

ELA W 1.1

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Read the passage and answer the following question(s).

The Kimono



Keiko was ashamed of the kimono. Aunt Fumika had presented it to her tonight after dinner. This visit from Aunt Fumika had been long awaited by the family. Keiko's parents had sacrificed much to arrange for Aunt Fumika's journey, and now Aunt Fumika would be here for six weeks. Now, the kimono from faraway Japan hung forlornly in the closet. It seemed to wonder if Keiko would ever wear it. Its intricate embroidery of red and pink floral design was embarrassing to Keiko. She was distressed by her inner rejection of something that represented her ethnic heritage.

The kimono was traditional. Its flowery brightness was perfectly suited for spring and summer. Summer vacation had just begun and her aunt was delighted to have given her special niece such an appropriate present. Now all of her niece's friends would know that Keiko's people came from Japan. The red and pink blossoms and green bamboo on her kimono were sure to bring her good fortune. Aunt Fumika had expressed these things that night at dinner, her ink-black eyes shining as Keiko had unfolded the kimono from its musty box.

Now Keiko lay in bed, agonizing. How would her friends react to seeing her in traditional Japanese dress instead of her usual California summer attire of a tank top, shorts, and sandals? Would her friends mock her or appreciate her ethnic pride? Each night for the next week, Keiko lay in bed staring at the moonlit patterns on the kimono in the closet. It seemed to reproach her.

Eight nights after Aunt Fumika's arrival, Keiko served a traditional Japanese dessert of *ohagi*. As the family savored the rich warmth of the sweet rice balls, Aunt Fumika began to talk of life in Japan. Aunt Fumika spoke perfect English, though accented. Keiko could understand every precise word. Keiko listened intently to the cadences of her aunt's sentences. They seemed to be swept along by a tide of emotion. In Aunt Fumika's voice, she could hear fierce pride, deep homesickness, and bittersweet nostalgia.

Keiko pictured the kimono in her closet, smothered behind a thick section of tank tops, sundresses, shorts, and swimsuits. Suddenly, the shame burning in Keiko's throat became painful.

Pushing away her plate of half-eaten *ohagi*, she jumped up and ran from the room, tears streaking her cheeks. She pounded up the stairs, ignoring her aunt's confused cries and her mother's worried questions. In her bedroom, she gently took the kimono from the closet, slipped it off its hanger, and pulled it on. Her tears of shame became tears of pride, the same pride she'd heard in Aunt Fumika's voice.

Smiling, she emerged from her bedroom, and walked triumphantly down the stairs into the dining room. Aunt Fumika stood with a gasp of pleasure and came toward her, arms outstretched.

"Beautiful, Keiko," she murmured, her voice catching as she clasped her niece to her in a warm embrace. In that moment, Keiko knew she had done exactly the right thing.

(Question 1)

1

What is the MAIN IDEA of the passage?

- A** Adults will sometimes make you do things that embarrass you in front of your friends.
- B** It is important to pretend that you appreciate gifts even if you don't like them.
- C** The kimono represents traditional Japanese dress.
- D** It is important to take pride in and appreciate one's heritage.

Read the passage and answer the following question(s).

Standing Up for Yourself

This passage may contain errors.

1) James is an eighth grader. He has red hair and freckles, he wears glasses, and he doesn't particularly care about the kinds of clothes he wears. Instead, he loves playing computer games. He's not very popular, as some of the more popular girls remind him daily.

2) He spends most breaks and lunches in the computer lab, not only because he likes to play the games, but also because it's usually a good place to hide out. But when the bullies get hard up for someone to pick on, they'll find him and start in. They'll ask him questions about who his favorite football team is, or who his favorite "rapper" is. He knows he isn't meant to answer, so he'll just sit. Then they'll call him names: nerd, geek. There isn't much James can do but take it until they get bored and leave.

3) He knows the old saying about sticks and stones breaking bones, and names never harming you. But firsthand experience has taught him differently. It is hurtful to be singled out and ridiculed. It is depressing to be excluded, having to try to be invisible to avoid harm.

