

1. Answer: B—18.3, *Is it Relevant: Replacing*

If you read the sentence just following the underlined portion, you'll notice it lists things which might be seen in a subway. This supports only option B, as it has nothing to do with speed, cost, or calmness. The context here is essential to finding the answer.

2. Answer: F—5, *Additional Comma Uses and Misuses*

The commas in this sentence are confusing, so identifying the subject and predicate can help determine where breaks are necessary. The subject is a list from "A musician..." to "...stockbrokers in crisp, charcoal gray suits..." The predicate is "get on at Wall Street." Commas in this sentence are only needed to separate list articles, as there is no compounding or complexity. The end of a list does not need another comma, as there is no new article, so **G** is out. "Charcoal gray" is a phrase, not two separate adjectives, so separating them is incorrect (unless the suits are literally made of charcoal). Similarly, there is no need to separate "suits" from its descriptor "charcoal gray."

3. Answer: D—1.3, *Apostrophes: Who's, Whose*

The difference between the possessive "whose" and conjunction "who's" is the key here. Remember that an apostrophe is a placeholder for missing letters. "Who is" has the space and "i" replaced.

4. Answer: G—12, *Modifications*

Prepositions are difficult because there is not a rule to follow. You just need to *know* from hearing and speaking English that "as" is appropriate. "Even if," implies an unexpected consistency, but the implication of each are not definite and rely nearly entirely on your English fluency.

5. Answer: B—3.3, *Joining and Separating Sentences: Comma + FANBOYS*

It's important to recognize that this sentence is compound. The word "subways" marks the end of one independent clause, as followed by another. Most compound sentences are linked simply with a comma and a conjunction (FANBOYS).

6. Answer: J—15, *Shorter is Better: Redundancy and Wordiness*

The existing "I think maybe" adds more than enough uncertainty to this statement, so all but answer **J** are redundant with their extra expressions of indefiniteness.

7. Answer: A—4.1, *Non-Essential Transition Words and Clauses*

The options provided all add unnecessary transitions. While it may be difficult to determine when a transition is necessary, if you notice that *they all mean the same thing* it becomes clear that one can't be correct and the others incorrect, thus eliminating them all.

8. Answer: G—1.1, *Apostrophes: It's/Its*

Make sure you know the difference between these before going into the ACT! Remember that the apostrophe is a placeholder for the missing space and "i" in "It is."

9. Answer: C—15, *Shorter is Better: Redundancy and Wordiness*

All the other options here are wordy to the point of just being confusing; don't let that fool you! If a one-word answer sounds correct, it often is.

10. Answer: H—8, *Verbs: Agreement and Tense*

Note the "NOT" in the question! **H** is the only unacceptable answer because the existing past-tense verb "watched" is the active verb of the sentence. "Playing" is only a modifier/descriptor of the elderly man, and thus should be either present or past tense with appropriate pronoun pairings. If you don't know all the rules, just listen: which sounds right?

11. Answer: D—12, *Modifications*

This is another tricky preposition question. You just need to know that one sits "across from," not "across with." English is tricky; count yourself lucky to speak it fluently!

12. Answer: G—19.1, *Sentence Order & 12, Modifications*

The phrase underlined is describing the "woman," thus it fits most appropriately right alongside her to avoid confusion.

13. Answer: A—16, *Diction and Register*

The question here specifically asks for a choice emphasizing "the rapid speed," so the verb "hurtle" is the most fitting option. It is a strong action verb with much more implication than "continued," "proceeded," and "moved," which are hardly descriptive.

14. Answer: H—18.2, *Is it Relevant: Deleting*

If the sentence is read, it should take little elimination to determine which answers are irrelevant. There is

no physical description, nor reference to the opening, nor explanation for actions: only evidence of friendliness in their consideration of his flowers.

