



# Exemplar English Test Questions

Computer-Based Tests



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We invite educators, administrators, and policymakers to learn about ACT Aspire™ by viewing the collection of sample computer-based test (CBT) questions online and in this booklet. The questions illustrate a variety of content from across grade bands and show different types of test questions and formats. This booklet also explains the concepts being measured and provides an answer key for the exemplar questions.

The exemplar ACT Aspire test questions should be accessed online with a desktop or laptop computer rather than a tablet or smartphone. Please note that the platform in which the questions are currently housed does not represent the final platform on which the ACT Aspire assessment will be delivered.

## Login Information

To view the exemplar ACT Aspire CBT questions online, visit [tn.actaspire.org](http://tn.actaspire.org). Usernames and passwords for the various subject areas can be found in the following table.

Subject	Username	Password
English	english	actaspire
Reading	reading	actaspire
Math	math	actaspire
Science	science	actaspire
Writing Grade 9	writing9	actaspire
Writing Grade 8	writing8	actaspire
Writing Grade 7	writing7	actaspire
Writing Grade 6	writing6	actaspire
Writing Grade 5	writing5	actaspire
Writing Grade 4	writing4	actaspire
Writing Grade 3	writing3	actaspire

## Technical Support

For technical support related to this exemplar set of ACT Aspire CBT questions, please contact us by phone at 888.802.7502 or by email at [actaspire\\_implementation@actaspire.org](mailto:actaspire_implementation@actaspire.org).

## Additional Information

For more information about the ACT Aspire assessment system, visit [www.discoveractaspire.org](http://www.discoveractaspire.org).

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# Introduction

ACT Aspire™ English tests assess students' developed ability to revise and edit texts. A typical English test contains several stimuli, or texts, and a series of selected-response and technology-enhanced questions. Texts used in the assessments represent various content areas (including English language arts, the humanities, and the social and natural sciences), and, considered collectively, reflect a range of text complexity levels from simple to complex, as appropriate for students' age and educational attainment. The questions fall under the following reporting categories.

## Conventions of Standard English

The questions in this category require students to apply an understanding of the conventions of standard English grammar, usage, and mechanics to revise and edit text.

### Punctuation Conventions

These questions require students to edit text to conform to standard English punctuation.

### Usage Conventions

These questions require students to edit text to conform to standard English usage.

### Sentence Structure and Formation

These questions test understanding of relationships between and among clauses, placement of modifiers, and shifts in construction.

## Production of Writing

The questions in this category require students to apply an understanding of the rhetorical purpose and the focus of a piece of writing to develop a topic effectively; to use various strategies to achieve logical organization, topical unity, and general cohesion; and to employ knowledge of language to ensure that writing is precise, concise, and stylistically consistent.

### Topic Development

These questions require students to demonstrate an understanding of and control over the rhetorical aspects of texts by identifying the purpose of parts of texts, determining whether a text has met its intended goal, and evaluating the relevance of material in terms of a text's focus.

### Organization, Unity, and Cohesion

These questions require students to use various strategies to ensure that text is logically organized, flows smoothly, and has an effective introduction and conclusion.

### Knowledge of Language

These questions require students to demonstrate effective language use through ensuring precision and concision in word choice, maintaining consistency in style and tone, and using references.

# Answer Key

The following pages show the sequence number, grade, question type, depth-of-knowledge (DOK) level,<sup>1</sup> alignment to the ACT Aspire reporting categories, and correct response for each question. The pages also include explanations of the questions and the correct responses.

## Passage A: “Cycling About”

The ACT Aspire English assessments employ various passage types to present a variety of rhetorical situations. This social science passage is of appropriate complexity for the ACT Aspire Early High School (EHS) English assessments.

### Question 1

The screenshot shows a digital test interface. At the top, there are navigation buttons (back, forward, review, flag) and a timer showing 1:59:51. Below the navigation is a breadcrumb trail: HOME / ENGLISH EXEMPLARS / SECTION 1 / 1 OF 24. The main content area is titled "Cycling About" and contains a reading passage. The passage is divided into three paragraphs. The first paragraph describes Baron von Drais's invention of the *Laufmaschine* in 1817. The second paragraph describes Pierre Michaux's *vélocipède* in the 1860s. The third paragraph describes the "high-wheel" bicycle in the 1870s. A question is posed at the end of the passage, asking for the best revision to a sentence fragment. The question options are: A. NO CHANGE, B. Regardless of whether this, C. Considering that this, and D. This.

Sequence	Grade	Question type	DOK level	ACT Aspire reporting category	Correct response
1	EHS	Selected Response	2	Conventions of Standard English	D

This selected-response question requires students to recognize and revise a rhetorically incorrect sentence fragment (aligns with the Common Core State Standards’ College and Career Readiness anchor standard [CCRA] W.5, L.1). The length and complexity of the sentence containing this question requires the student to read the entire sentence carefully in order to recognize that it lacks an independent clause, resulting in a sentence fragment. Students must then select a revision to the sentence that eliminates the fragment.

#### Explanation for Correct Response

Answer option D is the only option that creates a sentence that contains an independent clause. Answer options B and C create sentences that lack independent clauses, which would also result in sentence fragments.

<sup>1</sup> Norman L. Webb, “Depth-of-Knowledge Levels for Four Content Areas,” last modified March 28, 2002, <http://facstaff.wcer.wisc.edu/normw/All%20content%20areas%20%20DOK%20levels%2032802.doc>.

