

CROSS-TEXT CONNECTIONS – HARD

15 Hard Questions - 27 minutes

QUESTION 1

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
SAT	Reading and Writing	Craft and Structure	Cross-Text Connections	■ ■ ■

ID: 97e5bf55

Text 1

In 1916, H. Dugdale Sykes disputed claims that *The Two Noble Kinsmen* was coauthored by William Shakespeare and John Fletcher. Sykes felt Fletcher's contributions to the play were obvious—Fletcher had a distinct style in his other plays, so much so that lines with that style were considered sufficient evidence of Fletcher's authorship. But for the lines not deemed to be by Fletcher, Sykes felt that their depiction of women indicated that their author was not Shakespeare but Philip Massinger.

Text 2

Scholars have accepted *The Two Noble Kinsmen* as coauthored by Shakespeare since the 1970s: it appears in all major one-volume editions of Shakespeare's complete works. Though scholars disagree about who wrote what exactly, it is generally held that on the basis of style, Shakespeare wrote all of the first act and most of the last, while John Fletcher authored most of the three middle acts.

Based on the texts, both Sykes in Text 1 and the scholars in Text 2 would most likely agree with which statement?

- A. John Fletcher's writing has a unique, readily identifiable style.
- B. The women characters in John Fletcher's plays are similar to the women characters in Philip Massinger's plays.
- C. *The Two Noble Kinsmen* belongs in one-volume compilations of Shakespeare's complete plays.
- D. Philip Massinger's style in the first and last acts of *The Two Noble Kinsmen* is an homage to Shakespeare's style.

QUESTION 2

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
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ID: 105ea6de

Text 1

Growth in the use of novel nanohybrids—materials created from the conjugation of multiple distinct nanomaterials, such as iron oxide and gold nanomaterials conjugated for use in magnetic imaging—has outpaced studies of nanohybrids’ environmental risks. Unfortunately, risk evaluations based on nanohybrids’ constituents are not reliable: conjugation may alter constituents’ physiochemical properties such that innocuous nanomaterials form a nanohybrid that is anything but.

Text 2

The potential for enhanced toxicity of nanohybrids relative to the toxicity of constituent nanomaterials has drawn deserved attention, but the effects of nanomaterial conjugation vary by case. For instance, it was recently shown that a nanohybrid of silicon dioxide and zinc oxide preserved the desired optical transparency of zinc oxide nanoparticles while mitigating the nanoparticles’ potential to damage DNA.

Based on the texts, how would the author of Text 2 most likely respond to the assertion in the underlined portion of Text 1?

By concurring that the risk described in Text 1 should be evaluated but emphasizing that the risk is more than offset by

A. the potential benefits of nanomaterial conjugation

By arguing that the situation described in Text 1 may not be representative but conceding that the effects of

B. nanomaterial conjugation are harder to predict than researchers had expected

By denying that the circumstance described in Text 1 is likely to occur but acknowledging that many aspects of

C. nanomaterial conjugation are still poorly understood

By agreeing that the possibility described in Text 1 is a cause for concern but pointing out that nanomaterial conjugation

D. does not inevitably produce that result

QUESTION 3

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
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ID: c4737d6a

Text 1

Africa's Sahara region—once a lush ecosystem—began to dry out about 8,000 years ago. A change in Earth's orbit that affected climate has been posited as a cause of desertification, but archaeologist David Wright also attributes the shift to Neolithic peoples. He cites their adoption of pastoralism as a factor in the region drying out: the pastoralists' livestock depleted vegetation, prompting the events that created the Sahara Desert.

Text 2

Research by Chris Brierley et al. challenges the idea that Neolithic peoples contributed to the Sahara's desertification. Using a climate-vegetation model, the team concluded that the end of the region's humid period occurred 500 years earlier than previously assumed. The timing suggests that Neolithic peoples didn't exacerbate aridity in the region but, in fact, may have helped delay environmental changes with practices (e.g., selective grazing) that preserved vegetation.

Based on the texts, how would Chris Brierley (Text 2) most likely respond to the discussion in Text 1?

