporter, explains that Ukraine dropped the article "The" to show independence from Russia. When Russia ruled Ukraine, it was known as The Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic. According to ukrainetrek.com, millions of Ukrainians died during Soviet rule. Famine and starvation were widespread because Russia collected Ukraine's agricultural (farm) goods. Vegetables, fruits, and grains grown in plenty all left Ukraine for Russia. Thousands of Ukrainians also gave their lives to fighting the Russian occupation. A 1991 rebellion, as described by Nadja Achterkamp, freelance journalist, finally succeeded in ousting the Soviet reign, establishing self-government for Ukrainians.

-Excerpted from "Eastern History" by Aleksey Gregorovich

Which answer choice would be the best source to support facts about Ukrainian history?

- a) the CIA World Fact Book
- b) Nadja Achterkamp, freelance journalist
- c) Ukrainetrek.com, an independent website
- d) Adam Taylor, US business reporter

Question 12:

Read the passage below.

Ukraine, during its time as a Russian state, became known as the breadbasket of the Soviet Union. The rich, dark soil of its fields produced wheat, sugar, beets, and other vegetables. Grazing cows provided milk and meat across the republics of the Soviet Union. According to the CIA World Factbook, twenty-five percent of all of the Soviet agricultural output came from Ukraine. Nearly one out of four Ukrainian workers labored in the vast fields. According to the Ukraine Census Bureau, from 1950-1990, Ukraine also became known as an industrial and technological center. Many of Russia's top scientists and engineers grew up in the Ukraine. A variety of popular Soviet sports figures, writers, painters, and other various artists also came from Ukraine.

-Excerpted from "Eastern History" by Aleksey Gregorovich

Is the evidence presented by a reliable source?

- a) no, because the information comes from an unknown source
- b) yes, because the information comes from reliable sources
- c) yes, because the information is not factual

Question 13:

Read the passage below.

The term "global warming" refers to an increase in the average temperature of the earth's surface. The surface of the earth includes both the air and the sea. Since 1980, the surface temperature of the earth has risen about 1.4 degrees Fahrenheit. The planet's heat has increased every proceeding decade since 1980. The temperatures beginning in 1980 are the planet's warmest from the time when temperature records began in the 1850s.
-Excerpted from "Clearing Pollution's Sludge: A Primer" by James St. Cloud

Which source would be best to use in support of the global warming theory?

- a) an unnamed source's study concerning global warming
- b) a report from an environmental scientist
- c) a politician's speech on global warming's effects
- d) a meteorologist's local weather forecast

Question 14:

Read the passage below.

From 1991-2004, Ukraine felt many of the growing pains of a new democracy: corruption, voter fraud, power grabs, and censorship of free speech. According to the CIA World Factbook, "true freedom remain[ed] elusive, as the legacy of state control has been difficult to throw off". In 2004, a heated election between Viktor Yanukovich and Viktor Yuschchenko ended in controversy. Yanukovich's election win was seen as a state takeover, according to world news services. Tens thousands of students and protesters took to the streets in support of Yuschchenko. As noted by the Ukrainian Consul, the uprising was called the Orange Revolution after the Yuschchenko's party's colors. Government officials who supported Yanukovich participated in voter fraud. The Ukranian Parliament called for an official vote recount. In January of 2005, protesters defeated the ruling party and Yuschchenko took power.
-Excerpted from "Politics is Always Politics" by Oleg Kasperchuk

Which claim lacks a reliable source?

- a) "Tens of thousands of students and protesters took to the streets in support of Yuschchenko."
- b) "Government officials who supported Yanukovich participated in voter fraud."
- c) Viktor Yanukovich's election win was viewed as a state takeover.
- d) "True freedom remained elusive, as the legacy of state control has been difficult to throw off."

Question 15:

Read the passage below.

One of the first supporters of the global warming theory was Dr. Carl Sagan, a world-renowned astrophysicist and natural scientist. In the early 1980s, he proposed that if humans continued this build-up of carbon dioxide and methane in the earth's atmosphere, it would lead to a rise in earth's surface temperature. The results of this rise would include physical variances such as an increase in extreme weather events, ecological effects like increasing extinction due to habitat loss, and social changes when poor and low-lying countries have to adapt to the negative consequences of global warming.
-Excerpted from "Clearing Pollution's Sludge: A Primer" by James St. Cloud

Is the evidence presented by a reliable source?