Question 2

The screenshot shows a digital test interface. At the top, there are navigation buttons (back, forward), 'Review', and 'Flag' icons. A timer shows '1:51:34 | F. Last'. The breadcrumb trail reads 'HOME / ENGLISH EXEMPLARS / SECTION 1 / 2 OF 24'. The main content area is titled 'Cycling About' and contains three paragraphs of text. The first paragraph has a highlighted section: 'By the 1860s, French craftsman Pierre Michaux had designed a bicycle-like machine that featured a lightweight iron frame and pedals. But it was not perfect. Called the *vélocipède*, or fast foot, it became popularly called as the "boneshaker." Its stiff, hardwood wheels made for a jarring ride on bumpy cobblestone roads. Only the strongest men could navigate the boneshaker—and even they had to ride slowly. [B]'. To the right of the text is a multiple-choice question with four options: A. NO CHANGE, B. craftsman, Pierre Michaux, C. craftsman, Pierre Michaux, and D. craftsman Pierre Michaux.

Sequence	Grade	Question type	DOK level	ACT Aspire reporting category	Correct response
2	EHS	Selected Response	2	Conventions of Standard English	D

This selected-response question requires students to identify and correct text that does not conform to conventions of Standard English punctuation (aligns with CCRA.W.5, L.5). Specifically, students must determine whether commas should or should not be used to set off a sentence element based on whether the element is restrictive or nonrestrictive. Students must also demonstrate the ability to use punctuation correctly to set off a nonrestrictive element. To answer this question, the student must read the entire sentence carefully in order to determine if the French craftsman’s name (Pierre Michaux) is essential to the meaning of the sentence. Once this is determined, the student must select the answer option that correctly applies the rules of standard English punctuation.

Explanation for Correct Response

The French craftsman’s name is essential to the meaning of this sentence; if it were removed, the sentence would read “By the 1860s, French craftsman had designed....” The name “Pierre Michaux” is, therefore, a restrictive element and should not be set off by commas.

Question 3

Sequence	Grade	Question type	DOK level	ACT Aspire reporting category	Correct response
3	EHS	Selected Response	1	Conventions of Standard English	C

This selected-response question requires students to identify and correct language that does not conform to conventional ways of expressing ideas in standard English (aligns with CCRA.W.5, L.1). After reading the sentence carefully, students must identify the highlighted phrase as an idiomatically nonstandard expression. Students must then select an answer option that conforms to the conventions of standard English expression.

Explanation for Correct Response

Answer option C, “known,” properly completes the idiomatic standard English expression “known as.”

Question 4

**Cycling About**

Machine that featured a lightweight iron frame and pedals, but it was not perfect. Called the *vélocipède*, or fast foot, it became popularly called as the “boneshaker.” Its stiff, hardwood wheels made for a jarring ride on bumpy cobblestone roads. Only the strongest men could navigate the boneshaker—and even they had to ride slowly. [B]

Hoping to provide the public a faster, smoother ride, English manufacturers in the 1870s introduced the “high-wheel” bicycle. It included a huge front wheel paired with a tiny back wheel, both with cushiony rubber tires. [C] The problem, though, was that riders had to sit perched high up on these bicycles, creating a **hazard regarding their position when they rode**. Most people—with the exception of daring young men—didn’t ride the high-wheel.

Not until the 1890s, after attempts to make high-wheel bicycles safer had failed, were “safety” bicycles introduced in Europe and the United States. These models varied significantly in price. American suffragist Susan B. Anthony called the safety the “freedom machine.” [D] Finally, almost everyone could move about with ease on a bicycle—and they did.

Which choice provides the most precise information about a potential effect of riders having to sit high up on the high-wheel bicycle?

- A. NO CHANGE
- B. frightening situation in terms of their orientation.
- C. dangerous tipping hazard.
- D. fearful issue.

Sequence	Grade	Question type	DOK level	ACT Aspire reporting category	Correct response
4	EHS	Selected Response	3	Production of Writing	C

This selected-response question requires students to develop and focus text through the revision of information (aligns with CCRA.W.4, W.5). To answer the question, students must read the entire sentence carefully and select the answer option that accomplishes the specific rhetorical purpose outlined in the question (a purpose aimed at providing more precise information about the idea being developed).

Explanation for Correct Response

Of the available answer options, the phrase “dangerous tipping hazard” is the most precise option and the only one that fulfills the rhetorical purpose outlined in the question (if the rider must sit high up on the bicycle, there is the potential for the bike to tip).



Question 5

The screenshot shows a digital test interface. At the top, there are navigation buttons (back, forward), 'Review' and 'Flag' icons, and a timer showing '1:57.21 | F. Last'. Below the navigation bar is a breadcrumb trail: 'HOME / ENGLISH EXEMPLARS / SECTION 1 / 5 OF 24'. The main content area is titled 'Cycling About' and contains three paragraphs of text. The first paragraph describes the 'boneshaker' bicycle. The second paragraph describes the 'high-wheel' bicycle. The third paragraph describes the 'safety' bicycle. To the right of the text is a question box with the prompt: 'Given that all the choices are accurate, which one provides the most relevant information at this point in the essay?'. Below the prompt are four radio button options: A. NO CHANGE, B. had two equal-sized wheels, inflatable rubber tires, reliable brakes, and frames that allowed men, women, and children to ride comfortably, C. led to the formation of groups and clubs such as the League of American Wheelmen (today called the League of American Bicyclists), and D. were made and sold even though many roads were still unpaved and difficult to ride on.

Sequence	Grade	Question type	DOK level	ACT Aspire reporting category	Correct response
5	EHS	Selected Response	3	Production of Writing	B

This selected-response question requires students to evaluate the relevance of material to a text given the text’s focus (aligns with CCRA.W.4, W.5). To answer the question, students must read the entire paragraph carefully and determine which answer option would provide information most relevant within the context of the paragraph and the essay.

