The **Redesigned SAT** & PSAT Course Book

Reading, Writing & Language
and Essay

Instructor's Edition

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Focusing on the Individual Student

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WRITING AND LANGUAGE

ESSAY

Explanation of Instructor's Edition Notes:

- Throughout this book, helpful hints are included in green. Students will not have these notes in their version of the textbook.

- Answers are located at the bottom of each practice page.

- Selected attractor answer choices are denoted by the symbol ⚠️.

- Additional quesitons are indicated by the symbol ❓.

  These questions can improve undertsanding or expand skills and are not pertinent to solving the main problem.

Process of Elimination

❑ Correct answers to Reading questions might not jump out at you; often, you will have to eliminate answer choices. Wrong answers range from clearly wrong to almost right.

❑ Make sure that you've found the **best** answer, not just a good one. Reading questions, especially difficult ones, will usually contain at least one or two choices that are "almost right."

One way to explain the notion of a best answer is the Goldilocks analogy: this one is too broad, this one is too narrow...

❑ Eliminate answer choices that:

- aren't relevant or true.

- might be true but don't answer the question asked.

- might be true but are too broad.

- might be true but are too narrow.

Consider the analogy of a photograph: is it zoomed in too far, poorly cropped, or the "negative" of the image?

- are exactly the opposite of what is correct.

- address the wrong part of the passage.

- use words and phrases from the passage, but do not answer the question correctly.

- are too extreme.

❑ Look for opposites.

If two answer choices are exact opposites, one of them is likely the correct answer.

❑ Look out for answer choices that are only mostly correct.

Some answer choices will be almost perfect, but will have one detail or word that does not work. Do not choose an answer choice just because parts of it sound good.

❑ Be careful of incorrect names and facts.

Some answer choices will be almost correct – the right answer, but with the wrong name plugged in, or with the names swapped.

Most students solve Reading questions by trying to prove answer choices right. This approach often leads to multiple answers that seem correct. Instead, students should Anticipate the Answer; when that doesn't fully work, they should prove answer choices wrong until only the best answer remains.

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❑ Be on the lookout for answer choices that are designed to attract your attention away from the correct answer.

> I like driving at night. It's dark and comfortable in my car. No one can see me. I'm in a safe little world, and outside in the dark, the lights of the houses and streets have turned the real world into something else – nice, dark and secure. I drive along in the dark and look at the houses with their lights on, looking in the windows, seeing living rooms, curtains and comfortable, warm houses. Late at night, I dream of living on an island with white sand and a bright blue sky – a place free of other people.
>
> The phrase "a place free of other people" indicates that the author
>
> A)   believes society is too commercially oriented.
> B)   is kept awake at night by the sound of traffic.
> C)   feels unsafe when driving during the day.
> D)   is seeking independence from others.
>
> Try to isolate the correct answer by eliminating the other answer choices. Explain how you can prove answers are incorrect.
>
> A)   _No evidence_
>
> B)   _Yes, he is driving at night, but not being kept up by cars_
>
> C)   _He does not talk about the daytime_
>
> D)   _CORRECT_

❑ Using Process of Elimination doesn't mean you should rush through the question and immediately start reading answer choices. With each question, your first step should be to understand the question and try to answer it before reading the answer choices.

Combine the search for what you anticipate the correct answer to be with the elimination of answers. This will keep the goal in sight. Students who rely solely on POE have a difficult time when confronted with two "almost right" answers because they have forgotten their own answer to the question.

Advanced students tend to overthink a passage and to read too much between the lines. Focus on what the passage actually says. The answers are based on evidence and not conjecture.

PUT IT TOGETHER

This passage is from the autobiography of a Mexican-American author who revisits her childhood home.

1

We piled into the station wagon and drove over to the east side of town, arriving after dawn. I hadn't seen the house in five years, and was struck by how small it was. I remembered it as sweet, and plenty big
5 enough for four, but now it seemed tiny—the whole of the original house would have fit into my mother's current living room, and the house she lives in now is by no means large. She'd told me that when the family first moved here, when I was a new baby, the
10 refrigerator was outside in the yard, because there was no room for it indoors.

