

CHAPTER 20

Answering SAT Reading Questions

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After completing this chapter, you will be able to:

- Research the answer in the passage or your big picture summary
- Predict the correct answer
- Find the one correct answer choice

How Much Do You Know?

Directions: In this chapter, you'll learn how best to research, predict, and find the correct answers to SAT Reading questions. For this quiz, first take a couple of minutes to refresh your memory of the passage. Then, for each question 1) research the answer in the passage text or from your big picture summary, 2) predict the correct answer in your own words, and 3) identify the one correct answer.

Questions 1–11 refer to the following passage.

This passage is adapted from a 2018 article summarizing two different proposals for solving problems with maintaining New York City's mass transit system.

The history of the New York City subway system, quickly told: the first stations opened in 1904, and over the next century, it expanded to 472 stations, more than any other subway system in the world, with 850 miles of track. Operating 24 hours a day seven days a week, with an average weekday ridership of approximately 5.7 million, it is the planet's 7th-busiest rapid transit system.

While the system is, on many levels, an amazing achievement, it is also beset by a problem that harms both quality of life and economic activity. Such a large system must inevitably suffer from service interruptions and delays; normal wear and tear combined with the sheer age of the system necessitates regular maintenance. However, there is no consensus as to the best way to accomplish the required repairs.

The current maintenance scheme is designed to minimize service interruptions. A subway line in need of repair will be taken out of service during a comparatively less busy time, such as nights or weekends, while another line is re-routed to cover as many as possible of the missing line's stops. The main advantage to this approach is that trains are not taken out of service during rush hour, when most subway trips occur; subway service generally remains predictable and commuters are, for the most part,

able to use the system to get to their destinations on time.

But critics are quick to point out the disadvantages to this approach. Perhaps most obvious is the confusion caused by trains switching lines. The labyrinthine system is hard enough to navigate at the best of times, especially for tourists. A subway rider on the A train naturally expects the train to make stops on the A line. If, instead, it is diverted temporarily to the F line, the rider may find herself miles from her intended destination.

While annoying, the confusion arising from route switching is hardly the most serious problem with the current approach to repairs. Because the system runs 24 hours a day, routine maintenance can generally be done only during the temporary closures on nights and weekends. This means that more serious repair and crucial preventative maintenance is often neglected. Problems that could have been fixed or prevented reasonably expeditiously given a slightly longer closure wind up leading to major breakdowns and service interruptions later on.

On rare occasions, such breakdowns have resulted in entire subway lines being shut down for months or even a year. Beginning in 2019, for example the L Train connecting lower Manhattan to parts of Brooklyn was scheduled to close for as much as 15 months for long overdue service and upgrades. In a city fewer than half of whose households own a car,

Critics:
line switch
confusion

Even worse
- major
breakdowns

NYC
subway:
how to
repair?
diff. views

Current
approach -
night and
weekend
repairs

this can have serious economic impacts. Residents of the affected area may face a much longer commute via an alternate subway line if one is available;

Econ. & Soc.
 harms of
 shutdowns

One thing, at least, is clear: the city must carefully consider many economic and social factors in designing a subway maintenance plan.

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80 or, if there is no alternate subway service, they may need to take other, potentially more expensive, modes of transportation, such as taxis or ferries. Moreover, studies indicate that
 85 increased stress from the commute to work can lead to lower productivity, and that businesses near the impacted lines may see decreased revenue as potential customers have a harder time getting to
 90 them.

One controversial proposal for reducing breakdowns and the resulting transit interruptions is to end the subway's 24-hour service and to shut
 95 down for several hours each night.

Alt proposal
 - stop
 24-hour
 service

Proponents of this plan argue that this would allow time, on a regular rather than sporadic basis, for more preventative maintenance. This, they
 100 claim, would ultimately lead to more consistent service; rather than shutting down entire lines for long periods of a time, there would merely be shorter service outages overnight, when fewer
 105 people use the subway system. While this may seem a preferable outcome to the economic consequences of a total shutdown resulting from a breakdown, it has its liabilities as well. While most
 110 subway trips may occur during rush hour, not everyone works during the daytime. New York is famously known as the "the city that never sleeps."

Pros

Cons

Doctors, nurses, bartenders, police
 115 officers, and firefighters are just a few examples of occupations whose workers need transportation at all hours of the day and night. Rather than be subjected to a relatively short period
 120 of inconvenience, these workers would find their commutes irrevocably altered.

1. Which of the following best expresses the primary purpose of the passage?
- A) To argue that the New York City subway system maintenance plan should be altered
 - B) To explain the effects of the current New York City subway system maintenance plan and a proposed alternative
 - C) To discuss the economic and social importance of the New York City subway system
 - D) To show how the history of the New York City subway system has resulted in the current maintenance crisis
2. According to the passage, which of the following is true of the New York City subway system?
- A) It is the oldest subway system in the world.
 - B) It is the busiest mass transit system in the world.
 - C) It has more stations than any other subway system.
 - D) A majority of city residents rely on the subway to get to work.
3. Based on the passage, advocates of the current New York City subway maintenance plan would most likely agree that
- A) given its size, the city's subway system is one of the most well maintained in the world.
 - B) avoiding service interruptions during rush hour is a paramount consideration when designing a maintenance schedule.
 - C) confusion caused by route switching is a minor inconvenience for commuters and tourists.
 - D) operating the subway system 24 hours a day seven days a week is untenable given the wear and tear it causes.
4. Which choice provides the best evidence for the answer to the previous question?
- A) Lines 14–19 (“Such a . . . maintenance”)
 - B) Lines 30–37 (“The main . . . time”)
 - C) Lines 50–53 (“While . . . repairs”)
 - D) Lines 96–99 (“Proponents . . . maintenance”)
5. Based on the passage, which choice best describes a claim that critics of the current subway maintenance plan would likely make?
- A) The negative impacts that arise from neglecting preventative maintenance outweigh the benefits of minimizing subway service interruptions.
 - B) When devising a subway maintenance plan, no factor is more important than avoiding rush hour service interruptions.
 - C) The negative impact from subway line closures is greater on commuters than it is on businesses near the affected lines.
 - D) Slightly longer periods of scheduled maintenance would help the subway system minimize rush hour service interruptions.
6. Which choice provides the best evidence for the answer to the previous question?
- A) Lines 24–30 (“A subway . . . stops”)
 - B) Lines 60–65 (“Problems . . . later on”)
 - C) Lines 69–74 (“Beginning in . . . upgrades”)
 - D) Lines 84–90 (“Moreover, studies . . . them”)
7. As used in line 41, “labyrinthine” most nearly means
- A) subterranean.
 - B) mythological.
 - C) meandering.
 - D) complicated.

8. In the third paragraph, the discussion of two specific subway lines (lines 44–49) primarily serves to
- A) support the contention that line switching has a negative impact on tourism.
 - B) illustrate one problem created by the current subway maintenance plan.
 - C) underline the importance of minimizing subway service interruptions.
 - D) quantify the social costs that arise from extended subway repair schedules.
9. The fifth paragraph (lines 66–90) serves mainly to
- A) illustrate the impact of the current maintenance plan on one subway line.
 - B) advocate for increased funding for subway repair and maintenance.
 - C) provide support for a proposal to curtail 24-hour subway service.
 - D) outline the negative impacts of extended subway line outages.
10. The passage indicates that non-rush hour commuters
- A) would risk losing public transportation options if 24-hour subway service were suspended.
 - B) would face only minor inconveniences if 24-hour subway service were suspended.
 - C) work primarily in health care and its related fields.
 - D) are among the strongest advocates for a change to the current subway maintenance plan.
11. With which one of the following statements would the author of the passage be most likely to agree?
- A) The controversy surrounding New York City's subway system reflects similar issues for mass transit in many American cities.
 - B) Without major changes to its subway maintenance plan, New York City will be unable to provide regular service to its 5.7 million weekly riders.
 - C) Any plan for maintaining New York City's subway system will entail advantages and disadvantages for commuters.
 - D) The social and economic costs resulting from New York City's current subway maintenance schedule justify an end to 24-hour, seven-day subway service.

Check Your Work

1. B

Difficulty: Medium

Category: Global

Strategic Advice: Consult your big picture summary and find the one answer that matches the passage's scope and the author's purpose.

Getting to the Answer: Here, the author does not take a side. He lays out advantages and disadvantages to both the current maintenance plan and one proposal offered by critics of the current plan. That matches (B).

(A) distorts the author's position. He doesn't advocate for the critics of the current plan.

(C) is too narrow. It misses the key subject of subway *maintenance*.

(D) is also too narrow. This answer describes only the first paragraph.

2. C

Difficulty: Medium

Category: Detail

Strategic Advice: The correct answer will be something explicitly stated in the passage.

Getting to the Answer: Start by checking the answers against paragraph 1 where the author provides general facts about the New York City subway. Doing so will lead you to the correct answer, (C).

(A) is unsupported. You're told that the subway opened in 1904, but not whether other subway systems already existed at that time.

(B) is simply incorrect. New York City's subway system is the seventh busiest in the world.

(D) distorts a fact from the passage. The fifth paragraph states that fewer than half of households in the city own a car, but that doesn't mean that everyone in the majority of households that do not own cars takes the subway.

3. B

Difficulty: Hard

Category: Inference

Strategic Advice: The correct answer will follow from the passage text without having been explicitly stated in the text.

Getting to the Answer: The current maintenance plan is outlined in paragraph 2. You're told that its goal is to "minimize service interruptions" and that its main advantage is that trains operate during rush hour. Combining those statements leads to the correct answer, (B).

(A) is too extreme. Everyone seems to agree that maintaining the system is a huge challenge. The debate is over *how* best to implement the necessary repairs.

(C) misuses a detail from the passage. The author says nothing about how serious a problem those who support the current plan consider route switching to be. They might understand that it causes a major inconvenience but still be willing to reroute trains in order to keep the subway open during rush hour.

(D) states a position taken by *critics*, not advocates, of the current plan.

4. B

Difficulty: Medium

Category: Command of Evidence

Strategic Advice: The most common Command of Evidence question stems task you with locating the piece of text that supports the correct answer to the preceding question. Use that answer to direct your research as you evaluate the answer choices.

Getting to the Answer: In this case, the correct answer to the preceding question paraphrased the final sentence in paragraph 3. That sentence covers the lines in (B) making that the correct answer here.