Explanation for Correct Response

The first sentence of the last paragraph is about both the failure to make high-wheel bicycles safe and the introduction of “safety” bicycles; the last two sentences are about the reception and popularity of the new bicycles. One way to make the sentence containing question 5 relevant would be to include additional information about the “safety” bikes themselves. Answer option B speaks specifically about features of the safety bicycle that improved safety (equal-sized wheels, reliable brakes) and speaks to the comfort/accessibility of the bike (rubber tires, frames that allowed men, women, and children to ride). Of the available options, B provides the most relevant information to the paragraph and the essay.

Question 6

**Cycling About**

wooden wheels to a wooden plank and connected the front wheel to a bar for steering. **A** The baron propelled the device by straddling the plank and running his feet along the ground. While this *Laufmaschine* (running machine), as von Drais called it, was uncomfortable to ride and nearly impossible to steer. Even so, it inspired the public to imagine a new two-wheeled means of transportation—and encouraged inventors to create just that.

By the 1860s, French craftsman Pierre Michaux, had designed a bicycle-like machine that featured a lightweight iron frame and pedals. But it was not perfect. Called the *vélocipède*, or fast foot, it became popularly called as the “boneshaker.” Its stiff, hardwood wheels made for a jarring ride on bumpy cobblestone roads. Only the strongest men could navigate the boneshaker—and even they had to ride slowly. **B**

Hoping to provide the public a faster, smoother ride, English manufacturers in the 1870s introduced the “high-wheel” bicycle. It included a huge front wheel paired with a tiny back wheel, both with cushiony rubber tires. **C** The problem, though, was that riders had to sit perched high up on these bicycles, creating a hazard regarding their position when they rode. Most people—with the exception of daring young men—didn’t ride the high-wheel.

The writer is considering adding the following sentence to the essay:

The incredibly large front wheel allowed riders to travel farther and faster with only one rotation of the pedals.

If the writer were to add this sentence, it would most logically be placed at which of the highlighted points?

- A. Point A
- B. Point B
- C. Point C
- D. Point D

Sequence	Grade	Question type	DOK level	ACT Aspire reporting category	Correct response
6	EHS	Selected Response	3	Production of Writing	C

This selected-response question requires students to make a decision about where a proposed sentence should be placed within the text as a whole (aligns with CCRA.W.4, W.5). In order to answer this question, students must read and have a general understanding of the entire text. Students must then determine the best placement for the proposed sentence based on logic and cohesion, avoiding placements that are illogical or weaken the organization of the text.

Explanation for Correct Response

The proposed addition mentions “incredibly large front wheels” and describes the advantage of this development to riders. In order to maintain the logic and cohesion of the text, the best placement option is within the paragraph about the “high-wheel” bicycle, which specifically mentions the “huge front wheel.” Placement C comes immediately after a description of the high-wheel bicycle and is, therefore, a logical placement that maintains the cohesion of the paragraph and the essay.

## Passage B: “Ghost Bird”

This natural science passage is of appropriate complexity for the ACT Aspire Grade 8 English assessments.

### Question 7

The screenshot shows a digital test interface. At the top, there are navigation buttons (back, forward), a 'Review' button, a 'Flag' button, and a mouse cursor. The top right corner shows the time '1:54:53' and the user 'F. Last'. Below the navigation bar, the breadcrumb trail reads 'HOME / ENGLISH EXEMPLARS / SECTION 1 / 7 OF 24'. The main content area is titled 'Ghost Bird' and contains a reading passage. The passage is divided into three paragraphs. The first paragraph is highlighted in yellow and contains the text: 'In 1951, fifteen-year-old David Wingate examined the limestone cliffs of the Bermuda Islands. He was looking for the Bermuda petrel, or cahow, a seabird once so common that the Bermuda night sky was filled with its eerie cries. The bird, thought to have been extinct for three hundred years, had reportedly been spotted—twice. Wingate, a bird lover and Bermuda native, had joined a team of naturalists who were hoping to confirm the reports. For days they searched, the team found a cahow chick tucked into a crevice, along with a few other cahow nests.' To the right of the passage is a multiple-choice question with four options: A. NO CHANGE, B. Days passed as they searched., C. They spent days searching., and D. After days of searching.

Sequence	Grade	Question type	DOK level	ACT Aspire reporting category	Correct response
7	8	Selected Response	2	Conventions of Standard English	D

This selected-response question requires students to recognize and revise a run-on sentence (two or more independent clauses joined without proper punctuation and/or conjunctions; aligns with CCRA.W.5, L.1). The student must read through this complex sentence and recognize that the sentence contains two independent clauses joined only by a comma, resulting in a comma splice. The student must then pick the answer option that does not create another comma splice.

#### Explanation for Correct Response

Answer option D is the only option that correctly replaces the independent clause in the highlighted portion with a dependent (introductory) clause. Because an independent clause immediately follows the highlighted portion, the first part of the sentence must either be a dependent clause or an independent clause followed either by a comma and a coordinating conjunction or by a semicolon. Answer options A, B, and C create comma splices because they include independent clauses followed only by a comma.

## Question 8

← → Review Flag

1:53:57 | F. Last

HOME / ENGLISH EXEMPLARS / SECTION 1 / 8 OF 24

**Ghost Bird**

study zoology at Cornell University in New York, he returned in the late 1950s to search the islands for the bird. He found eighteen nesting pairs, **most of them fairly healthy**, on several remote islets. Though the cahow still existed, Wingate knew that its current breeding habitat—burrows created in fragile limestone cliffs—was threatened by hurricanes, rising sea levels, and erosion.

Over a period of years Wingate, as Bermuda's conservation officer, transformed an elevated, uninhabited fifteen-acre Bermuda island that was **unpopulated**, called Nonsuch, into a haven for this endangered species. He restored native flora and created dozens of sturdy, soil-filled burrows, providing the cahow with safe nesting places. Speakers played prerecorded cahow calls to attract the first birds. Soon, there were eight pairs of cahows nesting on Nonsuch Island.