The light green paint still flaked off the stucco walls of the house in long, leaden chunks. The stockade fence my father had built around the yard
15 when I was four still stood. Outside the yard, vultures still nested in the pair of soaring eucalyptus trees.

2

The one on the right still held, in its topmost branches, the giant limb that had been felled by a storm when I was a small girl. For most of my life,
20 my father had been trying to get that limb down. He thought it would make perfect firewood that would last all winter, but he'd never been able to climb high enough to knock it loose.

The new residents had torn out the jumping cholla
25 cactus I fell into the first time I rode my bicycle without training wheels, and had hung it as a trophy on the gate where my sister and I used to swing.

It wasn't the house I cared about so much as the desert it sat in. Mesquite trees curled like beloved
30 ghosts in the sandy dirt that surrounded the little cottage. Thick underbrush filled the spaces between them, low thorny bushes interspersed with cacti. A sweet dry smell rose from the plants.

"Here!" I shouted, spotting an overgrown trail
35 into the brush.

3

It was harder than I remembered—the sharp ground hurt my feet, and thorns reached out to tear at my arms and hair. As a child I had run through these desert woods, built worlds in the arms of trees. I'd
40 come home at dusk, full of stories, and sit on my mother's knee. She'd comb the twigs and burrs out of my hair—my souvenirs, we called them—and I'd tell her the adventure that went with each one.

The trail took us to my secret place, a fort my
45 sister and I had built in the belly of sprawling mesquite. Big limbs arched low to the ground around a contraption of junk. Rotting tires arranged as seats,

4

a decaying blanket draped over a discarded bathtub, by now frozen where we'd dropped it the last time
50 my sister had played the sleeping princess in our game. A tiny plastic tea service sat half buried under the tree.

I dropped into a crouch, scooping the fine dirt and letting it run through my fingers.
55 "Here," I said, turning toward my new husband. "This is where I came from."

Tears welled in my eyes, I was so excited to be home. I held a dirty hand out to him. He stood over me, his face registering distress.

5

60 "I can see now why your mother worked so hard to get you out of here," he said. "She must have promised herself never to let you live like this again."

6

I stood up beside him and looked around. What seemed to me to be the glowing, teeming world of a
65 happy childhood was a place where strange trees towered above crumbling houses. Dust was held in place by yellowed weeds. The only body of water for miles was in the decrepit swimming pool on the ranch next door. It looked like poverty to him, like
70 filmstrips of third world villages where children need your love, expressed in American currency. To me it was the thing not foreign, the landscape of safe dreams and the touchstone of reality in a world of inauthentic cities. How could he think my mother had
75 taken us away to escape this? This place was the beloved she gave up to be near her own mother again, not the thing she fled. The inches between my dusty outstretched fingertips and his clean hand multiplied as I curled them back in toward my palm.

7

80 "I think we'd better go back to the car," I said. "There's nothing left here I want you to see."

---

1 Main Idea

Which of the following sentences serves as the best summary of the author's description in lines 1-23?

A) Though the scale with which I judged it had changed, the house really hadn't.

B) Seeing the house I grew up in reminded me of all of the negative experiences of my childhood. *Opposite*

C) My deep love of nature was fostered by the beautiful surroundings of my childhood home. *Too narrow*

D) My childhood home had always been in poor shape, but now it has decayed even further. *Not true*

Resist the urge to explain the implied ideas in this passage. Have students describe their understanding of the reading, then have them try to solve the questions. This can be a great exercise in the importance of inferernce and implication.