(A) cites a sentence from paragraph 1. It contains the phrase "wear and tear," which was part of incorrect answer (D) in the preceding question, but doesn't support the correct answer, (B).

(C) comes from the beginning of paragraph 4. It suggests that there are problems with the current system even bigger than the inconvenience caused by line switching. This choice could be tempting if you chose (C) on the preceding question.

(D) provides evidence for the *critics'* proposal to stop running the subway 24/7. That is not the argument made by advocates of the current system who were the subject of the preceding question.

5. A

Difficulty: Hard

Category: Inference

Strategic Advice: The phrases “[b]ased on the passage” and “would likely” indicate an Inference question. Note that this question asks specifically for the position of the critics of the current plan. The correct answer will be implied by the passage text.

Getting to the Answer: The critics’ objections to the current plan are laid out primarily in paragraphs 3 and 4. Quick research shows that they make two arguments. First (paragraph 3), line switching for routine maintenance can be confusing and frustrating for riders. Second (paragraph 4), and worse, the limited time allowed for routine maintenance prevents important preventative maintenance from taking place. That leads to severe service outages that can last for weeks or months. This second criticism accords with the correct answer, (A).

(B) is something that advocates, not opponents, of the current plan might say. See paragraph 2 for this argument.

(C) is an irrelevant comparison. Paragraph 5 lays out the social and economic impacts of extended subway line closures to both riders and businesses, but it doesn’t assert that the impacts are worse for one group or the other.

(D) distorts the critics’ argument. They contend that slightly longer periods of scheduled maintenance would allow time for preventative maintenance, not that it would reduce rush hour interruptions.

6. B

Difficulty: Medium

Category: Command of Evidence

Getting to the Answer: Here, the correct answer to the preceding question paraphrased the critics’ argument in paragraph 4. That paragraph’s final sentence, represented by (B), provides the support.

(A) is a sentence from paragraph 2. It explains the rationale behind the current maintenance plan and does not support a criticism of that plan.

(C) contains an example of an extended service outage for one subway line. That’s an illustration of the kind of problem the critics hope to avoid, but by itself does not support the claim in the correct answer to the preceding question.

(D) cites a line from the end of paragraph 5. It does not support the correct answer to the preceding question, but might be tempting if you chose (C) there.

7. D

Difficulty: Easy

Category: Vocab-in-Context

Strategic Advice: Check the sentence in which the word was used to determine the author’s intended meaning. The correct answer can be substituted for the word without changing the meaning of the sentence.

Getting to the Answer: Here, the author uses “labyrinthine” to describe the New York subway system’s complexity. (D) fits perfectly.

(A) means *underground*. That is true of the subway system, of course, but it would be redundant for the author to use “labyrinthine” in this way.

(B) plays off the famous labyrinth from Greek mythology, but this definition does not fit the word “labyrinthine” or the context of the sentence.

(C) suggests that the subway system is random or wandering. While the huge system may be difficult to navigate at times, it isn’t random.

8. B

Difficulty: Hard

Category: Function

Strategic Advice: The phrase “serves to” tags this as a Function question, asking for the role a specific detail plays in the passage. Research the lines cited in the question stem to see *why* the author has included this example.

Getting to the Answer: The third paragraph introduces the first disadvantage cited by critics of the current subway maintenance schedule. The detail referenced in the question stem provides an example. That purpose is accurately described in the correct answer, (B).

(A) misuses a detail from the passage. You're told that line switching—the problem being discussed—is particularly difficult for tourists, but that's not the reason the author included this example.

(C) refers to the rationale provided by supporters of the current maintenance plan in paragraph 2.

In (D), the word “quantify” suggests that the example provides numbers to show the impact of the current maintenance plan. That's something the author never does in this passage.

9. D

Difficulty: Easy

Category: Function

Strategic Advice: In this case, you're asked for the author's purpose for including an entire paragraph. Consult your margin notes to see the role of paragraph 5 in the passage.

Getting to the Answer: Paragraph 5 details some of the social and economic harms caused by shutting down subway lines. That matches (D).

(A) distorts the purpose of the paragraph. The specific line—the L train—is given as an example of an extended shutdown, but the harms described in the paragraph apply to all similar extended service outages.

(B) is outside the scope of the passage. The author does not discuss the need for increased funding.

(C) refers to a proposal from paragraph 6. The author does not endorse that proposal and does not use paragraph 5 to support it.

10. A

Difficulty: Medium

Category: Detail

Strategic Advice: The phrase “[t]he passage indicates” shows this to be a Detail question. The correct answer will paraphrase a statement made explicitly in the text.

Getting to the Answer: The author discusses non-rush hour commuters in paragraph 5. He lists some examples of these commuters—“doctors, nurses, bartenders, police officers, and firefighters”—and explains that a cessation of 24-hour subway service could permanently alter their commutes. That matches choice (A), the correct answer here.

(B) is the opposite of what the passage says. The current system creates minor inconveniences for these workers when their subway lines are rerouted or closed for repair, but a suspension of 24-hour service would entail a permanent disruption.

(C) distorts the paragraph. Doctors and nurses are among the non-rush hour commuters, but that doesn't mean they are the majority of them.

(D) is outside the scope of the passage. The author does not discuss which occupations show the strongest support for a change in subway maintenance.

11. C

Difficulty: Hard

Category: Inference

Strategic Advice: For an open-ended Inference question like this one, predict the correct answer based on your big picture summary. Consider also any thesis statement or conclusion that sums up the author's point of view.

Getting to the Answer: This author outlines both sides of a debate and discusses the advantages and disadvantages to both the current subway maintenance plan and proposed alternatives. His conclusion at the end of the passage is neutral, encouraging the city to carefully consider all factors without advocating for a specific outcome. This matches up with the correct answer, (C).

(A) strays beyond the scope of the passage. Be careful not to bring in bigger issues if the author has not discussed them in the passage.

(B) is too extreme. To be sure, the author considers subway maintenance a major issue but stops short of dire predictions like the one stated in this answer choice.

(D) matches the position of one side in the debate, but not that of the author, who remains neutral throughout.

How to Answer SAT Reading Questions

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After this lesson, you will be able to:

- Research the answer in the passage or your big picture summary
- Predict the correct answer
- Find the one correct answer choice

To answer questions like these:

Directions: Choose the best answer choice for the following questions.

Questions 1–11 refer to the following passage and supplementary material.

This passage was adapted from an article titled “Millennials and the Market,” written by a money management expert in 2018.

During the Golden Age of American manufacturing, it was expected that after putting in 30 to 40 years of tedious labor in a factory, workers
 5 would be able to retire around age 65 and enjoy the benefits of retirement comforted by the thought that a pension and the Social Security system they had financed for decades would
 10 cover their expenses. Unfortunately for millennials (people born between the early 1980s and late 1990s), prospects look increasingly bleak that they will get a return on their investment at
 15 retirement age, despite continuing to fund programs like Social Security and Medicare. Fewer than a quarter of all Fortune 500 corporations still offer some form of pension plan to new
 20 hires, and the move from company-funded pension plans to 401(k) plans and IRAs that began in the 1970s shows no sign of slackening. In this financial environment, it might be expected
 25 that investment in the stock market would be at an all-time high. An analysis of the data, however, indicates a complicated and even fraught

Millennials won't have same retirement \$

But they don't like stock market

relationship between young adults and
 30 the stock market.

The trauma associated with the Great Recession (which began in December 2007 and ended in June 2009) left many investors wary of stock
 35 market volatility, and that hesitancy was exacerbated among young people, who saw a considerable portion of their families' wealth erased in short order. A study by Pfeffer, Danziger,
 40 and Schoeni published in 2014 posited that the average American household lost a third of its wealth, approximately \$28,000, during the Great Recession. This was at the exact moment when a
 45 great many millennials were making decisions about attending college, pursuing post-graduate studies, or entering the workforce. For a median-income family, those decisions were
 50 all directly correlated to household wealth. The ripple effects of the Great Recession left many millennials ascribing blame directly to the stock market for missed opportunities.
 55 Even with a full awareness that the stock market has rebounded and far exceeded the highs seen prior to the Great Recession, many millennials still feel trepidation about investing in the
 60 stock market, preferring to save a larger percentage of their salaries than their parents and grandparents did.

Reason:
 07-09 recession = millennials blame the market

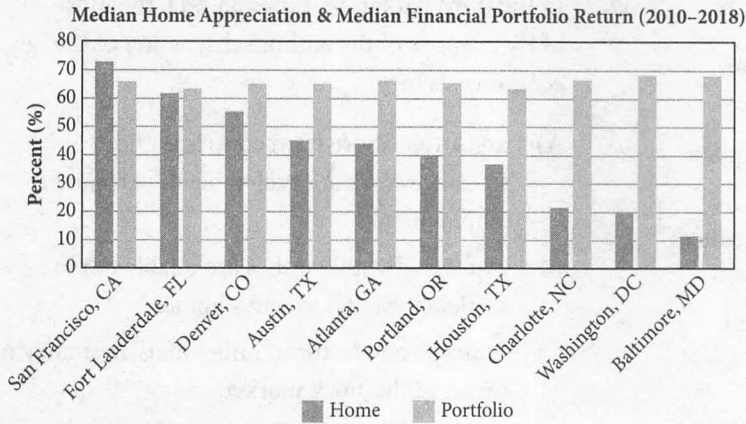
Another factor that has directly impacted the willingness of millennials to invest in the stock market is the seismic shift in the job market brought about by the “gig economy,” in which short-term contracts and freelance work have replaced permanent employment. To a large degree, the gig economy is still in its nascent phase, with many of the largest purveyors of jobs only incorporated in the last decade. Research has not adequately kept track of the trend, with estimates of participation in the gig economy ranging from 4% to 40% in the United States. The ability to pick up work on a contingency basis allows millennials to feel a greater level of control over their finances, something a significant number of them believe they cannot achieve through stock market investment. The increased diversity of available methods for building future wealth has caused many millennials to adopt an a la carte approach to preparing for retirement. But is it possible that this approach has been clouded by some common misconceptions about wealth building? One persistent, albeit erroneous, view is that real estate is a better investment instrument than a stock market portfolio. While it is true that home equity is the stepping-stone from which most individuals begin to build their personal wealth, statistics make it clear that stock market investments are a more stable and lucrative source of long-term wealth. A London Business School study found that over the same 90-year period, the average rate of return on a real estate investment was 1.3% compared to the 9.8% annualized total return for the S&P stock 500 index. Investing the \$5,500 IRS-imposed annual limit in an IRA for 25 years would result in a return of

Reason 2:
gig economy
= diff. ways
to make \$

Bad thinking:
house >
stock mkt

over \$600,000 based on the annualized return rate. Stock investment requires a smaller overhead than real estate investment, and the liquid nature of stocks makes them ideal for retirement: stocks allocated to retirement accounts remain tax-free until they are drawn on. Despite these pieces of tangible evidence, though, the stigma regarding stock market investment persists in the minds of many millennials. Regardless of their feelings about the stock market, one thing is self-evident: without preparation for retirement, millennials will be a generation adrift in a society without the social “safety nets” available to current retirees. The benchmark for the amount of savings the average retiree needs to live comfortably after retirement, which remained at \$1 million for many years, now continues to rise, and exacerbating factors, such as the cost of medical care, continue to increase. Armed with that knowledge, millennials need to be proactive about financial planning. By taking full advantage of their penchant for a hands-on approach to finances and leveraging the various financial technologies and services that were not available to the previous generation, millennials can amass the wealth necessary to retire comfortably and on their own terms.