15. Answer: C—20, *Suppose the Author's Goal*

In yes-or-no questions, keep in mind that what matters is the *supporting evidence*, not the yes/no. In this case, **C** is correct because it accurately portrays the essay and how it is not about economics. The others, while in many cases referencing the passage, do not provide sound reasoning based off of these references.

16. Answer: F—4.2, *Non-Essential Clause “...,”*

The clause “known as the Navajo code talkers” is non-essential to the sentence and thus does not affect its structure. Placed between two commas, no additions are necessary; most will incorrectly transform the sentence’s existing clauses.

17. Answer: C—5, *Other Comma Uses and Misuses*

There should be no commas or other punctuation in the underlined portion, as there is nothing to separate. A preposition does not need to be preceded by a comma. A colon at the end is incorrect because it would no longer be an independent clause. The same is true for **D**.

18. Answer: G—8.2, *Verbs: Tense*

“Had” is correctly in the past perfect tense, as the action began at a time preceding the relevant time in the past. No other option is in the correct tense.

19. Answer: A—11, *Word Pairs and Comparisons*

These adjectives each have different meanings. If you are unsure of a definition, see if you can rule out those you do know. Otherwise, use context to determine what is the best description for the particular subject.

20. Answer: J—3.3, *Joining and Separating Sentences: Comma + FANBOYS*

The word “whereas” is often misused, so don’t be daunted by its presence. Instead, consider and rule out the simpler answers. We have two independent clauses in need of separation: **G & F** have no comma, so they can be ruled out. While **H** has a comma, it has no conjunction to go with it. Although whereas is not in FANBOYS, it serves a similar purpose and is correct in this usage.

21. Answer: D—4.1, *Non-Essential Transition Words and Phrases*

Here we see just how non-essential these transitions can be. “Nevertheless” implies exception; “similarly” implies comparison; “still” also implies some sense

of despite-the-odds. Each of these is irrelevant in the context of the sentence, thus they are best foregone.

22. Answer: H—5, *Other Comma Uses and Misuses*

No comma is necessary in the underlined portion because nothing is being separated (that is, neither clauses nor lists). Even reading the options aloud should make clear that the commas do not make sense, as no pause would fit there.

23. Answer: C—9, *Pronouns: Agreement and Case & 8.1 Verbs: Agreement*

The antecedent to the pronoun underlined is “the Navajo language.” As such, we know we need a singular pronoun; this narrows us down to **B & C**. Only **C** correctly agrees the verb, too.

24. Answer: F—12, *Modifications*

Ah, the confusing prepositions never end. Again, you just need to know that one has exposure “to” something, not from, with, or of it.

25. Answer: B—3, *Joining and Separating Sentences*

This is another “NOT” question, so be careful not to pick the first right answer! Remember that on the ACT a semicolon and a period are functionally the same, so they are both correct. **B** is obviously not because it provides neither punctuation nor conjunction. Independent clauses can never just be put right together.

26. Answer: J—9, *Pronouns: Agreement and Case*

In this sentence, the antecedent to the pronoun is unclear. Because of the ambiguity, it’s better to just state the intended subject instead of using a pronoun.

27. Answer: A—18.2, *Is it Relevant: Deleting*

No. No it isn’t. Height and weight are irrelevant, and thus should be excluded.

28. Answer: J—15, *Shorter is Better: Redundancy and Wordiness*

It’s redundant to state that the peril was dangerous, as that’s just what “peril” means—danger. Remember to always give special attention to options for omission, as they are often correct.

29. Answer: C—3.3, *Joining and Separating Sentences: Comma + FANBOYS*

The compound predicate here can be combined with only the conjunction “and.” The sentence is not entirely compound as it does not repeat or introduce a subject for the second predicate, so no comma is needed as we do not have a new independent clause.

30. Answer: F—16, *Diction and Register*

The phrase “secret work” is concise and accurate, while the other options contain expressions which aren’t particularly proper for this passage. “Hush-hush” and “under wraps” are idioms better kept for creative passages, rather than informative.