A

2   Purpose

The description of the large limb caught in the highest branches of one of the trees (lines 17-23) most clearly conveys

A) the unchanging condition of the yard since her childhood.
B) the author's fond memories of her father working around the house. Not mentioned
C) the fragility of life in the desert. Opposite
D) the large amount of time that has passed since her childhood.   Not true

3   Inference

Lines 39-43 ("I'd come . . . each one") depict the author's

A) childhood poverty. Wrong part of passage
B) distant relationship with her mother. Opposite
C) intrepid nature.
D) collection of souvenirs. Too literal

4   Detail

The items that the author describes in lines 47-52 ("Rotting tires . . . under the tree") are examples of

A) common childhood mementos. Too broad
B) gifts that she gave to her sister. Not stated
C) refuse littering her childhood playground. Too extreme
D) artifacts of her past.

5   Inference

The primary effect of the husband's response in lines 60-62 is to

A) demonstrate the degree to which he supports the author. Partially correct
B) remind the reader that the husband has been in the scene from the beginning. Too literal
C) let the author know that it is time for them to leave. Not relevant
D) reveal to the author how little her husband understands her feelings about her childhood.

Work thoroughly through the answer choices for each question. This Put It Together is an exercise in how to judge and eliminate answer choices. Have students provide explanations for why each wrong answer is incorrect.

6   Purpose

The image of the two characters' hands in lines 77-79 underscores the

A) new distance between the young couple.
B) cleanliness of the husband as opposed to the soiled hands of his wife. Too literal
C) squalor in which the narrator was raised. Too extreme
D) narrator's inability to return home. Incorrect

7   Inference

The author's statement in the final paragraph implies that

A) she regrets opening up her childhood to her husband.
B) she has shown her husband everything she brought him there to see. Too literal
C) she is worried about the car.   Not relevant
D) there is nothing left in Mexico that she cares about. Too broad

8   Point of View

The overall tone of the passage is best described as

A) playful. Too narrow
B) mysterious. Not relevant
C) detached. Opposite
D) nostalgic.

Give reasons to eliminate incorrect answers:

A) _____
B) _____
C) _____
D) _____

A
C
D
D

A
A
D

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Main Idea Questions   1-4 per test

❑ Main idea questions ask you to determine the author's focus or point in writing a particular paragraph or the passage as a whole.

Through your use of Mapping the Passage, you should be able to find the main idea of each paragraph and the whole passage.

❑ Main idea questions typically appear in the following forms:

The central claim of the passage is…
The main idea of the first paragraph is…
Which of the following statements best expresses the central idea of the passage?
The passage primarily focuses on…

❑ Do not assume that the first paragraph will contain the main idea of the passage or that the first sentence will contain the main idea of a paragraph. Although you may have learned to write essays this way, not all authors will follow these guidelines.

❑ As you read through the possible answers for a main idea question, eliminate answer choices that:

• draw a broader conclusion than the passage does.

• talk about only a portion of the passage.

• have nothing to do with the topic.

• may sound reasonable, but are not mentioned in the text.

Make sure that you focus on the correct part of the passage. Incorrect answers often seem correct when you consider a part of the passage that is different from what the question references.

The main idea is the central issue, argument, or thought. It is the overall message that the writer wants to communicate to the reader. The main idea is what the passage is about and also why the information in the passage is important. Note that main idea is not the same as a summary of the passage or its topic.

Ask students to find the main idea of each paragraph and of whole passages. This is the most important reading skill for most SAT students.

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PUT IT TOGETHER

This passage is adapted from Sam Stoddard, "What's the (Dark) Matter?"

The Milky Way Galaxy is spinning quickly—too quickly. In fact, matter that populates the universe spins so rapidly that it should have torn itself apart long ago. As any child who has fallen off of a merry-
5 go-round knows, as the speed of rotation increases, objects are pulled away from the center and flung outwards. Children combat this centrifugal force by clinging tightly to the handles of a merry-go-round as it spins; objects in space are able to remain in
10 position thanks to the pull of gravity. But there is not enough observable matter in galaxies like our own to have enough gravity to cancel out the tremendous stress placed on galaxies as they spin. The merry-go-rounds of the universe are moving so quickly that it
15 should be impossible for the stars and planets to stay on for the ride—and yet galaxies remain intact.