Millennials need to adapt their thinking to have retirement \$



ROI of
 home owning
 vs. stock
 mkt

- One central idea of the passage is that
 - changes to social “safety net” programs such as Social Security and Medicare will force millennials to retire later in life than their parents did.
 - investing in the stock market is the only money management strategy that will allow millennials to amass savings sufficient to retire comfortably.
 - leveraging opportunities in the “gig economy” has allowed millennials to avoid the risks associated with investing in the stock market.
 - despite their distrust of the stock market, millennials will need a variety of investment tools and strategies to build adequate retirement savings.
- Which choice best describes the overall structure of the passage?
 - A surprising attitude is introduced, two criticisms of it are offered, an alternative attitude is presented, and data proving the alternative is superior is provided.
 - A surprising attitude is introduced, two reasons for it are described, a mistaken idea associated with it is revealed through data, and its effect on those holding it is assessed.
 - A previously held attitude is presented, reasons for its rejection are offered, new data is presented, and those rejecting the old attitude are endorsed.
 - Two reasons for a previously held attitude are presented, both reasons are rejected, and data is presented to introduce an alternative attitude.

3. According to the passage, large corporations are
- A) less likely to offer their employees pension plans than they were in the past.
 - B) more likely to invest in the stock market than millennial individuals are.
 - C) opposed to the gig economy because it reduces the number of permanent employees.
 - D) skeptical that their current employees will receive their full Social Security benefit.
4. As used in line 38, “erased” most nearly means
- A) canceled.
 - B) effaced.
 - C) laundered.
 - D) eradicated.
5. The passage most strongly implies which of the following statements about the Great Recession?
- A) It could have been avoided by continued funding of Social Security and Medicare.
 - B) It impacted families with millennial-age children more severely than any other group.
 - C) It resulted from misconceptions about the stability of stock market investments.
 - D) It caused at least some millennials to forego their educational and career goals.
6. Which choice provides the best evidence for the answer to the previous question?
- A) Lines 10–17 (“Unfortunately . . . Medicare”)
 - B) Lines 39–43 (“A study . . . Recession”)
 - C) Lines 48–54 (“For a . . . opportunities”)
 - D) Lines 89–91 (“But . . . wealth building”)
7. In the third paragraph (lines 63–91), the most likely purpose of the author’s discussion of the “gig economy” is to
- A) argue that short-term contracts and freelance work are preferable to permanent employment.
 - B) explain why millennials are unable to raise sufficient capital to buy a home.
 - C) examine one factor in millennials’ hesitancy to invest in the stock market.
 - D) cast doubt on claims that up to 40 percent of workers hold short-term and freelance jobs.
8. In the context of the passage as a whole, the question in lines 89–91 (“But is . . . wealth building”) primarily functions to help the author
- A) establish that millennials are mismanaging their retirement investments.
 - B) show how professional money managers diversify their investments to avoid market volatility.
 - C) introduce data that reveals a flaw in the premises that influence millennials’ investment choices.
 - D) call into question opposing opinions about the effects of the gig economy.
9. The passage indicates that investing in the stock market
- A) is the stepping stone from which most individuals begin to build personal wealth.
 - B) remains less stable and lucrative than home ownership as a source of wealth.
 - C) has tax implications well suited to retirement planning.
 - D) is limited by IRS rules to a \$5,500 annual maximum.

10. Which of the following statements about the period from 2010 to 2018 is supported by the graph?
- A) Investment in the stock market generated more wealth than home ownership in every market listed in the graph.
 - B) The value of a home appreciated by a greater percentage in Portland, Oregon, than in Charlotte, North Carolina.
 - C) The return on a median financial portfolio outperformed the value of home ownership by a greater margin in each subsequent year.
 - D) Austin, Texas, saw a greater disparity between home value appreciation and return on financial portfolios than Atlanta, Georgia, saw.
11. Which statement from the passage is most directly reflected by the data presented in the graph?
- A) Lines 48–51 (“For a . . . wealth”)
 - B) Lines 74–78 (“Research . . . United States”)
 - C) Lines 98–101 (“statistics . . . wealth”)
 - D) Lines 110–115 (“Stock . . . drawn on”)

You need to know this:

- Use clues to direct your research to a specific part of the passage or to your big picture summary:
 - **Line Numbers**—Reread the indicated text and possibly the lines before and after; look for keywords indicating why the referenced text has been included or how it's used.
 - **Paragraph Numbers**—Consult your margin notes to see the paragraph's purpose and scope before rereading the text. Sometimes your passage map alone is enough to find an answer.
 - **Quoted Text**—Go back to the passage to read the entire quote if the stem or answer choices use ellipses (. . .). Then check the surrounding context of the quoted term or phrase to see what the author meant by it in the passage.
 - **Proper Nouns**—Use your passage map or look for capital letters in the text to find the term, and then check the context to see why the author included it in the passage; note whether the author had a positive, negative, or neutral evaluation of it.
 - **Specific Content Clues**—Use your margin notes to help you search the passage for terms or ideas mentioned in the question stem; these clues will usually refer to something the author offered an opinion about or emphasized.
 - **Whole Passage Clues**—Begin by reviewing your big picture summary, and only go back to the passage if you can't find the information you need. If you do get stuck, the first and last paragraphs are typically the best places to go for global takeaways.
- Predicting what you're looking for in the correct answer saves time and reduces confusion as you read each choice.
- SAT Reading questions always have one correct answer and three incorrect answers:
 - The correct answer will match what the passage says in a way that responds to the task set out in the question stem.
 - Wrong answers often fall into one of five categories. Not every incorrect choice matches one of these types exactly, but learning to spot them can help you eliminate some wrong answers more quickly:
 - **Out of Scope**—contains a statement that is too broad, too narrow, or beyond the purview of the passage
 - **Extreme**—contains language that is too strong (*all, never, every, none*) to be supported by the passage
 - **Distortion**—based on details or ideas from the passage but distorts or misstates what the author says or implies
 - **Opposite**—directly contradicts what the correct answer must say
 - **Misused Detail**—accurately states something from the passage but in a manner that incorrectly answers the question

You need to do this:

The Method for SAT Reading Questions	
Step 1.	Unpack the question stem
Step 2.	Research the answer
Step 3.	Predict the answer
Step 4.	Find the one correct answer

- **Research the answer:**
 - When clues point to a specific part of the passage (line or paragraph numbers, quotations, content discussed only in particular paragraphs), begin by rereading the specified text and immediate context.
 - If the immediate context does not provide enough info to answer the question, gradually expand outward, rereading sentences that come before and after.
 - With whole passage clues or questions that seem to lack clear content clues, begin by reviewing your big picture summary.
 - If you can't figure out where to research the question and your big picture summary doesn't help either, consider using process of elimination, skipping the question and coming back to it later, or just making a guess.
- **Predict or characterize what the correct answer will say or suggest:**
 - Don't worry about phrasing your prediction as a complete sentence or about repeating exactly the language used in the passage. Just try to answer the question posed in your own words based on your research.
 - If you struggle to predict, use your active reading of the passage to characterize the correct answer, setting expectations about characteristics it must possess.
 - For example, if the author has a negative view of a topic in the question, expect a correct answer with negative language and eliminate choices that suggest a positive or neutral view.
- **Find the one correct answer:**
 - Identify the choice that matches your prediction, if possible.
 - Don't expect a word-for-word match, but look for a correspondence of ideas. For example, if you predict that the function of a detail is to "provide support for the main idea," an answer choice that says it "supplies evidence for the author's thesis" would likely be correct.
 - If there is no clear match, use process of elimination:
 - Eliminate any choice that contradicts your prediction or that clearly falls into one of the five wrong answer categories.
 - Choose the only answer remaining or guess among those you were unable to eliminate.

