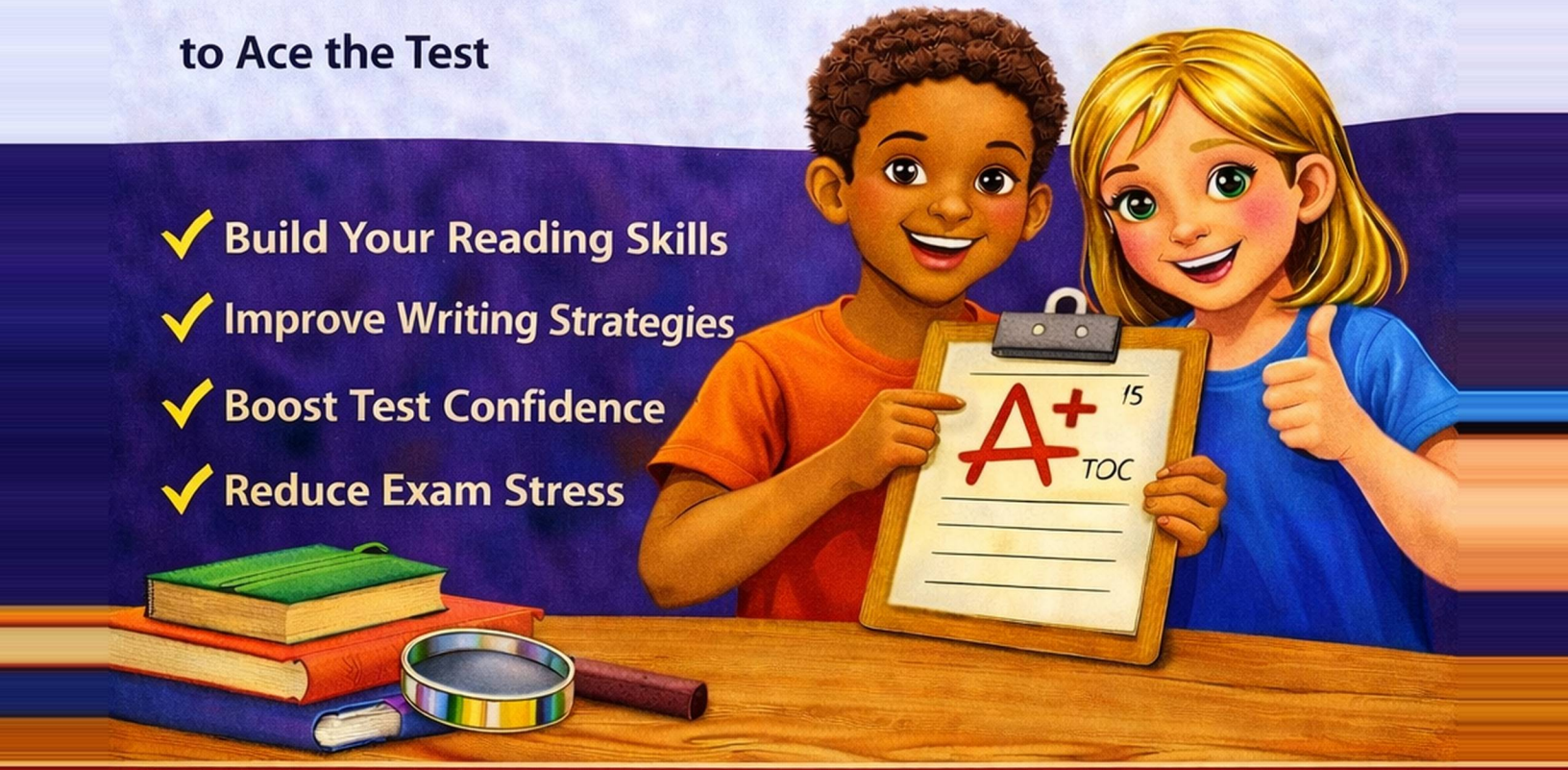
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Read the article. Then answer questions 1–8.

The Rain Barrel Challenge

1 In four blocks around Cedar School, a small team built a rain-barrel network around one idea: a local problem should be studied before anyone tries to fix it.

2 Daily work is organized around close observation. Participants measure runoff from roofs, install diverters, and share the stored water with garden plots. By keeping records, the group can connect each revision to a reason.

3 A clear setback interrupted the progress: One gutter clogged with leaves and sent water past the collection barrel. The team used the difficulty as a reason to investigate more carefully.

4 After comparing notes, the team added screens to the gutters and trained students to inspect them after storms. That revision helped collect more rainwater, because the screens kept leaves from blocking the barrels.

5 In the final stage, the system supplied enough water for school planters during dry weeks. The barrels that had first looked like an experiment were starting to feel like part of how the block took care of itself.

6 The result was useful, but not without trade-offs. Supplies had to be rationed, and not everyone agreed about what should come next. Some members wanted barrels at every school building right away; others argued that another season of storm logs and maintenance notes might reveal problems the group had not yet seen. In the end, the team postponed the expansion until it had gathered more evidence, even though the dry planters made a larger system seem appealing.

Scan Me

1) As it is used in paragraph 4, what does the word *collect* most nearly mean?