Wingate **feels, however**, that there is no sound more beautiful than the haunting cries of the cahow—the unbelievably reappearing “ghost bird,” as he calls it—again filling the Bermuda night sky. In 2009, eighty-six nesting pairs on Nonsuch Island produced dozens of healthy chicks that left **they're** burrows to fly out to sea. Many of these birds returned to Nonsuch to make nests of their own.

Given that all the choices are accurate, which one most clearly emphasizes how close the cahow was to extinction when Wingate began his project?

- A. NO CHANGE
- B. some of the pairs having made sturdy nests in the cliffs,
- C. likely the cahow's entire breeding population,
- D. more cahows than he had expected to find,

Sequence	Grade	Question type	DOK level	ACT Aspire reporting category	Correct response
8	8	Selected Response	3	Production of Writing	C

This selected-response question requires students to develop and focus text through the revision of information (aligns with CCRA.W.4, W.5). To answer the question, students must read the entire sentence carefully and select the answer option that accomplishes the specific rhetorical purpose outlined in the question (a purpose aimed at providing more precise information about the idea being developed).

#### Explanation for Correct Response

Answer option C is the only option that satisfies the rhetorical purpose outlined in the stem. The stem calls for a statement that emphasizes “how close the cahow was to extinction.” Answer option C, within the context of the sentence, calls attention to the fact that the entire breeding population of the cahow was likely limited to eighteen nesting pairs. Answer options A and B offer statements that aren’t related to the cahow’s closeness to extinction, and option D would seem to indicate that the cahows were more plentiful than expected.

Question 9

**Ghost Bird**

Wingate knew that its current breeding habitat—burrows created in fragile limestone cliffs—was threatened by hurricanes, rising sea levels, and erosion.

Over a period of years Wingate, as Bermuda's conservation officer transformed an elevated, uninhabited fifteen-acre Bermuda island that was unpopulated, called Nonsuch, into a haven for this endangered species. He restored native flora and created dozens of sturdy, soil-filled burrows, providing the cahow with safe nesting places. Speakers played prerecorded cahow calls to attract the first birds. Soon, there were eight pairs of cahows nesting on Nonsuch Island.

Wingate feels, however, that there is no sound more beautiful than the haunting cries of the cahow—the unbelievably reappearing “ghost bird,” as he calls it—again filling the Bermuda night sky. In 2009, eighty-six nesting pairs on Nonsuch Island produced dozens of healthy chicks that left they're burrows to fly out to sea. Many of these birds returned to Nonsuch to make nests of their own.

A. NO CHANGE  
 B. years, Wingate, as Bermuda's conservation officer,  
 C. years, Wingate, as Bermuda's conservation officer  
 D. years Wingate, as Bermuda's conservation officer

Sequence	Grade	Question type	DOK level	ACT Aspire reporting category	Correct response
9	8	Selected Response	1	Conventions of Standard English	B

This selected-response question requires students to identify and correct text that does not conform to conventions of Standard English punctuation (aligns with CCRA.W.5, L.5). Specifically, students must demonstrate the ability to use punctuation correctly to set off a nonrestrictive element. Students must also identify punctuation that is not necessary to or actively interferes with meaning.

Explanation for Correct Response

Answer option B includes a comma after the introductory clause “Over a period of years” and correctly uses parallel punctuation in order to set off the nonrestrictive element “as Bermuda’s conservation officer” with commas. Answer options C and D lack parallel commas and therefore do not correctly set off the nonrestrictive element. Answer option A includes an unnecessary comma between the possessive proper noun “Bermuda’s” and the element this noun modifies (conservation officer).

Question 10

← → Review Flag 1:52:16 | F. Last

HOME / ENGLISH EXEMPLARS / SECTION 1 / 10 OF 24

**Ghost Bird**

from many nearby, on several remote islands. Through the cawing she emitted, Wingate knew that its current breeding habitat—burrows created in fragile limestone cliffs—was threatened by hurricanes, rising sea levels, and erosion.

Over a period of years Wingate, as Bermuda's conservation officer, transformed an elevated, uninhabited fifteen-acre **Bermuda island that was unpopulated** called Nonsuch, into a haven for this endangered species. He restored native flora and created dozens of sturdy, soil-filled burrows, providing the cahow with safe nesting places. Speakers played prerecorded cahow calls to attract the first birds. Soon, there were eight pairs of cahows nesting on Nonsuch Island.

Wingate feels, however, that there is no sound more beautiful than the haunting cries of the cahow—the unbelievably reappearing "ghost bird," as he calls it—again filling the Bermuda night sky. In 2009, eighty-six nesting pairs on Nonsuch Island produced dozens of healthy chicks that left **they're** burrows to fly out to sea. Many of these birds returned to Nonsuch to make nests of their own.

- A. NO CHANGE
- B. area of Bermuda that was relatively high up.
- C. place that was soon to be a haven.
- D. Bermuda island.

Sequence	Grade	Question type	DOK level	ACT Aspire reporting category	Correct response
10	8	Selected Response	3	Knowledge of Language	D

This selected-response question requires students to recognize and revise instances of redundancy in text (aligns with CCRA.W.4, W.5, L.3). Students must read the entire sentence carefully, identify the redundancy in the highlighted portion, and select the answer option that eliminates this redundancy.

Explanation for Correct Response

Answer option D is the only choice that does not unnecessarily repeat information provided elsewhere in the sentence. It also eliminates wordiness.

Question 11

Sequence	Grade	Question type	DOK level	ACT Aspire reporting category	Correct response
11	8	Selected Response	2	Production of Writing	D

This selected-response question requires students to determine if a transition word ties two paragraphs together logically (aligns with CCRA.W.4, W.5). To answer the question, students must carefully read the preceding paragraph and the sentence containing the highlighted portion in order to determine which answer option provides the most logical transition between the two paragraphs.