31. Answer: D—2.1, *Arranging a Sentence*

Consider how this sentence would best be rearranged. “Everybody listens when storyteller...” makes the most sense. No “and” is included here, and only one clause is moved. Only one comma is needed to separate two clauses, so **D** is the best answer.

32. Answer: F—17, *Transitions*

The transition “indeed” is appropriate here because it expands upon the previous point. The other options bear implications which do not fit this context. Unfortunately, this does not have much of a trick; you just need to know how each is used.

33. Answer: B—9, *Pronouns: Agreement and Case*

As the antecedent is “the griots,” a group of people, “who” is appropriate because it refers to people rather than objects. “Whom” needs a paired preposition, and the other two options are also incorrect.

34. Answer: J—3, *Joining and Separating Sentences*

The trickiest option in this question is **H**, which appears incorrect due to lack of comma. In this case, however, it can be considered a compound predicate instead of a compound sentence, in which case a comma is not needed. The lack of any conjunction after the comma in **J**, however, is not an allowable omission.

35. Answer: C—18.2, *Is it Relevant: Deleting*

Consider what the phrase in question means out of context, as well as in context. It is by no means an essential transition, as in **A**, nor a comparison as in **B**. It may be argued to be unnecessary, but it is not a detail; in fact, it is rather vague. Thus we can rule out **D**. **C** correctly describes its purpose.

36. Answer: H—15, *Is it Relevant: Redundancy and Wordiness*

The redundancy in this sentence (as redundancy should always be sought when deleting) is the inclusion of both her being in education and public schools, as one can hardly be one without the other.

37. Answer: A—12, *Modifications*

This phrase serves as further description of “Cindy Ellie,” and thus is only a modification and not a new

clause. As such, only a comma before is needed. Were the sentence to continue past this modification, a comma would follow as well. As the sentence ends, however, a period supersedes it.

38. Answer: J—18.1, *Is it Relevant: Inserting*

Remember that in yes/no questions it is the supporting evidence which determines the right answer, not the yes or no themselves. It should be clear that **J** is the best option because the reasoning behind the others is either untrue (**H**) or irrelevant.

39. Answer: D—4.2, *Non-Essential Clause “...,”*

Note that the portion from “who had” to “in Gambia” is all one clause serving to further describe her friend. These non-essential clauses are always nested between twin commas, so we can be sure that one must follow “Alex Haley” to match the one following “Gambia.”

40. Answer: G—15, *Shorter is Better: Redundancy and Wordiness*

While the other options listed are not all inherently incorrect, it is always best to choose the shortest correct answer. Because “for” is just as correct as any other and states it in the simplest, most concise manner, it is correct.

41. Answer: C—3.1, *Joining and Separating Sentences: Period*

The use of “this” over something like “which” mean a new independent clause is started here, which “this” as the subject. The easiest way to separate two independent clauses is just to insert a period and capitalize.

42. Answer: F—18.3, *Is it Relevant: Replacing*

The most (and indeed only) relevant quote provided is that already in the passage. It provides an analogy appropriate to the situation, whereas the others do not fit this section at all.

43. Answer: D—15, *Shorter is Better: Redundancy and Wordiness*

It’s redundant to state that she could speak “for twelve hours straight” and “consecutively,” as that’s implied by the word “straight.” Redundancy begs omission. Remember to always pay attention to options for omission, as the ACT loves them!

44. Answer: F—5, *Other Comma Uses and Misuses & 1.1, *It’s/Its**

There’s no need for a comma here as there is no change of clause in the underlined portion. Also note the difference between the possessive “Its” and the contracted “It’s.”

45. Answer: D—20, *Suppose the Author's Goal*

Be sure not to overvalue the “yes or no” aspect of the question, and to focus on the supporting details. In this case, **D** is the only option which addresses both the story *and* the question. Others fail to accurately do both.