By pointing out that given the revised timeline for the end of the Sahara's humid period, the Neolithic peoples' mode of subsistence likely didn't cause the region's desertification

By claiming that pastoralism was only one of many behaviors the Neolithic peoples took part in that may have contributed to the Sahara's changing climate

By insisting that pastoralism can have both beneficial and deleterious effects on a region's vegetation and climate

By asserting that more research needs to be conducted into factors that likely contributed to the desertification of the Sahara region

QUESTION 4

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
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ID: d6c77ae5

Text 1

Astronomer Mark Holland and colleagues examined four white dwarfs—small, dense remnants of past stars—in order to determine the composition of exoplanets that used to orbit those stars. Studying wavelengths of light in the white dwarf atmospheres, the team reported that traces of elements such as lithium and sodium support the presence of exoplanets with continental crusts similar to Earth's.

Text 2

Past studies of white dwarf atmospheres have concluded that certain exoplanets had continental crusts. Geologist Keith Putirka and astronomer Siyi Xu argue that those studies unduly emphasize atmospheric traces of lithium and other individual elements as signifiers of the types of rock found on Earth. The studies don't adequately account for different minerals made up of various ratios of those elements, and the possibility of rock types not found on Earth that contain those minerals.

Based on the texts, how would Putirka and Xu (Text 2) most likely characterize the conclusion presented in Text 1?

A. As unexpected, because it was widely believed at the time that white dwarf exoplanets lack continental crusts

As premature, because researchers have only just begun trying to determine what kinds of crusts white dwarf exoplanets
B. had

As questionable, because it rests on an incomplete consideration of potential sources of the elements detected in white
C. dwarf atmospheres

As puzzling, because it's unusual to successfully detect lithium and sodium when analyzing wavelengths of light in white
D. dwarf atmospheres

QUESTION 5

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
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ID: f3c45b4f

Text 1

Fossils of the hominin *Australopithecus africanus* have been found in the Sterkfontein Caves of South Africa, but assigning an age to the fossils is challenging because of the unreliability of dating methods in this context. The geology of Sterkfontein has caused soil layers from different periods to mix, impeding stratigraphic dating, and dates cannot be reliably imputed from those of nearby animal bones since the bones may have been relocated by flooding.

Text 2

Archaeologists used new cosmogenic nuclide dating techniques to reevaluate the ages of *A. africanus* fossils found in the Sterkfontein Caves. This technique involves analyzing the cosmogenic nucleotides in the breccia—the matrix of rock fragments immediately surrounding the fossils. The researchers assert that this approach avoids the potential for misdating associated with assigning ages based on Sterkfontein’s soil layers or animal bones.

Based on the texts, how would the researchers in Text 2 most likely respond to the underlined portion in Text 1?

They would emphasize the fact that the *A. africanus* fossils found in the Sterkfontein Caves may have been corrupted in some way over the years.

They would contend that if analyses of surrounding layers and bones in the Sterkfontein Caves were combined, then the dating of the fossils there would be more accurate.

They would argue that their techniques are better suited than other methods to the unique challenges posed by the Sterkfontein Caves.

They would claim that cosmogenic nuclide dating is reliable in the context of the Sterkfontein Caves because it is applied to the fossils directly.

QUESTION 6

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ID: f7c02e89

Text 1

Films and television shows commonly include a long list of credits naming the people involved in a production. Credit sequences may not be exciting, but they generally ensure that everyone's contributions are duly acknowledged. Because they are highly standardized, film and television credits are also valuable to anyone researching the careers of pioneering cast and crew members who have worked in the mediums.

Text 2

Video game scholars face a major challenge in the industry's failure to consistently credit the artists, designers, and other contributors involved in making video games. Without a reliable record of which people worked on which games, questions about the medium's development can be difficult to answer, and the accomplishments of all but its best-known innovators can be difficult to trace.

Based on the texts, how would the author of Text 1 most likely respond to the discussion in Text 2?