- a) Yes, Dr. Sagan is a natural scientist theorizing about the effects of an atmospheric build up.
- b) Yes, Dr. Sagan has an advanced degree. Therefore, his opinion is automatically valid.
- c) No, Dr. Sagan is an astrophysicist and cannot be considered an expert on global warming.
- d) No, global warming is just a theory, not a fact. Therefore, no one can be a reliable source. Lesson Topic: Choose the strongest evidence to support an idea

Question 16:

Read the passage below.

The farther away an object is, the longer its light takes to reach us. When you look across the room, you see something as it was a few billionths of a second ago, and when you look at the moon, you see the light that left it a little more than one second ago. If our star, the Sun, were to suddenly burn out, we wouldn't even know it for more than eight minutes because the last bit of light that left it would take that long to travel to Earth. No need to worry, though. The Sun is estimated to last for about another five billion years. What about all the stars more distant than the sun? It takes much longer for their light to reach us. When you look at the stars at night, you are seeing light that may have taken twenty, thirty, or even a few hundred years to reach your eyes. You are literally looking back in time.
-Excerpted from "Dimensions" by Allen Bradbury

Which evidence is best for supporting the claim that light takes time to reach us?

Check all that are true.

- a) When you look across the room, you view light as it was a few billionths of a second ago.
- b) When you look at the moon, you see the light that left it more than one second ago.
- c) The sun should last about another five billion years; there's little need to worry about it burning out.
- d) When you look at the stars at night, you are seeing back years and years into time.
- e) all of the above

Question 17:

Read the passage below.

The distances in the universe are so vast that scientists use the term "light year" to measure them. A light year is the approximate distance a beam of light travels in one year, or ten trillion kilometers. That's a one followed by thirteen zeros! In order to see objects that are so vast of a distance away from earth, scientists use powerful telescopes. One of the most powerful, the Hubble Space Telescope (HST), can see objects millions of lights years away from our planet. Launched in 1990, the HST seeks to look deep into space and time. When the Hubble takes a picture of a galaxy one hundred million light years away, we are seeing the galaxy as it looked one hundred million years ago. At the time that light left that galaxy, dinosaurs still roamed Earth and humans would not appear for many millions of years! Because distant galaxies appear to us as they were millions or even billions of years ago, we can study how they change over time.
-Excerpted from "Astronomy Today" by Refractor Jones

Which evidence is best for supporting the claim that the Hubble Space Telescope looks back into time?

- a) One hundred million years ago, dinosaurs still roamed the Earth and humans were millions of years from appearing.

- b) When the Hubble takes a picture of a galaxy one hundred million light years away, we are seeing it as it looked one hundred million years ago.
- c) We can study how distant galaxies change over time because Earth is older than most objects in deep space. A light year is the distance a beam of light travels in one year, or ten trillion kilometers.
- d) all of the above

Question 18:

Read the passage below.

Upton Sinclair's *The Jungle* shook the American public when it was published in 1906. While Sinclair intended to strike at American hearts with his portrayal of abused workers, he instead struck their stomachs with his vivid descriptions of the packing plants and stockyards of the Union Stockyards in Chicago. Shortly after the book was released, the government passed the Pure Food and Drug Act, which created the Food and Drug Administration. -Excerpted from "You Gonna' Eat That" by the Edible Historian

Which would be the best fact to include in a paper about journalism affecting government policy?

- a) The American government created the Food and Drug Administration shortly after *The Jungle* was released.
- b) Sinclair instead struck Americans with vivid descriptions of packing plants and stockyards in Chicago.
- c) Upton Sinclair's *The Jungle* upset the American public when it was published in 1906.
- d) Sinclair intended to strike at American hearts with his portrayal of abused workers and poor conditions.

Question 19:

Read the passage below.

Hip-hop is a broad term for a musical style that began in the late 1970s and early 1980s. The hip-hop culture emerged from a common reaction to conditions of widespread poverty and violence in urban American centers. The expression of hip-hop explores the roots of urban poverty and violence, expresses the angst of living in these conditions, reflects upon growing up in hostile circumstances, and offers alternatives and opportunities to escape or improve these impoverished areas. Hip-hop combines four distinct elements to convey the message: spoken word or "rapped" lyrics, mixed music samples on turntables, break dancing, and graffiti art. -Excerpted from "Let There Be Beats" by Grandmaster Dash

Which would be a fact not to include in a paper about historical urban conditions?

- a) Hip hop explores the roots of urban violence and poverty.
- b) Hip-hop culture emerged commonly as a reaction to urban poverty.