This puzzle has led researchers to infer that only a small portion of the matter that makes up our universe is observable by traditional means. There
20 must be at least five times as much gravity holding galaxies together as can be accounted for by the stars, planets, dust clouds and other objects that absorb, reflect, or emit light. Researchers hypothesize that much of the mass in the universe does not interact
25 with the electromagnetic field; this otherwise unobservable matter is known as dark matter. But what is dark matter? And how can scientists study something that they cannot see?

Deep below the Alps, scientists aren't merely
30 searching for dark matter; they are working to create it. The European Organization for Nuclear Research has constructed the largest particle accelerator in history: the Large Hadron Collider, or LHC. Beginning operation in 2008, the LHC is a 27-
35 kilometer ring that uses superconducting electro-magnets to accelerate high-energy particles to nearly the speed of light. Separate ultra-high vacuum tubes house the tiny particles as they spin in opposite directions before being merged into a single tube
40 where they collide and break apart, forming new particles and releasing energy. The collisions that take place within the LHC mimic the formative processes that characterized the early universe; scientists detect and study the particles that result in
45 order to better understand the variety of substances that inhabit our universe.

Researchers have theorized that dark matter particles can be created using the LHC; however, even if they could be produced, they would still not
50 be directly observable. Instead, scientists believe they can prove the existence of dark matter by observing its effects. Dark matter is believed to interact only very weakly with ordinary matter, so any dark matter created would likely slip past particle detectors; but
55 as it does, it would carry energy and momentum away with it. Because scientists can estimate the amount of energy produced in a given collision, the presence of any newly created dark matter could be demonstrated by comparing the measurable energy
60 produced to predicted estimates.

To date, collisions produced by the LHC between a variety of particles at different levels of kinetic energy have been unable to produce dark matter. Furthermore, even if the presence of unknown
65 particles was to be observed, scientists cannot be certain that dark matter is responsible; the hidden particles could be something else entirely. Nevertheless, simply gaining knowledge of the conditions under which such a candidate can be
70 created would give scientists a strong idea of where to look for further evidence of dark matter, bringing us one step closer to understanding the elusive form of matter that may hold our galaxy together.

1   Main Idea

The central claim of the passage is that

A) the dark matter that holds our galaxy together was created with the Large Hadron Collider. Not true
B) scientists are trying to create dark matter in order to disprove the theory of gravity. Not true
C) scientists are using the LHC to search for an explanation for an apparent lack of matter in the galaxy.
D) dark matter causes our galaxy to rotate too quickly, and so scientists are studying dark matter in the hopes of weakening its interaction with ordinary matter. Misleading

2   Main Idea

The main idea of the first paragraph (lines 1-16) is that

A) scientists are split between two contradictory hypotheses to explain a recognized phenomenon. Not true
B) scientific principles often originate in childhood experiences. Too literal
C) there is an apparent contradiction in the structure of our galaxy.
D) a previously accepted theory has been disproven by recent discoveries. Not stated

Questions 44-54 are based on the following passage.

This passage is adapted from an article about the discovery of penicillin.

Despite the common adulation of individual genius, the advancement of scientific knowledge is nearly always an incremental, collaborative process. Progress tends to be slow and spotty at first. Early
5 research reveals clues which lead to theories; theories drive further research; promising ideas are tested and rejected. Finally, usually after the community has had time to ponder and build understanding, practical applications arise that solve real-world problems.
10 The process may take years or decades, but mainstream society cannot be bothered to follow every turn. We tend to wait for the big breakthroughs, streamline the details, and heap our admiration on lone figures, often leaving the most important work
15 as footnotes.