4) Last year, the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, a research arm of the federal government, conducted a survey throughout the United States of 15,686 students in grades 6 through 10. The survey found that "being teased is not just an unpleasant rite of passage through childhood; it's a public health problem that needs attention. People who are teased as children are more likely to suffer from low self-esteem, well into adulthood."

5) The study defined teasing as behavior intended to hurt or disturb another person. The behavior lasts for an extended length of time and involves a power play, in which the more powerful person or group attacks the less powerful one. Teasing may be physical, verbal, or psychological. In all, 29% of the students surveyed had been involved in some aspect of teasing.

6) The state of Colorado has created the Colorado Anti-Bullying Project. The project has researched the problem of teasing and come up with suggestions for how to cope with this problem at various levels: what kids can do, what parents can do, and what teachers can do. Coping suggestions can be found on their website, <http://www.nobully.com>, or through a phone call to 1-866-NO-BULLY.

7) The website offers the acronym STAMP to keep from being teased: Stay away from people who tease; Tell someone; Avoid bad situations; Make friends; Project confidence. If someone "gets in your face, then ignore the bully and walk away. Don't let them know they got to you. The person is looking for you to react, so don't." They pick on kids who are alone. The suggestion is to join activities, either at school or in the community, and to find friends who share the same interests. Stay away from a potential bad situation: walk to school with someone; stay away from kids who you think don't like you; avoid places where they hang out; sit near the bus driver; don't carry expensive things that might attract attention. Pay attention to your body language. "Slouching, looking at the ground or your feet, and fidgeting show that you're not confident. Look assertive and the person will be less likely to pick on you. Be confident—hold your head up, stand up straight, and look people in the eye. They don't pick on kids who are confident."

8) The website, <http://www.nobully.com>, recognizes that kids being teased may be afraid to tell on the bully. The website offers suggestions of signs parents should pay attention to:

- children coming home with torn clothes, lost money or lost objects
- children having unexplainable scratches or bruises
- children experiencing upset stomachs or headaches before school
- students who walk to school may take unusually long routes to get there
- students who appear fearful about taking a bus, or attending school at all
- students who feel anxious or stressed or depressed before or after school
- students who lose interest in schoolwork, and their academic performance may drop

9) Once parents have identified the signs, the website offers a checklist of suggestions to follow if their child is being teased.

10) All in all, the Colorado Anti-Bullying Project and its website have come up with many helpful suggestions to help stop the

serious problem of bullying.

(Questions 2-3)

2

The *best* way to improve this passage would be to

- A** go into detail more about James's feelings about being bullied.
- B** shorten the passage and add something funny.
- C** present more facts about the Colorado Anti-Bullying Project.
- D** include an ending paragraph that summarizes all the main points.

3

Which sentence would be the *best* thesis statement for the passage?

- A** Boys that are in the eighth grade are more inclined to be bullied than anyone else.
- B** Bullying is a serious, growing issue that needs to be managed before it spins out of control.
- C** Being teased throughout childhood is an inevitable part of growing up.
- D** Parents need to be well-informed of bullying, so that they can recognize the signs from kids.

Read the following passage and answer the question(s).

Wooden Instrument

Kamau's 8th grade class was assigned to write a report on the history of an instrument. This is the first draft of his report. It may contain errors.

(1) Did you know that small peices of wood could make a sound so sweet to the ear they could even be used as musical devices? This particular device is known as a xylophone. The xylophone is a percussion instrument that is struck with an object. They can come in many different shapes and sizes. Its unique tone and look made it appealing to people of all ages. The xylophone has been played in many different cultures, and in many different settings throughout time. Many of us may be familiar with this instrument, so many of us may not be familiar with its history.

(2) Long ago in the country of Africa, someone created this ancient instrument. Wooden peices were placed on the shell of a fruit that was hollowed out and dried. Quite often it was made in the shape of a ladder. The mallets, or playing sticks, were made of wood with bowl-like balls at the end. The Africans carved arches underneath the wooden peices to create separate distinctive sounds. For centuries, these instruments were used and eventually changed, or evolved.

(3) During the 1500s, the Africans shared their instrument with the people of Central America. The Latinos loved the xylophone and eventually changed them into an instrument called the marimba. The marimba had a much wider range than the xylophone. Another difference is in the playing sticks. The xylophone's mallet is much harder than the marimba's mallet.