Explanation for Correct Response

Because answer options A, B, and C all introduce transition words that do not flow logically from the preceding paragraph, answer option D provides the most logical transition by removing unnecessary connective words.

Question 12

← → Review Flag 1:48:43 | F. Last

HOME / ENGLISH EXEMPLARS / SECTION 1 / 12 OF 24

**Ghost Bird**

From many nesting on several remote islets. Through the cahow's chicks, Wingate knew that its current breeding habitat—burrows created in fragile limestone cliffs—was threatened by hurricanes, rising sea levels, and erosion.

Over a period of years Wingate, as Bermuda's conservation officer, transformed an elevated, uninhabited fifteen-acre Bermuda island that was unpopulated, called Nonsuch, into a haven for this endangered species. He restored native flora and created dozens of sturdy, soil-filled burrows, providing the cahow with safe nesting places. Speakers played prerecorded cahow calls to attract the first birds. Soon, there were eight pairs of cahows nesting on Nonsuch Island.

Wingate feels, however, that there is no sound more beautiful than the haunting cries of the cahow—the unbelievably reappearing “ghost bird,” as he calls it—again filling the Bermuda night sky. In 2009, eighty-six nesting pairs on Nonsuch Island produced dozens of healthy chicks that left they're burrows to fly out to sea. Many of these birds returned to Nonsuch to make nests of their own.

- A. NO CHANGE
- B. there
- C. their
- D. it's

Sequence	Grade	Question type	DOK level	ACT Aspire reporting category	Correct response
12	8	Selected Response	1	Conventions of Standard English	C

This selected-response question requires students to form a possessive adjective using the conventions of standard English, distinguishing possessive forms from contractions and adverbs (aligns with CCRA.W.5, L.1). Relying on the context of the sentence, students must identify the need for a possessive adjective in the highlighted portion and choose the correct possessive form from among the answer options provided.

Explanation for Correct Response

Answer option C correctly identifies the possessive adjective “their” (referring back to the plural noun “chicks”).



## Passage C: “Pie Through the Ages”

This social science passage is of appropriate complexity for the ACT Aspire Grade 6 English assessments.

### Question 13

The screenshot shows the ACT Aspire interface. At the top, there are navigation buttons (back, forward), a 'Review' button, a 'Flag' button, and a timer showing '1:47:25 | F. Last'. Below the navigation bar, the breadcrumb trail reads 'HOME / ENGLISH EXEMPLARS / SECTION 1 / 13 OF 24'. The main content area is titled 'Pie Through the Ages'. It contains three paragraphs of text. The first paragraph discusses ancient Greek pies, with the words 'baking' and 'the' highlighted in yellow. The second paragraph discusses blackbirds in pies, with the phrase 'The birds which were quite ready to be freed,' highlighted in blue. The third paragraph discusses English colonists' pie recipes. Below the text is a question box asking 'What change, if any, should be made to the highlighted words?' with four radio button options: A. NO CHANGE, B. baking. The, C. baking the, and D. baking the,.

Sequence	Grade	Question type	DOK level	ACT Aspire reporting category	Correct response
13	6	Selected Response	2	Conventions of Standard English	B

This selected-response question requires students to recognize and revise a run-on sentence (two or more independent clauses joined without proper punctuation and/or conjunctions; aligns with CCRA.W.5, L.1). The student must read the text surrounding the highlighted portion carefully in order to recognize that the highlighted text incorrectly combines two independent clauses with only a comma (creating a comma splice). The student must then pick the answer option that corrects this error while preventing the introduction of other errors.

#### Explanation for Correct Response

Answer option B corrects the comma splice by separating the two independent clauses into two separate sentences.

Question 14

**Pie Through the Ages**

many centuries, the pie's pastry shell served primarily as a means for baking, the tough dough functioned like a pot or casserole dish. The crust also served as a helpful way to carry, store, and serve food. The heavy crust did not go to waste after its filling was gone, however. It was then used to thicken stews.

Many children grow up hearing the nursery rhyme about blackbirds baked in a pie, but few realize there is truth to the tale. In the 1500s, pies were often part of an evening's entertainment. Blackbirds would be sealed in an uncooked pie that would be presented to partygoers. The birds which were quite ready to be freed, would fly around once the pie was cut open.

After arriving in North America, English colonists incorporated local ingredients into their pie recipes. They used berries, dried fruit, eggs, and molasses. In the late 1700s, pies were made from apples that were neither peeled nor cored. Some said the crust was so tough that it would not break, even if it were run over by a wagon wheel.

[A] As America expanded westward in the 1800s, settlers hungry for pie had to learn to cope with what tools were available, such as possum or vinegar. [B] As the United States grew, pie continued to be a valuable part of American life. [C] A newspaper editorial in the early 1900s claimed, "Pie is the food of

What change, if any, should be made to the highlighted word?

- A. NO CHANGE
- B. like
- C. after all
- D. then

Sequence	Grade	Question type	DOK level	ACT Aspire reporting category	Correct response
14	6	Selected Response	1	Conventions of Standard English	B

This selected-response question requires students to identify and correct language that does not conform to conventional ways of expressing ideas in standard English (aligns with CCRA.W.5, L.1). After reading the sentence carefully, students must identify the highlighted word as an idiomatically incorrect use of a preposition. Students must then select an answer option that conforms to the conventions of standard English expression.

Explanation for Correct Response

Answer option B is the best option because the preposition “like” is idiomatically appropriate here; it also creates a logical comparative relationship between dough and pots. All other answer options are idiomatically incorrect.