Answers and Analysis

Question	Analysis
<p>1. One central idea of the passage is that</p> <p>A) changes to social “safety net” programs such as Social Security and Medicare will force millennials to retire later in life than their parents did.</p> <p>B) investing in the stock market is the only money management strategy that will allow millennials to amass savings sufficient to retire comfortably.</p> <p>C) leveraging opportunities in the “gig economy” has allowed millennials to avoid the risks associated with investing in the stock market.</p> <p>D) despite their distrust of the stock market, millennials will need a variety of investment tools and strategies to build adequate retirement savings.</p>	<p>Answer: D</p> <p>Difficulty: Easy</p> <p>Category: Global</p> <p>Strategic Advice: Answer Global questions based on your big picture summary. Sometimes, the author has already “boiled down” the central idea and summarized it in a sentence, usually near the beginning of or end of the passage.</p> <p>Getting to the Answer: The big picture summary captured the author’s main point as it is expressed near the end of the passage: “Millennials are skeptical of investing in the stock market for several reasons, but they’ll need a variety of investments to be financially secure at retirement.” That matches (D) perfectly.</p> <p>(A) distorts the author’s point. The author doesn’t compare millennials’ potential retirement <i>age</i> with that of their parents’ generation.</p> <p>(B) is extreme. The author thinks millennials are too hesitant to use stock market investments, but concludes that their financial stability will come from a variety of financial technologies and services, not from the stock market alone.</p> <p>(C) is too narrow (the gig economy is discussed only in paragraph 3) and misstates the author’s point about the gig economy, which is that it has encouraged millennials to “feel a greater level of control over their finances.”</p>

Question	Analysis
<p>2. Which choice best describes the overall structure of the passage?</p> <p>A) A surprising attitude is introduced, two criticisms of it are offered, an alternative attitude is presented, and data proving the alternative is superior is provided.</p> <p>B) A surprising attitude is introduced, two reasons for it are described, a mistaken idea associated with it is revealed through data, and its effect on those holding it is assessed.</p> <p>C) A previously held attitude is presented, reasons for its rejection are offered, new data is presented, and those rejecting the old attitude are endorsed.</p> <p>D) Two reasons for a previously held attitude are presented, both reasons are rejected, and data is presented to introduce an alternative attitude.</p>	<p>Answer: B</p> <p>Difficulty: Medium</p> <p>Category: Global</p> <p>Strategic Advice: Occasionally, a Global question will ask you to outline the overall structure of the passage. To answer a question like this, consult your big picture summary and review the notes you've jotted down next to each paragraph.</p> <p>Getting to the Answer: In this passage, the author introduces a surprising opinion (millennials distrust the stock market), gives two reasons for their opinion (the Great Recession and the "gig economy"), points out an oversight in this opinion (the stock market is usually a better investment than home ownership), and concludes with an assessment of how that opinion needs to balance with other considerations (millennials will need a variety of investment strategies). That outline matches up nicely with the correct answer, (B).</p> <p>(A) starts off well but runs into trouble with "two criticisms of [the attitude] are offered." Paragraphs 2 and 3 explain <i>why</i> millennials distrust the market; those paragraphs don't criticize millennials for their point of view. The end of choice (A) is also problematic. The author offers data to show why millennials' attitudes toward the market are mistaken, not to prove an alternative opinion.</p> <p>The beginning of choice (C) may be tempting because the author does provide background on older generations' expectations upon retirement, but the remainder of this choice wanders far from the structure of the passage.</p> <p>(D) goes off course right from the start. This passage does not open with reasons for rejecting an older point of view on investing.</p>

Question	Analysis
<p>3. According to the passage, large corporations are</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">A) less likely to offer their employees pension plans than they were in the past.B) more likely to invest in the stock market than millennial individuals are.C) opposed to the gig economy because it reduces the number of permanent employees.D) skeptical that their current employees will receive their full Social Security benefit.	<p>Answer: A</p> <p>Difficulty: Easy</p> <p>Category: Detail</p> <p>Strategic Advice: “According to the passage” at the beginning of a question stem signals a Detail question. The correct answer will paraphrase something stated explicitly in the passage.</p> <p>Getting to the Answer: The author discusses large corporations in paragraph 1. She says that two-thirds of large corporations no longer offer pension plans and indicates that this trend is likely to continue. That supports (A), the correct answer.</p> <p>(B) is an irrelevant comparison; the author never discusses how large corporations invest.</p> <p>(C) presents a misused detail; in paragraph 3, the author states that the gig economy has replaced permanent employment with short-term contracts and freelance work, but she does not mention corporate opposition to the gig economy.</p> <p>(D) distorts the passage; the author expresses concern that individuals will not have enough income at retirement despite their investments in Social Security and Medicare, but she does not ascribe this concern to corporations.</p>

Question	Analysis
<p>4. As used in line 38, “erased” most nearly means</p> <p>A) canceled. B) effaced. C) laundered. D) eradicated.</p>	<p>Answer: D</p> <p>Difficulty: Medium</p> <p>Category: Vocab-in-Context</p> <p>Strategic Advice: To answer a Vocab-in-Context question, examine the sentence in which the word was used for clues about how the author used the word. You can substitute the correct answer into the sentence without changing the sentence’s meaning.</p> <p>Getting to the Answer: Here, the author uses “erased” to mean <i>lost</i> or <i>destroyed</i>. (D), “eradicated,” is the best fit for the sentence.</p> <p>(A), “canceled,” carries with it the implication that there was a plan or expected event that was deleted from the calendar before it ever took place. The wealth “erased” by the Great Recession already existed; it wasn’t canceled before it was created.</p> <p>(B), “effaced,” usually refers to removing a sign or indication of something. That doesn’t fit the context of money in a savings account or investment.</p> <p>(C), “laundered,” may bring to mind the financial crime of “money laundering,” but that has no logical connection to the sentence in the passage.</p>

Question	Analysis
<p>5. The passage most strongly implies which of the following statements about the Great Recession?</p> <p>A) It could have been avoided by continued funding of Social Security and Medicare.</p> <p>B) It impacted families with millennial-age children more severely than any other group.</p> <p>C) It resulted from misconceptions about the stability of stock market investments.</p> <p>D) It caused at least some millennials to forego their educational and career goals.</p>	<p>Answer: D</p> <p>Difficulty: Medium</p> <p>Category: Inference</p> <p>Strategic Advice: The phrase “most strongly implies” marks this as an Inference question. The correct answer will follow from the passage without having been explicitly stated in the passage. The reference in the question stem to the “Great Recession” points you to paragraph 2.</p> <p>Getting to the Answer: Paragraph 2 provides one reason that millennials distrust the stock market. Many millennials were considering college and career options when the market crashed in 2007, leading to the Great Recession. As a result, many of these young people blamed the market for “missed opportunities.” This directly supports (D).</p> <p>(A) is outside the scope; the author does not draw a connection between the Great Recession and the two social programs named here.</p> <p>(B) distorts the passage; while the author cites the damage that the Great Recession did to the “average American family,” she doesn’t compare the effect on families with millennial-age children to that on other groups of people.</p> <p>(C) is outside the scope; the author does not discuss any causes of the Great Recession.</p>

Question	Analysis
<p>6. Which choice provides the best evidence for the answer to the previous question?</p> <p>A) Lines 10–17 (“Unfortunately . . . Medicare”)</p> <p>B) Lines 39–43 (“A study . . . Recession”)</p> <p>C) Lines 48–54 (“For a . . . opportunities”)</p> <p>D) Lines 89–91 (“But . . . wealth building”)</p>	<p>Answer: C</p> <p>Difficulty: Medium</p> <p>Category: Command of Evidence</p> <p>Strategic Advice: Use the answer from the previous question to evaluate the answer choices here.</p> <p>Getting to the Answer: The correct answer to the preceding question focused on how the Great Recession curtailed educational and employment opportunities for young people. That is substantiated by the text in (C).</p> <p>(A) comes from paragraph 1 and cannot be used to support the answer to the preceding question. This choice may have been tempting to test takers who thought (A) was the correct answer to the previous question.</p> <p>(B) cites a study that quantified the harm done by the Great Recession, but that does not directly support the correct answer to the preceding question, which focused on missed opportunities for young adults at the time.</p> <p>(D) contains the rhetorical question at the end of paragraph 3; that’s outside the scope of the previous question’s correct answer.</p>

Question	Analysis
<p>7. In the third paragraph (lines 63–91), the most likely purpose of the author’s discussion of the “gig economy” is to</p> <p>A) argue that short-term contracts and freelance work are preferable to permanent employment.</p> <p>B) explain why millennials are unable to raise sufficient capital to buy a home.</p> <p>C) examine one factor in millennials’ hesitancy to invest in the stock market.</p> <p>D) cast doubt on claims that up to 40 percent of workers hold short-term and freelance jobs.</p>	<p>Answer: C</p> <p>Difficulty: Medium</p> <p>Category: Function</p> <p>Strategic Advice: Function questions ask you <i>why</i> an author included a specific piece of text or <i>how</i> she uses it in the passage. In this question stem, the identifying language is “most likely purpose.” The research clue sends you back to paragraph 3.</p> <p>Getting to the Answer: Paragraph 3 opens with a clear-cut topic sentence: this paragraph will examine “[a]nother factor” that leads millennials to distrust the stock market. That factor is the rise of the gig economy and its effects on millennial attitudes toward money management. That leads right to the correct answer, (C).</p> <p>(A) distorts the passage; the author expresses no preference for one kind of work or another.</p> <p>(B) misuses a detail from paragraph 4; one reason the author gives for considering stock market investment is its lower capital requirements. The author does not explain why millennials would have difficulty raising capital for a down payment on a home.</p> <p>(D) misuses a detail within paragraph 3; the author cites studies showing a range of gig economy participation, but her purpose is not to cast doubt on the high end of those claims.</p>

Question	Analysis
<p>8. In the context of the passage as a whole, the question in lines 89–91 (“But is . . . wealth building”) primarily functions to help the author</p> <p>A) establish that millennials are mismanaging their retirement investments.</p> <p>B) show how professional money managers diversify their investments to avoid market volatility.</p> <p>C) introduce data that reveals a flaw in the premises that influence millennials’ investment choices.</p> <p>D) call into question opposing opinions about the effects of the gig economy.</p>	<p>Answer: C</p> <p>Difficulty: Hard</p> <p>Category: Function</p> <p>Strategic Advice: Most Function questions use “serves to,” but occasionally, they’ll be as direct as this question stem, asking what a piece of text “functions to” do. The research clue in this stem points to the final sentence in paragraph 3.</p> <p>Getting to the Answer: By ending a paragraph with a rhetorical question, the author signals that the following paragraph will provide the answer. Paragraph 4 discusses the flaw in assuming that home ownership is a more stable or profitable investment than the stock market is. The question at the end of paragraph 3 helps the author set up this discussion, so (C) is the correct answer.</p> <p>(A) is extreme; the author questions one assumption underlying millennials’ “a la carte” investment approach, but she doesn’t accuse them of overall mismanagement.</p> <p>(B) is outside the scope. The pre-passage blurb suggests that this author is an investment strategist, but nothing in the passage claims to demonstrate professional approaches to reducing risk.</p> <p>(D) is outside the scope; the author doesn’t present or contradict any opposing views in this paragraph.</p>