- c) Hip-hop combines four distinct elements to convey a message.
- d) Hip-hop offers ideas on how to escape this poverty.

Question 20:

Read the passage below.

Have you ever really noticed the signs around you? Take a look around next time you are travelling. Signs invite you in, signs keep you out, and signs reflect the industry, culture, and technology of communities across the world. Signs are a physical and visual map of our past. "Welcome to Fabulous Las Vegas, Nevada" is the famous sign put up in 1959 greeting visitors to the city's casino hotels. Uncle Sam declared "I Want You For the US Army" on signs recruiting soldiers for World War's I and II. "Route 66" stands beside the perhaps the most famous American highway.

-Excerpted from "Signmaking 101" by Arthur Penland

Which would be the fact to include in a paper about games of chance?

- a) "Route 66" stands beside perhaps the most famous American highway running across the country.
- b) Uncle Sam declared "I Want You For the US Army" to recruit soldiers for World War's I and II.
- c) Signs serve multiple purposes in communities across the world.
- d) "Welcome to Fabulous Las Vegas, Nevada" is a sign welcoming visitors to the city's casino hotels.

Question 21:

Read the passage below.

Clackety-clack-clack. Clackety-clack-clack. The smack of metal upon metal filled offices in a constant thrum for the first three quarters of the twentieth century. Until the personal computer arrived, the typewriter and the printing press served as the primary sources of printed communication. From its first commercial availability in the 1870s until the 1980s, people used the typewriter to produce letters, memos, contracts, books, and newspapers. The arrival of the personal computer, however, ushered a swift end to the typewriter as an ever-present instrument in homes and offices. Thirty years after its rapid disappearance as a primary mode of communication, the clackety-clack-clack of the typewriter's keys serve as a nostalgic reminder of a not-too-distant past.

-Excerpted from "The Clack of the Past" by Zack Bell

Which conclusion could you draw from this text?

- a) The personal computer was first only present in home offices.
- b) The personal computer is now the primary source of printed communication.
- c) The typewriter and the personal computer exist together as modes of communication.
- d) The clackety-clack sound of the typewriter annoyed people.
- e) all of the above

Question 22:

Read the passage below.

The typewriter has a long and fascinating history of storied writers using the machine in unique ways. The early 20th century news paperman Don Marquis created a humor column written by a fictional typewriting cockroach named Archy. The roach typed one letter at a time by hopping from key to key. The roach was not strong enough to hold down the Shift key, which was always larger and heavier, so Archy typed in all lower case. When a roach wasn't controlling the machine, a typewriter could sometimes control itself. William S. Burroughs wrote of a "soft typewriter" that had the ability to control people through what it wrote. When the machine wasn't controlling men in fiction, men exerted control over the machine. Ernest Hemingway stood his Royal typewriter upon a high bookshelf so that he could stand and type. J.R.R. Tolkien took the opposite route, balancing the typewriter upon his bed because the desk wasn't comfortable. And when Jack Kerouac got comfortable, he spent two full weeks typing a single-spaced paragraph on a 120-foot roll of paper. Don't believe it? Hunt down Kerouac's actual manuscript, which is on a world-wide tour to museums and libraries.

-Excerpted from "The Clack of the Past" by Zack Bell

Which of the following claims is supported by the text?

Check all that are true.

- a) A fictional typewriting cockroach narrated the columns of Don Marquis.
- b) Burroughs' typewriter is on tour at museums throughout the United States.
- c) Ernest Hemingway preferred typing standing up.
- d) Jack Kerouac always liked writing while sitting down.

Question 23:

Read the passage below.

Gravity is the universal force that holds everything together. Your feet stay upon the ground because of gravity. And because of gravity, a ball thrown into the air comes down instead of just continuing up forever. Gravity is an attractive force, which means that it draws objects together. The closer things are to one another, the more gravity will pull them together. In turn, larger bodies with more mass contain more of a gravitational pull. The moon, for example, orbits the Earth because of the Earth's gravitational pull. The planets in our solar system revolve around the sun because of its larger gravitational pull. The sun's pull, though, is not constant. Hence planets rotate around our star in elliptical- or oval-shaped orbits. Part of the reason for this elliptical trajectory is each planet's individual pull on the worlds next to them. Earth, for example, affects Venus's orbit and Venus affects Mercury's. Scientists have even found planets due to gravity's pull. A slight variation in Neptune's revolution around the sun led to speculation on the existence of Pluto long before Pluto was officially observed.