Question 15

HOME / ENGLISH EXEMPLARS / SECTION 1 / 15 OF 24

1:45:31 | F. Last

**Pie Through the Ages**

Many children grow up hearing the nursery rhyme about blackbirds baked in a pie, but few realize there is truth to the tale. In the 1500s, pies were often part of an evening’s entertainment. Blackbirds would be sealed in an uncooked pie that would be presented to partygoers. The **birds which were quite ready to be freed** would fly around once the pie was cut open.

After arriving in North America, English colonists incorporated local ingredients into their pie recipes. They used berries, dried fruit, eggs, and molasses. In the late 1700s, pies were made from apples that were neither peeled nor cored. Some said the crust was so tough that it would not break, even if it were run over by a wagon wheel.

[A] As America expanded westward in the 1800s, settlers hungry for pie had to learn to cope with what tools were available, such as possum or vinegar. [B] As the United States grew, pie continued to be a valuable part of American life. [C] A newspaper editorial in the early 1900s claimed, “Pie is the food of the heroic. No pie-eating people can ever be permanently vanquished.” Pies have been a favorite food for a long time, and today, apple pie is considered a symbol of American life. [D]

What change, if any, should be made to the highlighted text?

- A. NO CHANGE
- B. birds which were quite ready to be freed
- C. birds, which were quite ready to be freed.
- D. birds, which were quite ready to be freed

Sequence	Grade	Question type	DOK level	ACT Aspire reporting category	Correct response
15	6	Selected Response	1	Conventions of Standard English	C

This selected-response question requires students to identify and correct text that does not conform to conventions of standard English punctuation (aligns with CCRA.W.5, L.2). Specifically, students must demonstrate the ability to use punctuation correctly to set off a nonrestrictive element. They must also identify punctuation that is not necessary to meaning or actively interferes with meaning.

Explanation for Correct Response

Answer option C correctly uses parallel punctuation to set off the nonrestrictive element “which were quite ready to be freed” with commas. Options A and D lack parallel commas and therefore do not correctly set off this nonrestrictive element. Option B lacks commas altogether and therefore does not correctly set off this nonrestrictive element.

Question 16

**Pie Through the Ages**

Many children grow up hearing the nursery rhyme about blackbirds baked in a pie, but few realize there is truth to the tale. In the 1500s, pies were often part of an evening's entertainment. Blackbirds would be sealed in an uncooked pie that would be presented to partygoers. The birds which were quite ready to be freed, would fly around once the pie was cut open.

After arriving in North America, English colonists incorporated local ingredients into their pie recipes. They used **berries, dried fruit, eggs**, and molasses. In the late 1700s, pies were made from apples that were neither peeled nor cored. Some said the crust was so tough that it would not break, even if it were run over by a wagon wheel.

[A] As America expanded westward in the 1800s, settlers hungry for pie had to learn to cope with what tools were available, such as possum or vinegar. [B] As the United States grew, pie continued to be a valuable part of American life. [C] A newspaper editorial in the early 1900s claimed, "Pie is the food of the heroic. No pie-eating people can ever be permanently vanquished." Pies have been a favorite food for a long time, and today, apple pie is considered a symbol of American life. [D]

What change, if any, should be made to the highlighted text?

- A. NO CHANGE
- B. berries dried fruit eggs
- C. berries dried fruit eggs,
- D. berries dried fruit, eggs,

Sequence	Grade	Question type	DOK level	ACT Aspire reporting category	Correct response
16	6	Selected Response	1	Conventions of Standard English	A

This selected-response question requires students to identify and correct text that does not conform to conventions of standard English punctuation (aligns with CCRA.W.5, L.2). Specifically, students must demonstrate the ability to use punctuation correctly to separate elements within a series.

Explanation for Correct Response

Answer option A correctly uses a comma after each element in the series. Options B, C, and D all omit necessary commas required by conventions of standard English punctuation.

Question 17

**Pie Through the Ages**

Many children grow up hearing the nursery rhyme about blackbirds baked in a pie, but few realize there is truth to the tale. In the 1500s, pies were often part of an evening's entertainment. Blackbirds would be sealed in an uncooked pie that would be presented to partygoers. The birds which were quite ready to be freed, would fly around once the pie was cut open.

After arriving in North America, English colonists incorporated local ingredients into their pie recipes. They used berries, dried fruit, eggs, and molasses. In the late 1700s, pies were made from apples that were neither peeled nor cored. Some said the crust was so tough that it would not break, even if it were run over by a wagon wheel.

[A] As America expanded westward in the 1800s, settlers hungry for pie had to learn to cope with what **tools** were available, such as possum or vinegar. [B] As the United States grew, pie continued to be a valuable part of American life. [C] A newspaper editorial in the early 1900s claimed, "Pie is the food of the heroic. No pie-eating people can ever be permanently vanquished." Pies have been a favorite food for a long time, and today, apple pie is considered a symbol of American life. [D]

What change, if any, should be made to the highlighted word?

- A. NO CHANGE
- B. features
- C. ingredients
- D. portions

Sequence	Grade	Question type	DOK level	ACT Aspire reporting category	Correct response
17	6	Selected Response	3	Knowledge of Language	C

This selected-response question requires students to establish the clearest and most precise way of expressing information or ideas in a text (aligns with CCRA.W.4, W.5, L.3, L.6). To answer this question, students must read the entire sentence that contains the highlighted word and determine which answer option provides the most clear, precise, and logical expression of an idea.

Explanation for Correct Response

Based on the examples provided in the sentence (possum or vinegar), answer option C, "ingredients," is the most logical and precise word choice. Answer option A is incorrect because cooking utensils are never mentioned. Answer option B is incorrect because the term "features" is too broad. Answer option D is incorrect because the settlers' share of the pie is never mentioned.