By recommending that the scholars mentioned in Text 2 consider employing the methods regularly used by film and

A. television researchers

By pointing out that credits have a different intended purpose in film and television than in the medium addressed by the

B. scholars mentioned in Text 2

By suggesting that the scholars mentioned in Text 2 rely more heavily on credits as a source of information than film and

C. television researchers do

By observing that a widespread practice in film and television largely prevents the kind of problem faced by the scholars

D. mentioned in Text 2

QUESTION 7

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
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ID: 84dbd633

Text 1

The Cretaceous-Paleogene (K-Pg) mass extinction event is usually attributed solely to an asteroid impact near Chicxulub, Mexico. Some scientists argue that volcanic activity was the true cause, as the K-Pg event occurred relatively early in a long period of eruption of the Deccan Traps range that initially produced huge amounts of climate-altering gases. These dissenters note that other mass extinctions have coincided with large volcanic eruptions, while only the K-Pg event lines up with an asteroid strike.

Text 2

In a 2020 study, Pincelli Hull and her colleagues analyzed ocean core samples and modeled climate changes around the K-Pg event. The team concluded that Deccan Traps gases did affect global conditions prior to the event, but that the climate returned to normal well before the extinctions began—extinctions that instead closely align with the Chicxulub impact.

Based on the texts, how would Hull's team (Text 2) most likely respond to the argument in the underlined portion of Text 1?

- A. By agreeing that the Chicxulub impact changed the climate and that the Deccan Traps eruption caused the K-Pg event
- B. By declaring that the changes in climate caused by the Deccan Traps eruption weren't the main cause of the K-Pg event
- C. By questioning why those scientists assume that the Chicxulub impact caused the Deccan Traps eruption

By asserting that the Deccan Traps eruption had a more significant effect on global conditions than those scientists
D. claim

QUESTION 8

Question ID e4e2aeb3

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
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ID: e4e2aeb3

Text 1

Like the work of Ralph Ellison before her, Toni Morrison's novels feature scenes in which characters deliver sermons of such length and verbal dexterity that for a time, the text exchanges the formal parameters of fiction for those of oral literature. Given the many other echoes of Ellison in Morrison's novels, both in structure and prose style, these scenes suggest Ellison's direct influence on Morrison.

Text 2

In their destabilizing effect on literary form, the sermons in Morrison's works recall those in Ellison's. Yet literature by Black Americans abounds in moments where interpolated speech erodes the division between oral and written forms that literature in English has traditionally observed. Morrison's use of the sermon is attributable not only to the influence of Ellison but also to a community-wide strategy of resistance to externally imposed literary conventions.

Based on the texts, how would the author of Text 2 most likely characterize the underlined claim in Text 1?

- As failing to consider Ellison's and Morrison's equivalent uses of the sermon within the wider cultural context in which
- A. they wrote
 - B. As misunderstanding the function of sermons in novels by Black American writers other than Ellison and Morrison
 - C. As disregarding points of structural and stylistic divergence between the works of Ellison and those of Morrison
 - As being indebted to the tradition of resisting literary conventions that privilege written forms, such as novels, over
 - D. sermons and other oral forms

QUESTION 9

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
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ID: 6a1dc7c5

Text 1

Virginia Woolf's 1928 novel *Orlando* is an oddity within her body of work. Her other major novels consist mainly of scenes of everyday life and describe their characters' interior states in great detail, whereas *Orlando* propels itself through a series of fantastical events and considers its characters' psychology more superficially. Woolf herself sometimes regarded the novel as a minor work, even admitting once that she "began it as a joke."

Text 2

Like Woolf's other great novels, *Orlando* portrays how people's memories inform their experience of the present. Like those works, it examines how people navigate social interactions shaped by gender and social class. Though it is lighter in tone—more entertaining, even—this literary "joke" nonetheless engages seriously with the themes that motivated the four or five other novels by Woolf that have achieved the status of literary classics.

Based on the texts, how would the author of Text 2 most likely respond to the assessment of *Orlando* presented in Text 1?

By conceding that Woolf's talents were best suited to serious novels but asserting that the humor in *Orlando* is often

A. effective

By agreeing that *Orlando* is less impressive than certain other novels by Woolf but arguing that it should still be regarded

B. as a classic

By acknowledging that *Orlando* clearly differs from Woolf's other major novels but insisting on its centrality to her body of

C. work nonetheless

By concurring that the reputation of *Orlando* as a minor work has led readers to overlook this novel but maintaining that

D. the reputation is unearned

QUESTION 10

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
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ID: 5e101c70

Text 1

Most animals can regenerate some parts of their bodies, such as skin. But when a three-banded panther worm is cut into three pieces, each piece grows into a new worm. Researchers are investigating this feat partly to learn more about humans' comparatively limited abilities to regenerate, and they're making exciting progress. An especially promising discovery is that both humans and panther worms have a gene for early growth response (EGR) linked to regeneration.

