



PSAT 8/9 Writing Comprehension

Passage 1

A sanctuary may be defined as a place where Man is passive and the rest of Nature active. Till quite recently Nature had her own sanctuaries, where man either did not go at all or only as a tool-using animal in comparatively small numbers.

But now, in this machinery age, there is no place left where man cannot go with overwhelming forces at his command. He can strangle to death all the nobler wild life in the world to-day. Tomorrow he certainly will have done so, unless he exercises due foresight and self-control in the mean time.

There is not the slightest doubt that birds and mammals are now being killed 1. off much faster than they can breed. And it is always the largest and noblest forms of life that suffer most. The whales and elephants, lions and eagles, go. The rats and flies, and all mean parasites, remain. This is 2. certainly going to happen in certain cases. But it is wanton killing off that I am speaking of to-night.

Civilized man begins by destroying the very forms of wild life he learns to appreciate most when he becomes still more civilized. The obvious remedy is to begin conservation at an earlier stage, when it is 3. easier and better in every way, by enforcing laws for close seasons, game preserves, the selective protection of certain species, and sanctuaries.

I have just defined a sanctuary as a place where man is passive and the rest of Nature active. But this general definition is too absolute for any special case. The mere fact that man has to protect a sanctuary does away with his purely passive attitude. Then, he can be beneficially active by destroying pests and parasites, like bot-flies or mosquitoes, and by finding antidotes for diseases like the epidemic which periodically kills off the rabbits and thus starves many of the carnivora to death.

But, except in cases where experiment has proved his intervention to be beneficial, 4. the less he upsets the balance of Nature the better, even when he tries to be an earthly Providence.

(Source: <https://www.mbauniverse.com/reading-comprehension-passages>)

Instructions: Some words or phrases were underlined in the passage. Decide which word or phrases can best replace them.

1. Which word/phrase can best replace the underlined phrase in the sentence?

“There is not the slightest doubt that birds and mammals are now being killed off much faster than they can breed.”

- A. no change
- B. undoubtedly
- C. breathlessly
- D. strikingly

2. Which word/phrase can best replace the underlined phrase in the sentence?

“This is certainly going to happen in certain cases.”

- A. inevitable
- B. interesting
- C. uncertain
- D. no change

3. Which word/phrase can best replace the underlined phrase in the sentence?

“The obvious remedy is to begin conservation at an earlier stage, when it is easier and better in every way, by enforcing laws for close seasons, game preserves, the selective protection of certain species, and sanctuaries.”

- A. no change
- B. plain
- C. evident
- D. elementary

4. Which choice, if added here, would most effectively establish the main topic of the last paragraph?

- A. Man should live and let live
- B. Man should try to recreate nature himself
- C. Man should plan the habitat of nature
- D. No change

Passage 2

As far as Justin knew, there was only one way out of his neighbourhood: basketball. So he ran with the ball like the hounds were chasing him. He could drop any of the older guys at the court in a blaze of crossovers, fadeaways, and finger rolls, and the younger guys didn't stand a chance. Justin saw his way out and he ran for it. But the world has a funny way of changing right when you think you've got things figured out, and that's just what happened to Justin.

One day when Justin was shooting around at the local court, some guys from another block ran up and asked to play. The big one in the middle said that he had heard that Justin was the best and he wanted to see if it was true. Justin said, "Nah, Man, I'm just shooting around with my cousin, I ain't trying to get all sweaty right now." But the big guy was insistent, and Justin's cousin was bugging, "C'mon, Justin, drop this guy." So Justin figured that he'd just do what everyone wanted and play.

Justin was running all over the big guy and making his shots while he did it. But just as the outcome of the game seemed certain, the big guy 5.roughly pushed Justin as he went for a lay up. Justin went flying in just such a way that he managed to tear up his right knee. The doctor said Justin might never play again, and if he did play, he wouldn't play the same. Justin was devastated.

The first six weeks, Justin just laid in bed with his leg in a long cast feeling like a broomstick. He watched three reruns of *The Simpsons* every day and ate potato chips until the bag was empty, and then he'd dig the salt and grease out of the corner with his index finger. Justin blew up like a balloon as watched his once bright future fadeway. Right when he reached the bottom of the pit of despair, Justin's sister, Kiki came home from the university

She came in the house like a 6.whirl of sunshine, bringing exciting tales of a far away land called college. Justin was amazed and intrigued by the dorm room dramas and campus craziness that Kiki told, but he could hardly believe any of it. It was as if she were telling him about some fantasy land high above the clouds. Justin gazed off dreamily as she spoke.

"Justin!" She interrupted his day dream. "Let me see your progress report." Justin was ashamed. His grades had really 7.reduced since his injury. "Oh no, this won't do, J," she said. "We're going to have to get these up." Well, Justin was a pretty stubborn guy, but his older sister had a way of getting him to do things that nobody else could. So, while she was home on break, they studied together, and they talked, and they worked, and Justin felt better than he ever had before.

After spending those weeks with his sister, Justin realized that he didn't want to feel bad for himself any more, and he didn't want to quit. Basketball used to be his thing, and he was good at it, but now there was only school, so he had to get good at that. Justin passed through all his

classes like a half-court trap. By the time he got to senior year in high school, his GPA was hovering in the slam-dunk position. The last thing that Justin had to do to get into the college of his choice was score well on the ACT. Well wouldn't you know it? Using the study skills Justin had acquired from his sister, Justin scored a 24 on the ACT. That's not the highest score a person can get, but it was high enough for Justin. 8. Now he had his game together.

Though the recruiters never came to Justin's door, every university that he applied to accepted him; and when the fall came, Justin had his choice in colleges. Though he'd miss his family, Justin decided to enroll in the sunniest university in Hawaii, and nobody could say that Justin made a bad choice. (Source:

http://fac.ksu.edu.sa/sites/default/files/the_breakaway_worksheet.docx)

Instructions: Some words or phrases were underlined in the passage. Decide which word or phrases can best replace them.

5. Which word/phrase can best replace the underlined phrase in the sentence?

“But just as the outcome of the game seemed certain, the big guy roughly pushed Justin as he went for a lay up.”

- A. shove
- B. no change
- C. unalter
- D. lay

6. What does the author mean by “whirl of sunshine”?

- A. supporter
- B. on an extremely sunny day
- C. to add to the misery
- D. someone who brings happiness

7. Which word/phrase can best replace the underlined phrase in the sentence?

“His grades had really reduced since his injury.”

- A. no change
- B. slumped
- C. increased
- D. less

8. What does the author mean by “had his game together”?
- A. have a good academic performance
 - B. get back to playing basketball
 - C. get amazing at basketball
 - D. become the best in academics and basketball

ANSWER KEY

Question	Option	Answer
1	A	No Change
2	A	Inevitable
3	D	Elementary
4	A	Man should live and let live
Question	Option	Answer
5	A	Shove
6	D	Someone who brings happiness
7	B	Slumped
8	A	Have a good academic performance