Question 18

**Pie Through the Ages**

Many children grow up hearing the nursery rhyme about blackbirds baked in a pie, but few realize there is truth to the tale. In the 1500s, pies were often part of an evening's entertainment. Blackbirds would be sealed in an uncooked pie that would be presented to partygoers. The birds which were quite ready to be freed, would fly around once the pie was cut open.

After arriving in North America, English colonists incorporated local ingredients into their pie recipes. They used berries, dried fruit, eggs, and molasses. In the late 1700s, pies were made from apples that were neither peeled nor cored. Some said the crust was so tough that it would not break, even if it were run over by a wagon wheel.

**A** As America expanded westward in the 1800s, settlers hungry for pie had to learn to cope with what tools were available, such as possum or vinegar.

**B** As the United States grew, pie continued to be a valuable part of American life.

**C** A newspaper editorial in the early 1900s claimed, "Pie is the food of the heroic. No pie-eating people can ever be permanently vanquished." Pies have been a favorite food for a long time, and today, apple pie is considered a symbol of American life.

**D**

Where would be the best place to add the following sentence?  
Pie was quite important to these settlers, and they ate it with almost every meal.

A. Point A

B. Point B

C. Point C

D. Point D

Sequence	Grade	Question type	DOK level	ACT Aspire reporting category	Correct response
18	6	Selected Response	3	Production of Writing	B

This selected-response question requires students to make a decision about where a proposed sentence should be placed within a particular paragraph (aligns with CCRA.W.4, W.5). In order to answer this question, students must read and have a general understanding of the entire paragraph. Students must then determine the best placement for the proposed sentence based on logic and cohesion, avoiding placements that weaken the organization of the paragraph or are illogical.

Explanation for Correct Response

Answer option B is the best choice. The proposed sentence refers to “these settlers,” who are introduced in the first sentence of the paragraph. Also, since the proposed sentence includes information about the value of pie, it logically connects to the sentence that follows Point B. Placement at Point A is incorrect because the reader wouldn’t know which “settlers” the proposed sentence is referring to. Placement at points C and D are also incorrect because the proposed sentence, if placed at these points, would interrupt the logical temporal flow of the paragraph.

## Passage D: “Vegetable Magic”

This humanities passage is of appropriate complexity for the ACT Aspire Grade 4 English assessments.

### Question 19

The screenshot shows the ACT Aspire interface. At the top, there are navigation buttons (back, forward), 'Review', 'Flag', and a mouse cursor. The top right shows the time '1:42:14' and the user 'F. Last'. Below the navigation bar, the breadcrumb trail reads 'HOME / ENGLISH EXEMPLARS / SECTION 1 / 19 OF 24'. The main content area is titled 'Vegetable Magic' and contains three paragraphs of text. The word 'orchestras' is highlighted in yellow in the first paragraph. To the right of the passage is a question box with the text 'What change, if any, should be made to the highlighted word?' and four radio button options: A. NO CHANGE, B. orchestra's, C. orchestras', and D. orchestra.

Sequence	Grade	Question type	DOK level	ACT Aspire reporting category	Correct response
19	4	Selected Response	1	Conventions of Standard English	B

This selected-response question requires students to identify and correct several problems related to nouns, pluralization, and possession (aligns with CCRA.W.5, L.2): forming possessive nouns correctly, using context to determine whether to use a possessive or plural noun, and using context to determine whether to use a singular or plural possessive noun.

#### Explanation for Correct Response

Only answer option B correctly uses the singular possessive form of the noun “orchestra.” Answer option A is a plural, nonpossessive noun, option C is a plural possessive noun, and option D is the singular, nonpossessive form of the noun. Within the context of the sentence, options A, C, and D all provide incorrect forms of the noun.

Question 20

← →

Review Flag

1:41:24 | F. Last

HOME / ENGLISH EXEMPLARS / SECTION 1 / 20 OF 24

**Vegetable Magic**

The Vienna Vegetable Orchestra is creating a new, unusual sound with its music. This group performs music by playing vegetables. The orchestras strange instruments *beep, whir, squeak, and thump*.

Before each show, the orchestra members shop for fresh vegetables. Then, the musicians careful cut and carve the food with knives. Sometimes they use a drill, too. As members work, a carrot becomes a flute, and a pepper changes into a horn, a pumpkin is transformed into a fine bass drum.

The members of the orchestra loves the taste, smell, and look of their instruments. They also enjoy sharing their special songs with others. The songs are influenced by many different styles, such as jazz, electronic, and pop music.

After watching a Vienna Vegetable Orchestra performance, Audience members have another delight waiting for them. The orchestra has a cook who makes a delicious soup from all of the vegetables. An evening with the Vienna Vegetable Orchestra is a truly remarkable experience.

What change, if any, should be made to the highlighted word?

- A. NO CHANGE
- B. most careful
- C. carefully
- D. more careful

Sequence	Grade	Question type	DOK level	ACT Aspire reporting category	Correct response
20	4	Selected Response	1	Conventions of Standard English	C

This selected-response question requires students to determine whether to use an adjective or adverb form based on the element of the sentence that is to be modified (aligns with CCRA.W.5, L.1). The student must read through this sentence carefully, recognizing that the adjective “careful” is incorrectly modifying the verb “cut.” The student must then pick the answer option that corrects the error.

Explanation for Correct Response

Answer option C is the only option that correctly uses an adverb to modify the verb “cut.” Answer options A, C, and D all incorrectly modify “cut” with a nonadverbial form of “careful.”



Question 21

**Vegetable Magic**

The Vienna Vegetable Orchestra is creating a new, unusual sound with its music. This group performs music by playing vegetables. The orchestras strange instruments *beep, whir, squeak, and thump*.