Question	Analysis
<p>9. The passage indicates that investing in the stock market</p> <p>A) is the stepping stone from which most individuals begin to build personal wealth.</p> <p>B) remains less stable and lucrative than home ownership as a source of wealth.</p> <p>C) has tax implications well suited to retirement planning.</p> <p>D) is limited by IRS rules to a \$5,500 annual maximum.</p>	<p>Answer: C</p> <p>Difficulty: Medium</p> <p>Category: Detail</p> <p>Strategic Advice: A question asking for something that the “passage indicates” is a Detail question. The correct answer will paraphrase a fact, opinion, or claim made explicitly in the passage. Broadly speaking, the entire passage is about “investing in the stock market,” but the author provides her most detailed analysis in paragraph 4, making it the best place to target your research.</p> <p>Getting to the Answer: The bulk of paragraph 4 compares investment in the market favorably to home ownership. The author demonstrates the large return on a modest investment and then points out other reasons why they are well suited to retirement income. One of those reasons is the investments’ tax-free status (lines 112–115); that matches the correct answer, (C).</p> <p>(A) is a misused detail; this answer choice virtually quotes the passage, but the piece of text it cites refers to home ownership, not to stock market investments.</p> <p>(B) says the opposite of what’s in the passage; the author demonstrates that the stock market is more stable and lucrative than home ownership is.</p> <p>(D) misuses a detail contained in paragraph 4; the \$5,500 annual cap applies to IRA contributions, not to stock market investments in general.</p>

Question	Analysis
<p>10. Which of the following statements about the period from 2010 to 2018 is supported by the graph?</p> <p>A) Investment in the stock market generated more wealth than home ownership in every market listed in the graph.</p> <p>B) The value of a home appreciated by a greater percentage in Portland, Oregon, than in Charlotte, North Carolina.</p> <p>C) The return on a median financial portfolio outperformed the value of home ownership by a greater margin in each subsequent year.</p> <p>D) Austin, Texas, saw a greater disparity between home value appreciation and return on financial portfolios than Atlanta, Georgia, saw.</p>	<p>Answer: B</p> <p>Difficulty: Medium</p> <p>Category: Inference</p> <p>Strategic Advice: When a question stem says that the correct answer is “supported by” something in the passage, you’re looking at an Inference question. It’s no different when the support comes from a graph or chart at the end of the passage. Use the information in the graph to evaluate the answer choices.</p> <p>Getting to the Answer: To see what is implied by a graph or chart accompanying an SAT Reading passage, make sure you understand what is being represented and look for trends. Here, the x-axis shows 10 different cities. For each one, the percent increase in value of a median-price home and a median-size stock portfolio are given on the y-axis. Only in San Francisco did the value of a home outperform the value of a portfolio of investments. Note that, along the x-axis, the cities are arranged from greatest increase in home value to least. The increases in stock portfolios, while all similar, are not in a particular order. Testing the answers against the graph reveals (B) as the correct choice. Charlotte is to the right of Portland on the graph, and you know that means its home values appreciated less than those in Portland.</p> <p>(A) is contradicted by the case of San Francisco, the one market in which home ownership outperformed stock market investments.</p> <p>(C) is not supported; the graph does not show year-over-year changes in value. This choice might be tempting to a test taker who glanced at the graph and made the unwarranted assumption that the x-axis represents different years instead of different locations.</p> <p>(D) can be eliminated by comparing the two named locations. Stock portfolios outperformed home ownership in both cities, but the gap is a little smaller for Austin than it is for Atlanta.</p>

Question	Analysis
<p>11. Which statement from the passage is most directly reflected by the data presented in the graph?</p> <p>A) Lines 48–51 (“For a . . . wealth”)</p> <p>B) Lines 74–78 (“Research . . . United States”)</p> <p>C) Lines 98–101 (“statistics . . . wealth”)</p> <p>D) Lines 110–115 (“Stock . . . drawn on”)</p>	<p>Answer: C</p> <p>Difficulty: Hard</p> <p>Category: Command of Evidence</p> <p>Strategic Advice: This question stem is relatively rare. It is a variation on the Command of Evidence question type. Here, instead of asking you to find the text supporting a previous answer choice, the question provides you with the evidence—in this case, it is the graph at the end of the passage—and asks you to find the text it supports.</p> <p>Getting to the Answer: The graph compares the value of home ownership to stock market investment. The author made the same comparison in paragraph 4. Only (C) and (D) contain statements from paragraph 4, and a quick check shows that it is the text in (C) that follows from the data shown in the graph.</p> <p>(A) comes from paragraph 2, which discusses the impact on millennials of the Great Recession. Don’t get tripped up by the word “median” here; the sentence from paragraph 2 mentions median-income families, while the graph represents median-value homes and median-size portfolios.</p> <p>(B) comes from paragraph 3, which discusses the gig economy. Always check the full reference in the answer choice; a hurried or sloppy test taker might see the words “[r]esearch” and “United States” and think that’s enough to connect this answer to the graph.</p> <p>(D) comes from the correct paragraph, but from a point at which the author has moved on from comparing home ownership and is now discussing other advantages of stock market investments as a source of retirement income.</p>

Try on Your Own

Directions: Put the expert question strategies to work on the following passage. First, take a few minutes to refresh your memory of the passage (which you first saw in chapter 18). Then, for each question 1) identify the question type, 2) note where/how you will research the answer, 3) jot down your prediction of the correct answer, and 4) find the one correct answer.

PREDICTIONS

On the real test, you won't have time to write down your full prediction in complete sentences. If you feel the need to write something to help you hold on to your prediction, keep it very brief: a word or two, or even better, a single abbreviation. For example, if you predict that an author is including a detail as support for a broader point, you might just write "suppt" next to the choices.

Directions: Choose the best answer choice for the following questions.

Questions 1–11 refer to the following passage.

This passage was adapted from an article titled "Quantum Computing: Where Is It Going?" published in a science magazine in 2018. It discusses the background and potential of quantum computing.

Pharmaceutical companies dream of a time when their research and development process shifts from looking for illnesses whose symptoms
 5 can be ameliorated by a specific drug to choosing a disease and creating a drug to eradicate it. Quantum computing may be the key to that goal. The powerful modeling potential unlocked
 10 by quantum computing may also someday be employed by autonomous vehicles to create a world free of traffic jams. With plausible applications in so many fields, it is worthwhile to learn
 15 a bit about how quantum computing works.

Any understanding of quantum computing begins with its most basic element, the qubit. In classical
 20 computing, information is processed by the bit, the binary choice of zero or one. Qubits, on the other hand, allow for infinite superpositions between zero and one and thus can store and process
 25 exponentially more complicated values.

QC: big potential

QC based on qubits - can store more values

Imagine showing someone where you live on a globe by pointing only to either
 30 the North Pole or the South Pole. While you are likely closer to one pole than the other, you need additional information to represent your specific location. If, however, you could provide your home's
 35 latitude and longitude, it could be located without any additional information. The power of quantum computing lies in the ability to express precise information in a single qubit.

Quantum computing may help
 40 scientists and engineers overcome another barrier by reducing energy output while increasing computational speed. The positive correlation between energy output
 45 and processing speed often causes classical computers to "run hot" while processing overwhelming amounts of data. Along with their ability to store multiple values simultaneously, qubits are able to process
 50 those values in parallel instead of serially. How does processing in parallel conserve energy? Suppose you want to set the time on five separate alarm clocks spaced ten
 55 feet apart. You'd have to walk to each clock to change its time. However, if the clocks were connected such that changing

Qubit > bit, much more data

Qubits = parallel processing

the time on one immediately adjusted the other four, you would expend less energy and increase processing speed. Therein lies the benefit of the quantum entanglement of qubits.

While quantum computing has moved beyond the realm of the theoretical, significant barriers still stand in the way of its practical application. One barrier is the difficulty of confirming the results of quantum calculations. If quantum computing is used to solve problems that are impossible to solve with classical computing, is there a way to “check” the results? Scientists hope this paradox may soon be resolved. As a graduate student, Urmila Mahadev devoted over a decade to creating a verification process for quantum computing. The result is an interactive protocol, based on a type of cryptography called Learning With Errors (LWE), that is similar to “blind computing” used in cloud-computing to mask data while still performing calculations. Given current limitations, Mahadev’s protocol remains purely theoretical, but rapid progress in quantum computing combined with further refinement of the protocol will likely result in real-world implementation within the next decade or two.

It is unlikely that early pioneers in the field, including Stephen Wiesner, Richard Feynman, and Paul Benioff, could have foreseen the rapid progress that has been made to date. In 1960, when Wiesner first developed conjugate coding with the goal of improving cryptography, his paper on the subject was rejected for publication because it contained logic far ahead of its time. Feynman proposed a basic quantum computing model at the 1981 First Conference on the Physics of

Faster AND cooler

One barrier to QC - how to check results?

Probably will get solved

QC pioneers - 1960s - 80s

105 Benioff spoke on the ability of discrete mechanical processes to erase their own history and their application to Turing machines, a natural extension of Wiesner’s earlier work. A year later, 110 Benioff more clearly outlined the theoretical framework of a quantum computer.

The dawn of the 21st century brought advancements at an even more impressive pace. The first 5- and 7-qubit nuclear magnetic resonance (NMR) computers were demonstrated in Munich, Germany, and Santa Fe, New Mexico, respectively. In 2006, 120 researchers at Oxford were able to cage a qubit within a “buckyball,” a buckminsterfullerene molecule, and maintain its state for a short time using precise, repeated microwave pulses. The first company dedicated to quantum computing software, IQB Information Technologies, was founded in 2012, and in 2018, Google announced the development of the 72-qubit Bristlecone chip designed to prove “quantum supremacy,” the ability of quantum computers to solve problems beyond the reach of classical computing.

135 With progress in quantum computing accelerating, it seems inevitable that within a few decades, the general population will be as familiar with quantum computing as they now are with classical computing. At present, 140 quantum computing is limited by the struggle to build a computer large enough to prove quantum supremacy, and the costs associated with quantum computing are prohibitive to all but the world’s largest corporations and governmental institutions. Still, classical computing overcame similar problems, so the future of quantum computing looks bright.