Sir Alexander Fleming, his Nobel complimented by knighthood, became an object of scientific lore following the successful mass production of penicillin, perhaps the most important turning point
20 in the history of modern medicine. It is the sort of tale that makes otherwise esoteric science not merely digestible, but popular. When Fleming, a bacteriologist on staff at a Scottish hospital, left for his August vacation in 1928, he hastily stacked his
25 cultures of staphylococci bacteria on a bench in the corner of his untidy laboratory. Upon returning one month later, he was surprised to find that a mold had developed on some of the cultures, and that the bacteria nearest to this mold had died while his other
30 samples remained healthy. Fleming came to recognize the miraculous mold as a member of the Penicillium genus; dubbing the material it released penicillin, he set about experimenting with its ability to treat bacterial infections in humans. His early
35 results were promising; penicillin not only reversed the spread of staphylococci, it was also shown to kill the bacteria that caused many other destructive diseases of the age, including scarlet fever, pneumonia, meningitis, diphtheria, and gonorrhea.
40 Fleming published his results in the *Journal of Experimental Pathology* in 1929, but they received little attention from the broader community. Because he lacked the proper facilities and scientific expertise necessary to work with penicillin, Fleming found the
45 mold difficult to produce in quantity, and he struggled to isolate its antibiotic agent. Furthermore, Fleming was working with a type of penicillin that acted rather slowly on infectious bacterias, and he worried that the finicky substance would not survive
50 once inside the human body. Discouraged, Fleming eventually abandoned his research into penicillin.

Fortunately, Oxford University Professor Howard Florey stumbled upon Fleming's paper in 1938, as he searched for a cure to bacterial infections
55 on behalf of the British and American militaries. Florey assembled a team of expert researchers in one of Britain's most well-equipped laboratories; among the most capable of his employees was a young biochemist named Ernst Chain. During the summer
60 of 1940, the scientists tested a new penicillin mold extract on a collection of 50 mice infected with streptococcus; the mice injected with penicillin recovered and survived. Florey believed the results promising enough to move to human trials, but there
65 was still the problem of producing enough penicillin to treat larger organisms.

The first person treated by Florey and Chain was Albert Alexander, a local police constable who had developed an infection after suffering a small cut to
70 his face while working in his rose garden. Alexander's condition had worsened quickly; streptococci and staphylococci had spread first to his eyes and scalp, and then to his shoulder and lungs. Having heard of Alexander's condition from
75 colleagues at the Radcliffe Institute, Florey and Chain suggested trying penicillin. Five days after his initial treatment, Alexander's infections had begun to retreat; but further doses of penicillin were required, and because Florey and Chain could not possibly
80 produce their antibiotic solution fast enough, Alexander ultimately died. It was another member of the Oxford team, Norman Heatley, who was most instrumental in developing the x-ray technologies and filtration techniques necessary to mass produce
85 penicillin.

When news reports touting the new wonder-drug swept the world in 1941, it was the story of Fleming's chance discovery that captivated the public. Years of challenging technical work by the
90 Oxford team, whose efforts that had made the breakthrough possible, were largely ignored. The modest Fleming did his best to share the spotlight, but it is his name alone that graces the lips of millions of school-age children, often mentioned alongside the
95 likes of Louis Pasteur, Percy Julian, and Jonas Salk. Fleming was a dedicated biologist who made a fortunate discovery, but it took a team of top scientists to advance antibiotics from an interesting observation to a revolutionary treatment.

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U.S. Death Rate for Infectious Diseases

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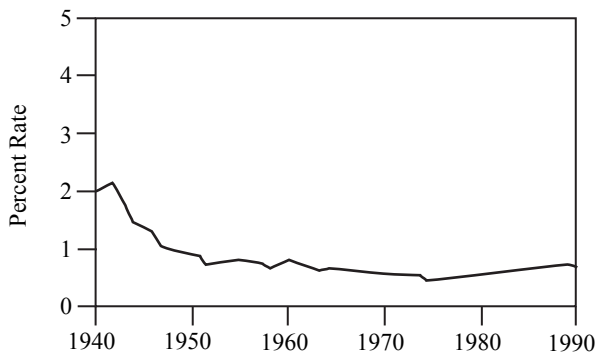
44   Detail

Based on the passage, which choice best describes the relationship between Fleming's work and that of the Oxford researchers?