Text 2

When Mansi Srivastava and her team reported that panther worms, like humans, possess a gene for EGR, it caused excitement. However, as the team pointed out, the gene likely functions very differently in humans than it does in panther worms. Srivastava has likened EGR to a switch that activates other genes involved in regeneration in panther worms, but how this switch operates in humans remains unclear.

Based on the texts, what would the author of Text 2 most likely say about Text 1's characterization of the discovery involving EGR?

- It is reasonable given that Srivastava and her team have identified how EGR functions in both humans and panther
- A. worms.
- B. It is overly optimistic given additional observations from Srivastava and her team.
- C. It is unexpected given that Srivastava and her team's findings were generally met with enthusiasm.
- D. It is unfairly dismissive given the progress that Srivastava and her team have reported.

QUESTION 11

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
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ID: 17bf10de

Text 1

Despite its beautiful prose, *The Guns of August*, Barbara Tuchman's 1962 analysis of the start of World War I, has certain weaknesses as a work of history. It fails to address events in Eastern Europe just before the outbreak of hostilities, thereby giving the impression that Germany was the war's principal instigator. Had Tuchman consulted secondary works available to her by scholars such as Luigi Albertini, she would not have neglected the influence of events in Eastern Europe on Germany's actions.

Text 2

Barbara Tuchman's *The Guns of August* is an engrossing if dated introduction to World War I. Tuchman's analysis of primary documents is laudable, but her main thesis that European powers committed themselves to a catastrophic outcome by refusing to deviate from military plans developed prior to the conflict is implausibly reductive.

Which choice best describes a difference in how the authors of Text 1 and Text 2 view Barbara Tuchman's *The Guns of August*?

The author of Text 1 argues that Tuchman should have relied more on the work of other historians, while the author of
A. Text 2 implies that Tuchman's most interesting claims result from her original research.

The author of Text 1 believes that the scope of Tuchman's research led her to an incorrect interpretation, while the author
B. of Text 2 believes that Tuchman's central argument is overly simplistic.

The author of Text 1 asserts that the writing style of *The Guns of August* makes it worthwhile to read despite any perceived deficiency in Tuchman's research, while the author of Text 2 focuses exclusively on the weakness of Tuchman's
C. interpretation of events.

The author of Text 1 claims that Tuchman would agree that World War I was largely due to events in Eastern Europe, while the author of Text 2 maintains that Tuchman would say that Eastern European leaders were not committed to
D. military plans in the same way that other leaders were.

QUESTION 12

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
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ID: d0198544

Text 1

In 2007, a team led by Alice Storey analyzed a chicken bone found in El Arenal, Chile, dating it to 1321–1407 CE—over a century before Europeans invaded the region, bringing their own chickens. Storey also found that the El Arenal chicken shared a unique genetic mutation with the ancient chicken breeds of the Polynesian Islands in the Pacific. Thus, Polynesian peoples, not later Europeans, probably first introduced chickens to South America.

Text 2

An Australian research team weakened the case for a Polynesian origin for the El Arenal chicken by confirming that the mutation identified by Storey has occurred in breeds from around the world. More recently, though, a team led by Augusto Luzuriaga-Neira found that South American chicken breeds and Polynesian breeds share other genetic markers that European breeds lack. Thus, the preponderance of evidence now favors a Polynesian origin.

Based on the texts, how would the author of Text 2 most likely respond to the underlined claim in Text 1?