QC sped up in 2000s

QC still difficult, but bright future

1. The primary purpose of the passage is to
 - A) argue that quantum computing will provide the solution to pressing societal problems.
 - B) compare the speed and efficiency of quantum computing to that of classical computing.
 - C) explain the progress and potential of quantum computing despite current obstacles.
 - D) refute those who argue that quantum computing is too impractical and expensive to succeed.
2. According to the passage, which one of the following is true of Urmila Mahadev's graduate work?
 - A) It was focused on ways to improve "cloud computing."
 - B) Its results cannot be confirmed by classical computing techniques.
 - C) It will likely have applications for the pharmaceutical industry.
 - D) It may lead to verification of quantum computing calculations.
3. Which choice provides the best evidence for the answer to the previous question?
 - A) Lines 1–9 ("Pharmaceutical . . . goal")
 - B) Lines 67–73 ("One barrier . . . results")
 - C) Lines 78–83 ("The result . . . calculations")
 - D) Lines 83–90 ("Given . . . two")
4. In the second paragraph, the discussion of locating a person's home on a globe (lines 26–36) primarily serves to
 - A) contrast the processing power of quantum computing to that of classical computing.
 - B) illustrate the rapid progress of research in quantum computing.
 - C) argue that quantum computing will allow for exponentially more complicated mapping software.
 - D) support the claim that quantum computing will enable autonomous vehicles to navigate.
5. Based on the passage, the author would most likely criticize classical computing because it
 - A) has developed more slowly than quantum computing in recent years.
 - B) lacks any application for autonomous vehicles.
 - C) employs serial processing.
 - D) cannot verify quantum computing calculations.
6. Which statement best describes the technique the author uses to advance the main point of the third paragraph (lines 39–62)?
 - A) She describes research done by leading scientists and engineers.
 - B) She proposes a laboratory experiment that would prove a hypothesis.
 - C) She offers a hypothetical example to illustrate a complex comparison.
 - D) She cites data demonstrating the superior efficiency of one technique.
7. The passage indicates that which of the following factors slowed early developments in the theory of quantum computing?
 - A) Feynman and Benioff were discouraged that their computing models were rejected.
 - B) At least one academic journal was reluctant to publish papers containing advanced logic.
 - C) Quantum computing was too expensive for colleges and universities to support effectively during the 1980s.
 - D) A focus on cryptology in the early 1960s drew the most talented researchers away from quantum computing.

8. Which one of the following does the passage imply about the development of quantum computing in the 21st century?
- A) At least some companies anticipate commercial viability for quantum computing in the future.
 - B) Recent advancements in hardware have demonstrated “quantum superiority.”
 - C) Research into quantum computing led to the discovery of the “buckyball.”
 - D) It has stalled due to reluctance of major corporations and governments to fund such expensive research.
9. Which choice provides the best evidence for the answer to the previous question?
- A) Lines 115–119 (“The first . . . respectively”)
 - B) Lines 119–124 (“In 2006 . . . pulses”)
 - C) Lines 124–133 (“The first . . . computing”)
 - D) Lines 139–142 (“At present . . . supremacy”)
10. As used in line 123, “maintain” most nearly means
- A) sustain.
 - B) repair.
 - C) resupply.
 - D) nurture.
11. The author’s attitude toward the potential success of quantum computing can best be described as
- A) skeptical.
 - B) resigned.
 - C) incredulous.
 - D) optimistic.

How Much Have You Learned?

Directions: Take 13 minutes to read the passage and answer the associated questions. Try to use the various SAT Reading question strategies you learned in this chapter.

Questions 12–22 refer to the following passage.

This passage was adapted from an article entitled “John Snow Knew Something” published in a popular history magazine in 2018.

Few would deny that doctors use critical thinking to solve problems, but most imagine a difference between the practice of medicine and, say, the methods a police detective might use to solve a case. In fact, medical researchers have long used forensic methods of detection and analysis. The case of John Snow, a 19th-century anesthesiologist, is often said to have ushered in the modern era of epidemiology, the branch of medicine that tracks the incidence and distribution of diseases and proposes solutions for their control and prevention.

It would not be until 1861 that Louis Pasteur would propose the link between microorganisms and disease, now known as the germ theory. Before Pasteur’s breakthrough, the predominant explanation for the cause of most illnesses was the so-called miasma theory, which held that noxious fumes and pollution—quite literally, as the theory’s name implies, “bad air”—were responsible for making people sick. Consequently, during the 1854 outbreak of cholera in Westminster, London, doctors and government officials alike blamed “miasmatic particles” released into the air by decaying organic matter in the soil of the River Thames.

Despite the widespread acceptance of the miasma theory, there were those, Snow included, who were skeptical of

this view. Snow would not have known, as doctors do today, that cholera is caused by a bacterial infection, *Vibrio cholerae*. Nevertheless, he was convinced that the spread of the disease was caused by some form of matter passed between individuals, likely through contaminated water.

To demonstrate this, Snow targeted a particularly deadly outbreak in the Soho district of Westminster in London. From August 31 to September 3, 1854, 127 people in the area died of cholera. Within a week, that number had risen to over 500. Snow took to the streets. Speaking to residents of the area, he found a commonality among them: most of the victims had used a single public water pump located on Broad Street. Though he was unable to find conclusive proof that the pump was the source of the outbreak, his demonstration of a pattern in the cholera cases prompted authorities to disable the pump by removing its handle. The epidemic quickly subsided.

Soon after the Broad Street pump was shut down, Snow’s continued investigation provided additional evidence that contaminated water was the source of the outbreak. Snow created a dot map of the cases of cholera in London and demonstrated that they occurred in areas where water was supplied by two companies that obtained their water from wells near the Thames. Investigation of these wells showed that they had been dug three feet from a cesspit that was leaking sewage into the surrounding soil. Snow also discovered that there were no cases of cholera among workers in a brewery close to the Broad Street pump.

Snow: cholera from contam. H₂O

Snow’s work used investigation, changed medicine

Proof from interviews – all used same pump

1854 – didn’t know about germs; miasma theory

Water from contam. wells

80 These workers were provided a daily allowance of beer, which they drank instead of water, and although the beer was brewed using the contaminated water, it was boiled during the brewing process. This revelation provided a practical solution for the prevention of future outbreaks.

Boiling first prevented disease

Snow is now hailed as the “father of modern epidemiology,” and the radical nature of his approach—formulating a new theory, substantiating it with verifiable evidence, and proposing preventative action—is fully appreciated. At the time, however, not all were convinced, at least publicly, of Snow’s findings. As anxiety over the outbreak flagged, government officials replaced the handle on the Broad Street pump and publicly denounced Snow’s conclusions. It seems they felt that the city’s residents would be upset and disgusted to have the unsettling nature of the well’s contamination confirmed. It wasn’t until 1866, more than a decade after Snow’s original investigation and theory—when another cholera outbreak killed more than 5,500 residents of London’s East End—that officials working in public health began to accept the link between contaminated water and certain kinds of illness and to take appropriate actions to quell such outbreaks.

Snow not accepted at the time

1866 – another epidemic

12. The passage primarily serves to
- A) summarize the history of research into the causes and prevention of cholera.
 - B) critique government officials for failing to consider evidence that could have prevented further loss of life.
 - C) chronicle an episode in the history of medicine that changed the way in which research is conducted.
 - D) demonstrate similarities in the methods used by medical researchers and by police detectives.
13. The author of this passage writes from the perspective of
- A) a public health official advocating for improved disease prevention measures.
 - B) a journalist narrating medical history to lay readers.
 - C) an editorial opinion writer critiquing the actions of local officials.
 - D) a medical school professor explaining the techniques of epidemiological research.
14. The second paragraph serves mainly to
- A) suggest a reasonable alternative to a hypothesis presented later.
 - B) outline the scientific and historical context for a problem that required a novel solution.
 - C) summarize the conditions that led to a recurring public health issue.
 - D) criticize the stubbornness of physicians and politicians against considering new evidence.
15. Which of the following is most analogous to John Snow's theory that contaminated water caused the cholera outbreak?
- A) Gregor Mendel described the principles of biological heredity years before the discovery of genes and DNA.
 - B) Robert Koch used Louis Pasteur's experiments to develop the postulates of the germ theory of disease.
 - C) Rosalind Franklin produced X-ray diffraction images of DNA, which were used by Watson and Crick to describe its structure.
 - D) Galileo Galilei promoted a sun-centered model of the solar system but was put on trial because his views conflicted with those of the Spanish Inquisition.
16. Which choice provides the best evidence for the answer to the previous question?
- A) Lines 17–20 (“It would . . . theory”)
 - B) Lines 38–45 (“Snow would . . . water”)
 - C) Lines 57–63 (“Though he . . . subsided”)
 - D) Lines 85–87 (“This revelation . . . outbreaks”)
17. The passage indicates that the main reason government officials rejected Snow's hypothesis was
- A) a lack of concrete scientific proof.
 - B) a fear of public backlash.
 - C) mistrust of Snow's methods.
 - D) financial ties to the city's water suppliers.
18. Which choice provides the best evidence for the answer to the previous question?
- A) Lines 35–38 (“Despite the . . . view”)
 - B) Lines 57–63 (“Though he . . . subsided”)
 - C) Lines 68–73 (“Snow created . . . Thames”)
 - D) Lines 100–103 (“It seems . . . confirmed”)

19. Which of the following is cited as the primary reason Snow suspected the Broad Street pump as the source of the epidemic?
- A) The discovery of decaying organic matter in soil near the Thames releasing gases into the air
 - B) The decline of cases of the disease following the removal of the pump handle
 - C) A pattern in the geographical location of cases of the disease
 - D) A lack of cases of the disease among those working in a brewery near the pump
20. It can be reasonably inferred from the passage that scientists in 1855 would have found which of the following solutions to be most practical in dealing with future outbreaks of cholera?
- A) Using alcoholic beverages in place of water for all applications
 - B) Removing the handles from all water pumps in the affected area
 - C) Vaccinating the public against the disease using inactive *V. cholerae* bacteria
 - D) Advising the public to boil all water from municipal sources before use
21. As used in line 97, the word “flagged” most nearly means
- A) subsided.
 - B) indicated.
 - C) penalized.
 - D) peaked.
22. The author uses the final sentence of the passage (“It wasn’t . . . outbreaks”) at least in part to
- A) underscore the assertion that Snow’s explanation of the cause of the epidemic was ultimately correct.
 - B) demonstrate that an explanation of a phenomenon will not be accepted until after the mechanism behind it is fully detailed.
 - C) suggest that there is often a significant delay between medical discovery and its application.
 - D) lament the loss of life caused by failing to act on medical recommendations that are reasonably supported by evidence.