A) Fleming made an initial discovery that was the basis for work by the Oxford researchers.
B) Fleming and the Oxford researchers arrived independently at similar discoveries. Not true
C) Fleming proposed a scientific theory that was challenged by the Oxford researchers. Opposite
D) Fleming refined a scientific technique pioneered by the Oxford researchers. Wrong Timeline

45   Evidence

Which choice provides the best evidence for the answer to the previous question?

A) Lines 7-9 ("Finally… problems") Too vague
B) Lines 16-20 ("Sir Alexander… medicine") Too narrow
C) Lines 40-42 ("Fleming… community") Too narrow
D) Lines 96-99 ("Fleming… treatment")

46   Detail

Which description of penicillin is supported by the passage?

A) Penicillin is a virus that spreads quickly among humans. Not stated
B) Penicillin is extracted from mold and used to combat bacterial infections.
C) Penicillin is a bacteria grown from staphylococci. Opposite
D) Penicillin does not occur naturally and must be synthesized inside of a laboratory. Opposite

47   Evidence

Which choice provides the best evidence for the answer to the previous question?

A) Lines 81-85 ("It was… penicillin") Wrong part
B) Lines 4-7 ("Progress… rejected") Wrong part
C) Lines 71-73 ("Alexander's… lungs") Wrong part
D) Lines 30-34 ("Fleming… humans")

48   Words in Context

As used in line 4, "spotty" most nearly means

A) stained. Not logical
B) microscopic. Not logical
C) inconsistent.
D) abbreviated. Not logical

49   Purpose

Lines 10-15 ("The process… footnotes.") draw a distinction between

A) the work of amateur scientists and that of trained professionals. Not stated
B) the advancement of scientific knowledge and public perception of such progress.
C) conducting scientific research and writing for scientific journals. Not related
D) previously held beliefs and modern scientific knowledge. Not stated

50   Inference

The passage most strongly suggests that the "community" mentioned in lines 7 and 42 is composed of

A) research scientists.
B) medical patients. Not mentioned
C) people living in close proximity to the Radcliffe Institute. Wrong part of passage
D) citizens of Britain and the United States of America. Not relevant

A
D
B

D
C
B
A

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51   Purpose

In relation to the rest of the passage, the primary function of first paragraph is to

A)   explain a scientific principle that is subsequently refuted by the author.   Opposite
B)   consider an event that contradicts a theory presented in the following paragraph.   Opposite
C)   introduce a problem for which a solution is described later in the passage.   Not stated
D)   present a claim that is illustrated in the remainder of the passage.

52   Point of View

The author probably considers Fleming to have been

A)   a brilliant researcher at the top of his field.   Too extreme
B)   a fraud who manipulated the public to achieve fame.   Too extreme
C)   an unremarkable scientist who made an auspicious discovery.
D)   an under-appreciated genius whose achievements have only recently begun to gain recognition.   Too extreme

53   Data Graphics

Data in the graph following the passage most strongly support which of the following statements?

A)   Penicillin usage has declined since the mid-1970s.   Not measured by graph
B)   Penicillin usage has declined since the early 1940s.   Not measured by graph
C)   The widespread usage of penicillin brought a decline in the mortality of infectious diseases.
D)   The widespread usage of penicillin brought an increase in the mortality of infectious diseases.   Opposite

54   Detail

Which of the following best describes the role of Norman Heatley in the development of penicillin?

A)   Heatley was the first person to be treated with penicillin.   Incorrect
B)   Heatley developed new techniques for producing penicillin.
C)   Heatley was the first researcher to publish a scientific paper on penicillin.   Incorrect
D)   Heatley lobbied the British military to adopt penicillin.   Misleading