By broadly agreeing with the claim but objecting that the timeline it presupposes conflicts with the findings of the genetic analysis conducted by Storey's team

By faulting the claim for implying that domestic animals couldn't have been transferred from South America to the Polynesian Islands as well

By critiquing the claim for being based on an assumption that before the European invasion of South America, the chickens of Europe were genetically uniform

By noting that while the claim is persuasive, the findings of Luzuriaga-Neira's team provide stronger evidence for it than the findings of the genetic analysis conducted by Storey do

QUESTION 13

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
SAT	Reading and Writing	Craft and Structure	Cross-Text Connections	

ID: de2c2f57

Text 1

The fossil record suggests that mammoths went extinct around 11 thousand years (kyr) ago. In a 2021 study of environmental DNA (eDNA)—genetic material shed into the environment by organisms—in the Arctic, Yucheng Wang and colleagues found mammoth eDNA in sedimentary layers formed millennia later, around 4 kyr ago. To account for this discrepancy, Joshua H. Miller and Carl Simpson proposed that arctic temperatures could preserve a mammoth carcass on the surface, allowing it to leach DNA into the environment, for several thousand years.

Text 2

Wang and colleagues concede that eDNA contains DNA from both living organisms and carcasses, but for DNA to leach from remains over several millennia requires that the remains be perpetually on the surface. Scavengers and weathering in the Arctic, however, are likely to break down surface remains well before a thousand years have passed.

Which choice best describes how Text 1 and Text 2 relate to each other?

Text 1 discusses two approaches to studying mammoth extinction without advocating for either, whereas Text 2

A. advocates for one approach over the other.

Text 1 presents findings by Wang and colleagues and gives another research team's attempt to explain those findings,

B. whereas Text 2 provides additional detail that calls that explanation into question.

Text 1 describes Wang and colleagues' study and a critique of their methodology, whereas Text 2 offers additional details

C. showing that methodology to be sound.

Text 1 argues that new research has undermined the standard view of when mammoths went extinct, whereas Text 2

D. suggests a way to reconcile the standard view with that new research.

QUESTION 14

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
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ID: 6977d22b

Text 1

Ecologists have long wondered how thousands of microscopic phytoplankton species can live together near ocean surfaces competing for the same resources. According to conventional wisdom, one species should emerge after outcompeting the rest. So why do so many species remain? Ecologists' many efforts to explain this phenomenon still haven't uncovered a satisfactory explanation.

Text 2

Ecologist Michael Behrenfeld and colleagues have connected phytoplankton's diversity to their microscopic size. Because these organisms are so tiny, they are spaced relatively far apart from each other in ocean water and, moreover, experience that water as a relatively dense substance. This in turn makes it hard for them to move around and interact with one another. Therefore, says Behrenfeld's team, direct competition among phytoplankton probably happens much less than previously thought.

Based on the texts, how would Behrenfeld and colleagues (Text 2) most likely respond to the "conventional wisdom" discussed in Text 1?

- A. By arguing that it is based on a misconception about phytoplankton species competing with one another
 - By asserting that it fails to recognize that routine replenishment of ocean nutrients prevents competition between
- B. phytoplankton species
- C. By suggesting that their own findings help clarify how phytoplankton species are able to compete with larger organisms
 - By recommending that more ecologists focus their research on how competition among phytoplankton species is
- D. increased with water density

Question 15

Assessment	Test	Domain	Skill	Difficulty
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ID: 35e21b06

Text 1

Dominique Potvin and colleagues captured five Australian magpies (*Gymnorhina tibicen*) to test a new design for attaching tracking devices to birds. As the researchers fitted each magpie with a tracker attached by a small harness, they noticed some magpies without trackers pecking at another magpie's tracker until it broke off. The researchers suggest that this behavior could be evidence of magpies attempting to help another magpie without benefiting themselves.

Text 2

It can be tempting to think that animals are deliberately providing help when we see them removing trackers and other equipment from one another, especially when a species is known to exhibit other cooperative behaviors. At the same time, it can be difficult to exclude the possibility that individuals are simply interested in the equipment because of its novelty, curiously pawing or pecking at it until it detaches.

Based on the texts, how would the author of Text 2 most likely respond to the researchers' perspective in Text 1 on the behavior of the magpies without trackers?

A. That behavior might have been due to the novelty of the magpies' captive setting rather than to the novelty of the tracker.

That behavior likely indicates that the magpies were deliberately attempting to benefit themselves by obtaining the
B. tracker.

That behavior may not be evidence of selflessness in *Gymnorhina tibicen* because not all the captured magpies
C. demonstrated it.

That behavior might be adequately explained without suggesting that the magpies were attempting to assist the other
D. magpie.