(A) to repair with new metal parts
(B) to throw away after one use
(C) to gather and keep for later use
(D) to spread evenly across a surface

Use the article "The Rain Barrel Challenge" to answer this question.

2) Which statement best expresses the central idea of the article?

(A) The article mostly explains the team's daily routines and gives only brief attention to how the project adjusted over time.
(B) Careful research and revision helped a rain-barrel network become a useful community project.
(C) The article describes a community effort whose success depended more on a single decisive moment than on the broader pattern of testing and revision.
(D) The article focuses on the project's final outcome and suggests that earlier setbacks had little effect on what the team eventually achieved.

Use the article "The Rain Barrel Challenge" to answer this question.

3) Which detail best supports the idea that the team improved the project by studying a problem carefully?

(A) Students and volunteers worked together throughout the project.
(B) The team studied the weakness and then added screens to the gutters and trained students to inspect them after storms.
(C) The project began after students identified a local need in the community.
(D) The finished project later provided a useful result for the community.

Use the article "The Rain Barrel Challenge" to answer this question.

4) How does paragraph 3 contribute to the structure of the article?

(A) It presents the setback that leads to the revision described later.
(B) It compares two unrelated projects in different locations.
(C) It summarizes the article's conclusion before any evidence is given.
(D) It introduces the setting of the project for the first time.

Use the article "The Rain Barrel Challenge" to answer this question.

5) Why does the author include details about the team's routines in paragraph 2?

(A) To show that the team worked in an orderly way from the beginning
(B) To show that the project depends on repeated steps and collected evidence
(C) To emphasize how much time and effort the project required
(D) To foreshadow that the project will face a challenge later

Use the article "The Rain Barrel Challenge" to answer this question.

6) Which sentence best explains how the article develops the topic?

(A) It presents the final result first and then goes back to explain how the project originally started.
(B) It introduces a project, explains its process, describes a problem, and shows a revised solution.
(C) It compares two competing approaches to solving the problem and argues that one is clearly better.
(D) It describes two different community problems and explains how each was solved by a different team.

Use the article "Finding the Real Night Sky" to answer this question.

21) What can the reader infer about the author's view?

(A) The author thinks people should avoid looking at the night sky.
(B) The author believes dark skies are worth protecting for wonder, wildlife, and community.
(C) The author believes cities should stop using any outdoor lights.
(D) The author thinks dark-sky parks are too expensive to be useful.

Use the article "Finding the Real Night Sky" to answer this question.

22) **This question has two correct answers.** Choose the **two** sentences from the article that **together** best support the idea that light pollution harms both the view of the night sky and the living things that depend on darkness.

(A) "The International Dark Sky Association now recognizes more than two hundred parks around the world."
(B) "Streetlights, signs, and headlights scatter so much light into the air that fainter stars disappear behind a soft glow."
(C) "A well-aimed porch light can still welcome a guest while sending almost no light upward."
(D) "Too much artificial light confuses sea turtles, which can head toward streetlights instead of the ocean after hatching."
(E) "Visiting a dark-sky park requires some planning, but the reward is a view that earlier generations took for granted."

Use the article "Finding the Real Night Sky" to answer this question.

23) Which sentence would **best** summarize the article?

(A) Dark-sky parks can help communities recover views of the night sky while protecting wildlife and using light more wisely.
(B) Dark-sky parks allow visitors to see the Milky Way.
(C) Scientists study light in the night sky.
(D) Streetlights are bad for people and animals.

Read the selection and choose the best answer to each question.

Diego wrote an informational essay about the benefits of learning a musical instrument. Read Diego's essay and look for revisions he needs to make. Then answer the questions that follow.

Why Everyone Should Try a Musical Instrument

(1) Learning a musical instrument does more than make music. (2) Studies show that students who play an instrument often develop stronger memory, patience, and focus. (3) Practice teaches the kind of steady attention that also helps with math and reading. (4) My younger brother spends hours practicing soccer in the backyard.

(5) Playing an instrument also builds community. (6) School bands, church choirs, and neighborhood lessons bring together students who might never meet otherwise. (7) Over time, these groups become places where students support each other through the slow work of improvement.

(8) Learning an instrument can be hard at first. (9) Fingers get sore, and songs can sound rough during the first weeks. (10) But students who stick with it describe a steady joy that grows as small pieces of music come together.

24) Which sentence should Diego remove from the **first** paragraph because it does not support the main idea?

(A) Sentence 1
(B) Sentence 2
(C) Sentence 3
(D) Sentence 4

Use the essay "Why Everyone Should Try a Musical Instrument" to answer this question.

25) What is the **best** way to combine sentences 5 and 6?

(A) Playing an instrument also builds community, because school bands, church choirs, and neighborhood lessons bring together students who might never meet otherwise.
(B) Playing an instrument also builds community through school bands, church choirs, and neighborhood lessons.
(C) School bands, church choirs, and neighborhood lessons bring together students who play instruments.
(D) Instruments can help students meet people in group settings.

Use the essay "Why Everyone Should Try a Musical Instrument" to answer this question.

26) Diego wants to add a transition at the beginning of paragraph 3. Which sentence would **best** serve this purpose?

(A) In addition, practicing with others can help students stay motivated.
(B) Of course, starting an instrument is not always easy.
(C) For example, many students also enjoy listening to music at home.
(D) As a result, every student should be required to join band.