-Excerpted from "That Pull, That Pull" by Isaac Simone

Which of the following claims is not supported by the text?

- a) Another yet undiscovered planet affects Pluto's orbit.
- b) The Earth orbits the sun because the sun's gravitational pull is greater.
- c) Other stars in the universe most likely have planets orbiting them.
- d) Balls would fly further on the moon because there is less gravity there.

Question 24:

Read the passage below.

Travel companies and resorts know that a secluded island retreat is attractive to many potential vacationers. Their advertisements conjure up images of white sandy beaches, pristine aquamarine waters, and gently swaying palm trees. For many people, islands offer a retreat from the stresses of our daily routines. However, in literature, the island is often more than just a pretty place to relax. They set the scene for exploration of our complex human nature. Some are paradises where tranquility and contemplation exemplify our hopeful and optimistic outlook on life. Others are dark wildernesses where laws break down and humanity is put to the test.

-Excerpted from "A Different View from the Cabana" by Earl Traveler

Which conclusion could you draw from this text?

- a) In most books, islands conjure images of a tropical paradise.
- b) Islands can symbolize a number of literary settings. Islands only symbolize primal wilderness in literature.
- c) Islands always symbolize a serene setting where people can contemplate in peace.

Question 25:

Read the passage below.

For decades, school children learned that our solar system had nine planets. The first planet, Mercury, is closest to the sun while the ninth planet, Pluto, was usually the furthest from the sun. (Pluto crosses into Neptune's orbit for 20 out of every 248 years.) Pluto was the weird, icy outlier to our solar system until 2006. Since the eighteenth century, a planet was defined as a large, round object orbiting a star. The continued discovery of small objects in a similar area to Pluto, however, motivated the International Astronomical Union (IAU) to update the definition of a planet. The IAU reasoned that once space objects are better classified, they are easier to study. Their new definition of planets in 2005, however, led to Pluto losing its planetary status in 2006. Because Pluto shares its orbit with nearby objects, it no longer fit the definition of a planet. Pluto, along with several of the nearby bodies, is now officially considered a dwarf planet. For many people who learned about it as kids, though, Pluto will always remain a planet in the solar system of their hearts.

-Excerpted from "O Pluto, Where Art Thou" by Evan Orpheus

Which of the following claims is supported by the text?

- a) Astronomers still disagree on whether or not Pluto is a planet.
- b) Pluto is not always further from the sun than other planets.
- c) Pluto has very few space objects in the area around its orbit.
- d) NASA pressured the IAU to update the definition of a planet.

Question 26:

Read the passage below.

Have you ever seen a television show about investigating hauntings? If so, do you ever wonder exactly how people determine whether or not a place is haunted? Currently, there is no scientific proof of ghosts and hauntings. However, paranormal investigators, or people who inspect supposedly haunted places, use science in an effort to help them find out the truth about ghosts. Most paranormal investigators begin by researching the history of a place. Ghosts are supposed to be spirits attached to a certain location. Investigators interview people who currently or recently inhabited the building. If these people have experienced strange happenings, it is a good indication the place is haunted. Ghosts are supposed to be tied to a particular location. Knowing more about the people who lived, worked, or resided there can help explain a haunting.

Excerpted from "Ghosts: An Exploration" by Paul T. Geist

Which evidence does not claim a reason why investigators research the history of a house?

- a) Investigators determine the value of the home to for current owners.
- b) Investigators interview former residents' about possible encounters with ghosts.
- c) Investigators inquire about current or recent building inhabitants.
- d) Investigators research the history of a location to determine former residents.

Question 27:

Read the passage below.

Anton Pavlovich Chekhov (Jan 29, 1860-July 15, 1904), was born in southern Russia. Chekhov was from a poor family in Taganrog, Russia, a seaport town where his father was a grocer. When Chekhov was 16 years old, his father declared bankruptcy and fled to Moscow, leaving Anton in Taganrog to finish school and to sell off the family goods. Three years later, Chekhov joined his family in Moscow and began studies at Moscow University to become a doctor. Anton Chekhov's writing career began out of necessity when he moved to Moscow. He needed to help pay for the family's living expenses and cover his tuition, so he began writing comic short stories for various newspapers. Chekhov finished medical school in 1882, but made little money in his profession because he would often treat poor patients for free. In 1886, Chekhov began writing for the St. Petersburg New Times and they paid almost three times what he was earning from other newspapers. This led to a wider readership base and to increased attention for Chekhov from some very famous writers, like Leo Tolstoy and Dmitry Grigorovich.