Reflect

Directions: Take a few minutes to recall what you've learned and what you've been practicing in this chapter. Consider the following questions, jot down your best answer for each one, and then compare your reflections to the expert responses on the following page. Use your level of confidence to determine what to do next.

Why do SAT experts research and predict the correct answer to Reading questions before reading the answer choices?

What are the types of research clues contained in SAT Reading question stems?

What are the five common wrong answer types associated with SAT Reading questions?

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

How will you approach the process of answering SAT Reading questions more strategically going forward? Are there any specific habits you will practice to make your approach to SAT Reading more effective and efficient?

Expert Responses

Why do SAT experts research and predict the correct answer to Reading questions before reading the answer choices?

Expert test takers know that the correct answer to each SAT Reading question is based on the text of the passage. They research to avoid answering based on memory or on a whim. Predicting the correct answer before reading the choices increases accuracy and speed by helping the test taker avoid rereading, confusion, and comparing answer choices to one another.

What are the types of research clues contained in SAT Reading question stems?

Line numbers, paragraph numbers, proper nouns, quoted text, specific content clues, and whole passage clues

What are the five common wrong answer types associated with SAT Reading questions?

- *Out of scope*
- *Opposite*
- *Distortion*
- *Extreme*
- *Misused detail*

How will you approach the process of answering SAT Reading questions more strategically going forward? Are there any specific habits you will practice to make your approach to SAT Reading more effective and efficient?

There is no one-size-fits-all answer here. Reflect on your own habits in answering SAT Reading questions and give yourself an honest assessment of your strengths and weaknesses. Consider the strategies you've seen experts use in this chapter and put them to work in your own practice to increase your accuracy, speed, and confidence.

Next Steps

If you answered most questions correctly in the How Much Have You Learned? section, and if your responses to the Reflect questions were similar to those of the SAT expert, then consider answering Reading questions an area of strength and move on to the next chapter. Come back to this topic periodically to prevent yourself from getting rusty.

If you don't yet feel confident, review the material in How to Answer SAT Reading Questions, and then try the questions you missed again. As always, be sure to review the explanations closely.

Answers and Explanations

1. C

Difficulty: Easy

Category: Global

Strategic Advice: “[P]rimary purpose” indicates a Global question. Consult your big picture summary to predict the correct answer.

Getting to the Answer: The author is convinced that quantum computing has enormous potential despite current obstacles. She explains the basis of quantum computing, outlines its rapid progress, and describes efforts to make it practicable. (C) summarizes all of this and is correct.

(A) is too narrow and too strong. The passage opens with examples of problems that quantum computing may help solve, but this isn’t the author’s main point.

(B) is too narrow. The discussion of processing speed and energy output is included in paragraph 3 as one potential advantage of quantum computing.

(D) misstates the author’s purpose. The passage was not written to *refute* an opposing point of view, nor does the author contend that anyone else is mistaken in their criticism of quantum computing.

2. D

Difficulty: Medium

Category: Detail

Strategic Advice: “According to the passage” indicates a Detail question. The correct answer is something stated explicitly in the passage. The research clue, Urmila Mahadev, leads you straight to paragraph 4.

Getting to the Answer: Paragraph 4 is about an obstacle to quantum computing: the paradox that arises from the fact that classical computing cannot be used to verify the results of quantum computing. How does Mahadev figure in here? Mahadev dedicated her graduate studies to trying to resolve this paradox. She has come up with a theoretical solution that the author concludes will likely have real-world application in the coming years. That final statement matches (D), making it the correct answer.

(A) is a faulty use of detail. Part of Mahadev’s protocol is similar to techniques used in cloud computing, but nothing indicates that she was trying to improve cloud computing.

(B) distorts the paragraph. It is the results of quantum computing that cannot be confirmed by classical computing, not the results of Mahadev’s graduate work.

(C) brings in a detail from paragraph 1; pharmaceutical research is irrelevant to Mahadev’s graduate studies.

3. D

Difficulty: Medium

Category: Command of Evidence

Strategic Advice: Questions that ask you to locate the evidence for the preceding question’s correct answer are Command of Evidence questions. Use your research for the preceding question to put your finger on the relevant support from the passage and match that to the correct answer choice here.

Getting to the Answer: The correct answer to the preceding question said that Mahadev’s graduate work would likely lead to verification of quantum computing results. That was from the end of paragraph 4, matching (D).

(A) refers back to paragraph 1; this is irrelevant to Mahadev’s work, but matches up with choice (C) in the preceding question.

(B) quotes the statement of the problem that Mahadev’s work is trying to solve, but doesn’t match the correct answer to the preceding question, which stated that her protocol will likely work.

(C) cites the description of Mahadev’s protocol; this answer could be tempting if you incorrectly chose (A) on the preceding question.

4. A

Difficulty: Medium

Category: Function

Strategic Advice: The phrase “serves to” identifies this as a Function question. Check the context of the example cited in the question stem and identify *how* the author uses it.

Getting to the Answer: The second paragraph outlines why qubits (the basis for quantum computing) are so much more powerful than bits (the building blocks of classical computing). The hypothetical case of pinpointing one's house on a globe illustrates this contrast. Thus, (A) is correct.

(B) is off topic. The progress of quantum computing research is discussed in the fifth and sixth paragraphs.

(C) contains a distracting reference to “mapping software,” which may remind you of a globe, but the author doesn't discuss software applications at all in this paragraph. Another potentially distracting phrase here is “exponentially more complicated,” an exact quote from earlier in the paragraph. When evaluating answer choices in SAT Reading, look for the answer that matches the meaning of your correct-answer prediction, not simply for a choice with familiar words.

(D) inappropriately drags in an example—autonomous vehicles—from the first paragraph. The author does not connect that to the globe analogy in any way.

5. C

Difficulty: Hard

Category: Inference

Strategic advice: “Based on the passage” introduces an Inference question. The correct answer will follow from the passage without having been explicitly stated in the passage. Use the research clues in the question stem to narrow down your search and then consider the implications of what is stated at that point in the passage.

Getting to the Answer: The author compares classical computing unfavorably to quantum computing in paragraphs 2 (quantum computing can handle exponentially more complicated values) and 3 (quantum computing uses parallel processing to run faster with less energy output). Paragraph 3 directly supports the correct answer, (C). Because parallel processing gives quantum computing its advantage, serial processing is the reason classical computing is inferior.

(A) distorts the author's point of view. She describes quantum computing's rapid advancement, but doesn't compare that to classical computing's development.

(B) is extreme. The author doesn't say that classical computing has *no value* for driverless cars, but rather that quantum computing may have great value for this technology in the future.

(D) is a faulty use of detail. This answer choice is true according to paragraph 4, but the author doesn't claim that this is a shortcoming of classical computing.

6. C

Difficulty: Hard

Category: Function

Strategic Advice: On occasion, the SAT will ask you to describe the way in which the author has made or supported a point in the passage. Research a question like this from the clues in the question stem. Be prepared for somewhat abstract language in the answer choices as they will be worded to describe the author's technique, not to recount the details in the paragraph.

Getting to the Answer: In paragraph 3, the author describes a potential advantage of quantum computing by comparing parallel processing in quantum computing to serial processing in classical computing. She illustrates this with the simple thought experiment about the five clocks. That matches the “complex comparison” and “hypothetical example” described in (C).

(A) distorts the paragraph. Quantum computing, you're told, may help scientists and engineers, but doesn't mention any research by people in those occupations.

(B) distorts the author's example. She doesn't suggest that someone set up the five clocks in a laboratory and test them for efficiency.

(D) misses the paragraph entirely; the author doesn't cite any data here.

7. B

Difficulty: Medium

Category: Detail

Strategic Advice: The word “indicates” signals a Detail question. The correct answer will be something explicitly stated in the text. The research clue “early developments” should send you to paragraph 5 to research.

Getting to the Answer: Most of the details in paragraph 5 are positive and speak to a slow but consistent advancement in theorizing and modeling quantum computing. The one setback that is mentioned is the rejection of Wiesner's paper by an academic journal hesitant to publish logic that was “ahead of its time.” That's described in the correct answer, (B).

(A) distorts the paragraph, which does not suggest that Feynman’s and Benioff’s models were rejected.

(C) misapplies a detail from paragraph 7; the expense of quantum computing limits research today. You’re told nothing about whether schools funded this research in the 1980s.

(D) contradicts the passage; Wiesner’s interest in cryptology appears to have promoted his work leading to early quantum computing models.

8. A

Difficulty: Medium

Category: Inference

Strategic Advice: The word “imply” marks this as an Inference question. The correct answer will be supported by something in the passage’s discussion of quantum computing’s development in the 21st century.

Getting to the Answer: The passage focuses on the 21st century development of quantum computing in paragraph 6, which contains three main details: the demonstration of MNR computers, the Oxford research that caged a qubit, and the emergence of commercial interest in quantum computing. The last of those, as exemplified in the passage by 1QB Information Technologies and Google, supports choice (A) as the correct answer.

(B) distorts the paragraph; Google’s Bristlecone chip is intended to prove quantum superiority, but the passage does not say that it has been used successfully.

(C) distorts what the passage says about the Oxford research; there, researchers used a “buckyball,” but you’re not told who discovered the molecule or when it was discovered.

(D) misuses a claim from paragraph 7; while it’s true that quantum computing is very expensive, the last sentence of paragraph 6 contradicts the statement made in this answer choice.

9. C

Difficulty: Medium

Category: Command of Evidence

Strategic Advice: This is a standard Command of Evidence question asking you to locate the text that supports the correct answer to the preceding question. Use that answer to guide your research.

Getting to the Answer: The final sentence of paragraph 6 demonstrates that companies are pursuing quantum computing research. That matches (C).

(A) comes from paragraph 6 but doesn’t support the correct answer to the preceding question.

(B) describes the Oxford research; it might be tempting to a test taker who mistakenly chose (C) on the preceding question.

(D) comes from paragraph 7; it cites a hurdle that quantum computing must overcome.

10. A

Difficulty: Medium

Category: Vocab-in-Context

Strategic Advice: For Vocab-in-Context questions, check the sentence in which the word from the question stem is used to paraphrase its meaning in context. The correct answer could be substituted into the sentence without changing the meaning of the sentence at all.

Getting to the Answer: In the sentence at line 123, scientists have been able to maintain the state of qubit using an oddly named molecule. You don’t need to understand the details of the process to get the gist of the sentence. The scientists are keeping the qubit in a constant, or stable, state. That matches the correct answer, (A).