Before each show, the orchestra members shop for fresh vegetables. Then, the musicians **careful** cut and carve the food with knives. Sometimes they use a drill, too. As members work, a carrot becomes a flute, and a pepper changes into a **horn. a** pumpkin is transformed into a fine bass drum.

The members of the orchestra loves the taste, smell, and look of their instruments. They also enjoy sharing their special songs with others. The songs are influenced by many different styles, such as jazz, electronic, and pop music.

After watching a Vienna Vegetable Orchestra performance, Audience members have another delight waiting for them. The orchestra has a cook who makes a delicious soup from all of the vegetables. An evening with the Vienna Vegetable Orchestra is a truly remarkable experience.

What change, if any, should be made to the highlighted text?

- A. NO CHANGE
- B. horn. A
- C. horn a
- D. horn a.

Sequence	Grade	Question type	DOK level	ACT Aspire reporting category	Correct response
21	4	Selected Response	2	Conventions of Standard English	B

This selected-response question requires students to recognize and revise a run-on sentence (two or more independent clauses joined without proper punctuation and/or conjunctions; aligns with CCRA.W.5, L.1). The student must read through this sentence carefully, recognizing that it contains two independent clauses joined only by a comma (creating a comma splice). The student must then pick the answer option that corrects the error.

Explanation for Correct Response

Answer option B is the only option that corrects the run-on sentence by splitting it into two sentences. Answer option A creates a comma splice, answer option C deletes an unnecessary comma but still creates a run-on, and answer option D moves the comma but still creates a run-on.

Question 22

**Vegetable Magic**

The Vienna Vegetable Orchestra is creating a new, unusual sound with its music. This group performs music by playing vegetables. The orchestras strange instruments *beep, whirl, squeak,* and *thump*.

Before each show, the orchestra members shop for fresh vegetables. Then, the musicians careful cut and carve the food with knives. Sometimes they use a drill, too. As members work, a carrot becomes a flute, and a pepper changes into a horn, a pumpkin is transformed into a fine bass drum.

The members of the orchestra **loves** the taste, smell, and look of their instruments. They also enjoy sharing their special songs with others. The songs are influenced by many different styles, such as jazz, electronic, and pop music.

After watching a Vienna Vegetable Orchestra performance, Audience members have another delight waiting for them. The orchestra has a cook who makes a delicious soup from all of the vegetables. An evening with the Vienna Vegetable Orchestra is a truly remarkable experience.

What change, if any, should be made to the highlighted word?

- A. NO CHANGE
- B. love
- C. has loved
- D. loving

Sequence	Grade	Question type	DOK level	ACT Aspire reporting category	Correct response
22	4	Selected Response	1	Conventions of Standard English	B

This selected-response question requires students to identify and correct faulty subject-verb agreement (aligns with CCRA.W.5, L.1). The student must read through the sentence and recognize that the verb “loves” does not agree with the subject of the sentence, “members.”

Explanation for Correct Response

Answer Option B is the only option that corrects the agreement error by using the correct form of the verb “to love.” Answer options A and C use forms of the verb that would agree with a singular, not a plural, subject. Answer option D creates a sentence fragment.

Question 23

Sequence	Grade	Question type	DOK level	ACT Aspire reporting category	Correct response
23	4	Selected Response	1	Conventions of Standard English	A

This selected-response question requires students to form a possessive adjective using the conventions of standard English, distinguishing possessive forms from contractions and adverbs (aligns with CCRA.W.5, L.1). Relying on the context of the sentence, students must identify the need for a possessive adjective in the highlighted portion and choose the correct possessive form from among the answer options provided.

Explanation for Correct Response

Option A is correct because “their” is modifying “special songs,” so the possessive adjective is used correctly. Options B and C incorrectly substitute contractions for the possessive adjective. Option D incorrectly substitutes an adverb (there) for the possessive adjective.

## Question 24

← → Review Flag 1:38:30 | F. Last

HOME / ENGLISH EXEMPLARS / SECTION 1 / 24 OF 24

**Vegetable Magic**

The Vienna Vegetable Orchestra is creating a new, unusual sound with its music. This group performs music by playing vegetables. The orchestras strange instruments *beep, whir, squeak,* and *thump*.

Before each show, the orchestra members shop for fresh vegetables. Then, the musicians careful cut and carve the food with knives. Sometimes they use a drill, too. As members work, a carrot becomes a flute, and a pepper changes into a horn. a pumpkin is transformed into a fine bass drum.

The members of the orchestra loves the taste, smell, and look of their instruments. They also enjoy sharing their special songs with others. The songs are influenced by many different styles, such as jazz, electronic, and pop music.

After watching a Vienna Vegetable Orchestra performance. Audience members have another delight waiting for them. The orchestra has a cook who makes a delicious soup from all of the vegetables. An evening with the Vienna Vegetable Orchestra is a truly remarkable experience.

What change, if any, should be made to the highlighted words?

- A. NO CHANGE
- B. performance audience
- C. performance, audience
- D. performance audience,

Sequence	Grade	Question type	DOK level	ACT Aspire reporting category	Correct response
24	4	Selected Response	1	Conventions of Standard English	C

This selected-response question requires students to correctly use a comma to set off a long introductory element from the rest of the sentence (aligns with CCRA.W.5, L.2). The student must read through the sentence carefully, recognizing that the first part of the sentence creates an introductory element. Students must then choose the correct answer from among options that introduce ambiguity and create rhetorically ineffective fragments.

#### Explanation for Correct Response

Answer option C is the only option that correctly sets off an introductory element from the rest of the sentence. Answer option A creates a sentence fragment; answer option B does not set off the introductory clause with a comma, which creates an ambiguity in meaning; and answer option D both creates an ambiguity and has an unnecessary comma after “audience.”