46. Answer: G—9, *Pronouns: Agreement and Case*

“They” is too ambiguous a pronoun to be used here, as there is no plural noun which could be the antecedent. As such, replacing it with such a plural removes ambiguity and provides an antecedent for the later “they’re” pronoun in the sentence.

47. Answer: C—6, *Colons*

The colon is used here to separate an independent clause from a list of examples. **D** is incorrect because the extra comma at the end incorrectly separates the article “dirt” from the parenthetical description (which is part of the “dirt” list article).

48. Answer: F—14, *Relative Pronouns: Who(se), Whom, Which, Where, and That*

These sorts of pronoun questions can be difficult to pin down because there are no easy rules to reference. The best approach is to read the sentence with each option and determine which sounds correct; if you’ve spoken English all your life, you should have an ear for what is correct.

49. Answer: B—19.1, *Sentence Order*

This sentence is difficult to place because it does not contain any strong clue words like pronouns or transitions. Instead, we must consider what the implications are of having “doubts” to serve the purpose of amplifying. To have doubts, there needs to be a belief stated: something to doubt. The only sentence which has any such statement is 2, which is amplified with a humorous understatement to display the lack of mentioned organization.

50. Answer: F—4.1, *Non-Essential Transition Words and Phrases*

The transition word “since” loosely means “because of.” This implication of causation is correct given the cause-and-effect relationship of the clauses later in the sentence. Also, all other answers have very similar connotations, which should be a strong indicator that they are wrong (there can only be one correct answer).

51. Answer: C—2, *Sentences and Fragments*

Be careful you don’t miss the “NOT” in this question. The key to answering this question is identifying the clauses. The “If-Then” structure of

this sentence mandates two independent clauses, the first led by “if,” followed by an independent clause (the effect for the cause, so to speak). Answer **C** incorrectly changes this clause into a subject with no predicate. The use of “who” creates a modification instead of a predicate, leaving us with a fragment.

52. Answer: J—16, *Diction and Register*

What do the phrases in question say? To determine what is lost, first determine what they contribute. These phrases emphasize the commonness of the described actions, which is necessary to explain why the umpire need be patient. While admiration may be implied by the sentence (and the word “patient”) the phrases in question do not impact that aspect of the sentence.

53. Answer: A—15, *Shorter is Better: Redundancy and Wordiness*

The other two grammatically correct choices in this question are wordy and add no meaning to the sentence which is not already provided by “ends up.” The shorter option always wins between two similar choices.

54. Answer: F—17, *Transitions*

Just because it’s in the middle of the sentence does not mean the underlined portion is not a transition! It is important to consider what each transition means. “Instead” implies replacement, “likewise” a similarity through comparison, “meanwhile” a simultaneous action. “Therefore” correctly implies a correlation of causation.

55. Answers: A—18.1, *Is it Relevant: Inserting*

What does the proposed addition have to do with the rest of the sentence? Answer: It doesn’t. There is no reason to add it. The fact that **B-D** are all synonymous and grammatically valid should be a strong clue that one can’t be correct, because they would all be.

56. Answer: J—5, *Additional Comma Uses and Misuses*

No clauses or articles are being separated here, so there is no need for an additional comma.

57. Answer: C—9, *Pronouns: Agreement and Case*

“It” is the correct pronoun here, not “that,” because we do not have a need for a relative pronoun. The “What” is incorrect without an additional “is” after “about” to keep our clause functionally the same. Only “It’s about” serves this purpose out of the given options.

58. Answer: G—1, *Apostrophes: Possessive vs. Plural*

Remember that a plural-possessive needs an apostrophe *after* the “s.” The comma answer is only there to distract you.

59. Answer: C—15, *Shorter is Better: Redundancy and Wordiness*

So many, so wordy answers. “They’re not” is short and adequately communicates the exception stated in the sentence. The other options are wordy and confusing, adding no new thought to the sentence.

60. Answer: J—20, *Suppose the Writer’s Goal*

Don’t overvalue the “yes” or “no” portion of each answer; the supporting evidence is what determines the correct choice. Only **J** both addresses the question and the essay, while the others fall short, often misinterpreting one or both.