-Excerpted from "The Life of Chekhov" by Krista Garver

Which evidence supports the claim that Chekhov's writing career started because he needed money?

- a) Chekhov began to write when he joined the Red Guard.
- b) Chekhov began his literary career writing short stories to support his family.
- c) Chekhov's career started after he moved to Moscow and won a short story contest.
- d) Chekhov's career took off when his medical experiments gained notice from famous writers.

Question 28:

Read the passage below.

Paranormal investigators use a lot of equipment to try to measure paranormal activity. Most investigators use photography and video recordings to try to capture images of ghosts. They will often leave cameras running for a long period of time. Although many photographs of supposed ghosts have turned out to be fake, there are some images of ghosts that are more difficult to explain. There are many famous instances of ghosts in photographs. A still frame from Anderson Cooper's report at Michael Jackson's Neverland Ranch in 2009 shows a shadowy face over his shoulder. The "Brown Lady of Raynham Hall," taken in 1936, is maybe the most famous ghost picture ever taken. Captain Hubert C. Provand snapped a photo of a misty figure he and his wife saw gliding down the stairs. "The Girl on Fire" shows a shadow of a girl amidst a burning building in Shropshire. This later turned out to be a case of double exposure, though. "The Ghost of Freddy Jackson" captures the face of a recently deceased air mechanic floating behind the shoulder of a WWI airman in a photo of the squadron. There may never be definitive proof of ghosts, but where people have curiosity, there will probably always be people looking for evidence of them.

-Excerpted from "Ghosts: An Exploration" by Paul T. Geist

Which evidence supports the claim that some images of ghosts turn out to be fake?

- a) the misty shot of "The Brown Lady"
- b) the double exposure of "The Girl on Fire"
- c) the still frame of Michael Jackson
- d) the face of Freddy Jackson

Question 29:

Read the passage below.

In 1931, Universal Studios adapted Bram Stoker's novel *Dracula* into a film. Bela Lugosi's portrayal of The Count in *Dracula* was a smash, spreading monster fever among the movie-going public. Universal followed up *Dracula*'s bloody success with classics such as *Frankenstein*, *The Mummy*, and *The Wolfman*. While Lugosi's portrayal remains the most iconic appearance of the Count, it was far from the last. Christopher Lee is famous for his appearance as the vampire in the 1970s. Gary Oldman portrays a more relatable and tragic version of *Dracula* in Bram Stoker's *Dracula*, and the Count even makes an appearance in the TV show *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*. Why has Count *Dracula*—and the many other vampires based on him—proven to be so popular? Unlike other movie monsters, vampires are usually highly charismatic. Immortal beings represent many of humanity's darker urges. Count *Dracula* represents both incredible power and the terrible cost of that power. This makes him an enormously fascinating villain, hero, or anything in-between in the hands of a creative writer or director. The vampire character, born out of historical fact, medieval superstition, and one man's creativity has gone beyond its origins to become an enduring and complex character for the ages.

—Adapted from "From Medieval Count to Silver Screen Legend: The History of *Dracula*" by Peter Rhomberg

What can you infer about vampires in contrast with other movie monsters?

- a) Vampires are no longer significant to movie goers after being proven fictional, whereas other monsters may still exist.
- b) Vampires can be difficult characters to develop because they have a limited personality compared to other monsters.
- c) Vampires are more human in appearance and nature, making them a more compelling character than other monsters.
- d) The more primal, animal nature of other movie monsters makes them more frightening than vampires.

Question 30:

Read the passage below.

There were two problems with phrenology, a pseudoscience that judged people on the size and shape of their skull. The first was that phrenology had no scientific merit. There is no correlation between the size and shape of your head and your intelligence, personality, or likelihood of committing a crime. The other major problem was that it was used by people such as the Nazis and racists in America to "prove" their unjust idea of racial superiority. They argued that the shape and size of African-American and Jewish skulls naturally meant that these people were inferior to the white race, and used that to help justify inhumane treatment toward other races.

-Adapted from "Pseudoscience and Crime" by Peter Rhomberg

What can you infer from the fact that Nazis and racists in America used pseudoscience to "prove" their idea of racial superiority?

- a) Nazis and racists in America felt sorry for using inaccurate pseudoscience techniques.

- b) Nazis and racists in America argued that head size determined personality traits.
- c) Nazis and racists did not use any other tactics to attempt to prove their superiority.
- d) Nazis and racists argued that inhumane conduct was justified because they were racially superior.