(B) doesn’t work here because nothing suggests that the qubit was “broken” in the process.

(C) implies that the qubit loses something and needs to be refreshed or made whole; that doesn’t fit the context.

(D) means to care for the development of, which would add information not implied by the sentence.

11. D

Difficulty: Medium

Category: Inference

Strategic Advice: A question about the author’s attitude is a variety of Inference question. The correct answer follows from the author’s opinions and points of view as they are expressed in the passage.

Getting to the Answer: The author concludes the passage on a high note. While acknowledging ongoing difficulties that quantum computing still needs to overcome, she finds it “inevitable” that it will one day be familiar to most people and explicitly states that the field’s future “looks bright.” Thus, **(D)** is correct.

(A) is too negative to describe this author’s point of view.

(B) is also negative; a “resigned” attitude would indicate an author who has accepted an unfortunate result and has stopped fighting against it.

(C) means unbelieving. If the author were incredulous, she would deny that quantum computing could actually happen.

12. C

Difficulty: Easy

Category: Global

Strategic Advice: The phrase “primarily serves to” marks this as a Global question. Consult your big picture summary to predict the correct answer.

Getting to the Answer: For this passage, you can summarize the author’s purpose as something like: “Narrate the story of how Snow’s cholera research changed doctors’ understanding and prevention of disease.” That leads to the correct answer, **(C)**. The phrase “chronicle an episode” contains a verb that accurately describes the author’s journalistic tone and focuses on the correct scope, a single event.

(A) is too broad; the passage does not attempt to sum up the entire history of cholera research.

(B) is too narrow; officials’ rejection of Snow’s findings the decade after the 1854 cholera outbreak is an unfortunate coda to the story, not the main point of the passage.

(D) is too narrow; the author mentions forensic evidence and investigation in the introduction to familiarize the reader with techniques that will be discussed.

13. B

Difficulty: Medium

Category: Global

Strategic Advice: This is a relatively rare variation on Global questions that asks you to describe the author’s perspective. Consider your big picture summary, especially the author’s purpose, to determine the role this author most likely fills.

Getting to the Answer: This passage centers on the story of Snow’s cholera research to explain its importance for medical research. The author compares epidemiology to criminal investigation to provide context for the general reader. This leads to **(B)** as the correct answer.

(A) suggests a passage that would likely focus on a current problem and would use language intended to persuade the reader to adopt new policies.

(C) describes an article primarily focused on the mistakes of present-day politicians and bureaucrats.

(D) portrays an expert communicating scientific and technical details to an expert reader.

14. B

Difficulty: Medium

Category: Function

Strategic Advice: When a Function question (“serves . . . to”) asks about the role of a paragraph, check your margin notes to see why the author wrote the paragraph and how it fits into the rest of the passage.

Getting to the Answer: Your note for paragraph 2 should indicate that this is where the author laid out the state of medical knowledge in 1854: doctors didn’t know about germs; people still believed the miasma theory of disease. The author included this to show how innovative Snow’s hypothesis and investigation were. That analysis leads to the correct answer, **(B)**.

(A) states the opposite of what the author intended; the beliefs outlined in paragraph 2 were unreasonable and soon rejected.

(C) distorts the passage; the conditions that led to the outbreak, such as wells dug too near cesspits, are discussed later in the passage.

(D) describes details the author introduces in paragraph 6, not paragraph 2.

15. A

Difficulty: Hard

Category: Inference

Strategic Advice: A question asking you to select a scenario “analogous to” one described in the passage is an Inference question. The correct answer follows from the passage without having been stated explicitly in the passage.

Getting to the Answer: The passage says that Snow hypothesized that cholera was spread by contaminated water even though he and his contemporaries were unaware of germs as the cause of diseases. Among the answer choices, the most appropriate analogy is the one described in (A); Mendel described the workings of heredity even though he didn’t know about its underlying structures, genes and DNA.

(B) may be tempting because it mentions Louis Pasteur—a scientist also mentioned in the passage—but it gets the analogy backwards; the situation described in this answer choice involves a scientist building on information already discovered.

(C) describes a situation in which a technological breakthrough (X-ray diffraction images) led to the refinement of a scientific theory; that doesn’t match Snow’s investigation, performed without the aid of technology.

(D) recounts a case in which social pressure was used in an attempt to silence a scientist; after Snow’s discovery, some officials ignored his findings, but the passage does not imply that he was persecuted.

16. B

Difficulty: Medium

Category: Command of Evidence

Strategic Advice: This is a standard Command of Evidence question. Your job is to locate the passage text that directly supports the correct answer to the preceding question.

Getting to the Answer: The correct answer to the question immediately before this one suggested that an important aspect of Snow’s theory was that he formulated the theory before scientists had discovered the biological mechanism explaining it. The author said this explicitly in the sentence quoted in choice (B).

The sentence quoted in choice (A) discusses the germ theory of disease but does not directly discuss the fact that Snow would not have known about it.

The sentence quoted in (C) focuses on how Snow pinpointed the physical source of the cholera outbreak, not on how he formulated his initial hypothesis.

The text quoted in (D) explains how Snow’s research helped find a way to prevent the spread of cholera; the question preceding this one focused on his theory of its cause, not prevention.

17. B

Difficulty: Medium

Category: Detail

Strategic Advice: The word “indicates” signals a Detail question. The correct answer will paraphrase something explicitly stated in the passage. Target paragraph 6 where the author discussed government officials’ rejection of Snow’s findings.

Getting to the Answer: The question stem asks for the “reason” officials ignored Snow’s hypothesis. This is discussed in lines 94–103. The officials feared public outcry (“upset and disgusted”) upon finding out that sewage had leaked into their water supply, a concern that (B) sums up succinctly.

(A) misuses a detail from paragraph 4: Snow persuaded officials to remove the pump handle despite a lack of “conclusive proof.”

(C) distorts the passage; the author says that officials publicly rejected Snow’s findings for political reasons but doesn’t say that they doubted his methods.

(D) is outside the scope; nothing in the passage suggests that corruption played a role in the officials’ decisions.

18. D

Difficulty: Medium

Category: Command of Evidence

Strategic Advice: This is a standard Command of Evidence question. Your job is to locate the passage text that directly supports the correct answer to the preceding question.

Getting to the Answer: The preceding question focused on why officials rejected Snow’s findings. That is directly explained by the sentence quoted in choice (D).

(A) quotes the first sentence of paragraph 3; this addresses Snow’s rejection of the miasma theory, not officials’ rejection of Snow’s theory.

(B) quotes the end of paragraph 4 where the author explained that removal of the pump handle curtailed the cholera outbreak. Because this excerpt contains the phrase “unable to find conclusive proof,” it may tempt test takers who mistakenly chose (A) in the preceding question.

(C) quotes a sentence from paragraph 5 that details further steps in Snow’s research; it is unrelated to the officials’ reactions to his findings.

19. C

Difficulty: Hard

Category: Detail

Strategic Advice: This is a Detail question asking for something “cited” in the passage. Direct your research to paragraph 4, where the author explains how Snow narrowed his search for the cause of the cholera outbreak to the Broad Street pump.

Getting to the Answer: According to the passage, Snow interviewed “residents of the area” and discovered that “most of the victims had used a single pump.” That is summed up nicely in the correct answer, (C).

(A) restates what those who still held the miasma theory of disease, not Snow, believed to be the outbreak’s source.

(B) gets the order of events backwards; Snow’s suspicions about the Broad Street pump led to the removal of its handle.

(D) also describes a situation Snow discovered *after* the pump handle was removed.

20. D

Difficulty: Hard

Category: Inference

Strategic Advice: The phrase “reasonably inferred” indicates an Inference question. The correct answer will follow from the passage without having been explicitly stated in the passage.

Getting to the Answer: At the end of paragraph 5, the passage states that Snow’s “revelation”—that workers at the brewery near Broad Street pump boiled the water before using it to make beer—provided a way to prevent future outbreaks. Thus, (D) is the correct answer.

(A) is extreme; while the brewery employees were fortunate to avoid contamination, the passage does not imply that drinks containing alcohol could be universally substituted for water.

(B) is extreme; the result of this recommendation would be that no one in the city would have water, which would be untenable.

(C) might be a reasonable suggestion today, but the passage tells you that the bacteria was unknown in 1855.

21. A

Difficulty: Medium

Category: Vocab-in-Context

Strategic Advice: To answer a Vocab-in-Context question, check the sentence in which the word was used for clues about its meaning. The correct answer can be substituted for the word in the question stem without changing the meaning of the sentence.

Getting to the Answer: If you know that one meaning of “flag,” used as a verb, is *decrease* or *lessen*, this question is straightforward. If you are unfamiliar with this definition, the logic of the sentence still leads to (A) as the correct answer. Officials would have replaced the pump handle at the point when public anxiety went down.

(B), “indicated,” suggests a use of “flagged” that would be appropriate in a sentence like, “The teacher flagged the error with a sticky note.” In the context of the passage, it does not make sense to say that “public anxiety” was flagged in this way.

(C), “penalized,” might remind you of the way “flagged” is used to describe a referee’s actions in a sporting event, but it is not appropriate for this sentence in the passage.

(D), “peaked,” meaning *arriving at the highest point*, is opposite of the correct meaning; officials certainly would not replace the pump handle at the height of public anxiety.

22. A

Difficulty: Hard

Category: Function

Strategic Advice: A question asking how the author uses a piece of text—in this case, a specific sentence—is a Function question. Research the sentence in the context of the paragraph.

Getting to the Answer: The final paragraph of the passage opens with a statement of how Snow is now appreciated as an innovator. The heart of the paragraph then explains how political expediency led to a temporary rejection of his findings. The paragraph's final sentence brings you back to Snow's ultimate vindication, despite an intervening tragedy. **(A)** accurately describes the final sentence's purpose in the paragraph.

(B) distorts the passage; Snow's explanation was accepted because it was effective in preventing cholera, not because he fully explained the bacteria causing the disease.

(C) contradicts the passage; Snow's discovery was applied immediately when officials removed the handle of Broad Street pump.

(D) refers to the 1866 epidemic for the wrong reason; the author mentions this detail to explain what finally motivated acceptance of Snow's ideas, not to criticize the officials' actions.