61. Answer: A—11, *Word Pairs and Comparisons*

The word “slowly” is immediately before the underlined portion, so it should be easy to determine what type of description is needed. **A** is the only option which does not imply a sudden or immediate loss of feathers.

62. Answer: G—18.2, *Is it Relevant: Deleting*

Not only is the word “diurnal” unelaborated upon, it is also irrelevant to this sentence. While this information may be included elsewhere in the passage, this placement is inappropriate and warrants deletion.

63. Answer: C—11, *Word Pairs and Comparisons*

It is difficult to recognize sure-fire patterns and rules in these questions, however an English-speaker is likely to have a natural intuition and understanding of connotations which helps immensely (and is impossible to teach). “Total,” while of a very similar meaning, is not used this way in English, but rather to refer to the noun form of an action (ex: “Total destruction:”).

64. Answer: G—18.3, *Is it Relevant: Replacing*

The most relevant option is the one which supports the statement of pain following the underlined portion. The option which would most explain this is **G**, as the others would not imply any sort of difficulty in removing them.

65. Answer: A—9, *Pronouns: Agreement and Case*

The singular antecedent “a quill stub” mandates a singular pronoun. This rules out **B** & **C** which are plural. The relative “that” is also incorrect, leaving only the simple “it.”

66. Answer: H—3, *Joining and Separating Sentences*

The clause beginning with “the implanting…” is dependent, as it has no predicate. As such, it cannot be treated like an independent clause and separated with only a period, or else it will be a fragment.

67. Answer: D—8, *Verbs: Agreement and Tense*

The incorrect answers here are confusing, and exist to try and fool you. Trust your gut when you think “birds have” sounds simple and correct—it is.

68. Answer: H—10, *Adjectives and Adverbs*

The descriptive words in the underlined portion are meant to describe “shaped,” a verb. As such, adverbs much be used, not adjectives. Only one answer is free of adjectives.

69. Answer: B—16, *Diction and Register*

Consider the implications of the removed words “carefully” and “small.” These most support the idea of delicacy in option **B**, as they do not address limitations, differentiation, or ease as the other options imply.

70. Answer: F—12, *Modifications*

The preposition “to” is not underlined, which is essential to identifying the correct answer. Similarly, “be” *is* underlined. These subtleties make a big difference in choosing the correct answer. Some of these could be correct if the underlining were placed differently, so beware speeding through and not carefully reading each answer in the actual context.

71. Answer: A—17, *Transitions*

“Next” correctly shows the sequence of events. While “Finally” does show sequence, it improperly makes this step seem to end the process.

72. Answer: J—8.1, *Verbs: Agreement*

The subject-verb agreement is key here. As-written, the subject of the sentence is “glue,” which also shifts the sentence into passive voice. The real problem, however, is this causes “glue” to be the one doing the “sliding” at the start of the sentence, when it is really the rehabilitator. The same is true for all other options

73. Answer: B—3, *Joining and Separating Sentences*

These questions have a pattern which should be clear by this point in the test: they often have an independent or dependent clause separated in three correct ways and one incorrect way. In this case, the independent clause is incorrectly put after a comma with no conjunction in option **C**.

74. Answer: G—1.1, *Apostrophes: It's vs. Its*

This question is between spellings of “It’s,” and should quickly reveal itself as such due to the glaring errors in **H & J**. Remember the apostrophe’s role as “placeholder” for the missing space and “i” in the phrase “it is,” and it’s easy to solve.

75. Answer: C—18.1, *Is it Relevant: Inserting*

Don’t be distracted by the yes/no part of these questions. Instead, focus on the supporting evidence. It should be clear that the claims in each other option do not adequately reference both the question and the passage. In these questions, it pays off to have read the entire passage, posing a risk for the read-as-you-need strategy, however good inference can often help eliminate nonsense answers.