(4) The xylophone was also introduced to the people of Europe during the sixteenth century. This musical instrument became a popular piece in their folk music. The xylophone became even more popular during the 1800s when a Russian musician, by the name of Michael Gusikov, played it when he went on tours throughout Europe. After that, the xylophone became a common instrument that was played in many different orchestras.

(5) Eventually, the xylophone became popularized in America during the 1900s. The famous George Hamilton Green was a great xylophonist. He shared this instrument through his unique style of music. Green's xylophone had many wooden pieces, which gave off a wider range of sound.

(6) The xylophone is such a marvelous musical instrument that gives off a sound that is beautiful, pure, and cannot be compared. In time, this delightful device could be found in many different bands, orchestras, and even households. They are played by professionals in impressive orchestras. They can also be played by young toddlers who are first learning about music. This ancient instrument has come a long way.

(Question 4)

4

Which of the following would make the *best* concluding sentence to this report?

- A** Although the xylophone has changed throughout time, it has always been a fascinating instrument to play.
- B** The ancient Greeks played musical instruments like the lyre and the aulos, which makes a sound similar to the oboe.
- C** Perhaps the greatest orchestra of the world would have to be the Boston Symphony Orchestra.
- D** Even though the xylophone has been regarded as a charming musical device, the marimba creates a sound that is actually more pleasant.

Read the following passage and answer the question(s).

Popular Pair of Pants

This is the first draft of Joel's essay. It may contain errors.

(1) Denim jeans are one of the most common pieces of clothing around. They are universal, practical, and something of style. Without a doubt, blue jeans are as American as apple pie or a good old game of baseball. This article of clothing is used in the fashion world as well as the working world. Even though there are many different brands and types of denim today, for many years only one was widely known and used.

(2) During the late 1840s, miners flooded to the far west to look for gold in California. They faced many challenges during their treasure hunting, including a lack of sturdy clothing. The treacherous work usually led to torn pants which slowed down the miner's work. Local businesses tried very hard to find a quality pants to sell to the miners; likewise, the product was not good enough.

(3) One inventive man Levi Strauss heard about the problems the miner's were facing and thought of a new way to create pants that could endure almost anything. At first, he created the pants out of tent canvas because it was extremely durable. However, the miners complained that it chafed them while they worked. To fix the problem, Strauss came up with a way to make the pants more comfortable by adding twill cotton, which was a softer fabric. This fabric eventually became known as denim.

(4) At the same time, Jacob Davis, a tailor, developed a way to make regular pants more durable. Davis came up with the idea of using copper rivets to strengthen the pockets of the pants. Eventually, Levi paired up with Jacob Davis to create a better pair of pants, the denim jean. Together, Levi and Davis bought a U.S. patent so no one would steal their invention. This patent would not let any other company make riveted jeans for twenty years. The two men received the patent on May 20, 1873, which became the "birthday" of blue jeans.

(5) Levi Strauss And Company created a functional piece of clothing that was very good for miners and workers in the United States. It was not until the 1950s that the blue jean became fashionable. What was first used by miners during the gold rush is now worn as comfortable everyday pants by most Americans.

(Question 5)

5

Which of the following would make the *best* concluding sentence for the essay, "Popular Pair of Pants"?

- A Levi Strauss, a German immigrant, came to the United States to help his two brothers run a dry goods business.
- B By using a different material and a little metal, these two men were able to create a piece of clothing that has been extremely popular over the years.
- C Calvin Klein, another brand of jean, became extremely popular in the 1980s.
- D Americans have always been into fashion; however, they are not as fashionable as the French.

Read the passage and answer the question(s).**When Commas Attack!****The following is a student's rough draft and may contain errors.**

(1) In the process of creative writing, grammar is often overlooked. This is unfortunate. Grammar is a set of accepted rules that can greatly increase the reader's understanding of the composition. Grammar is a roadmap, showing how to get where you are planning to go with your words. One of the core components of grammar is the comma. It can be a complex tool, yet simplistic after it is learned. The elusive comma is often misunderstood and misused: there are only a few times when a comma is mandatory; other times, style and interpretation play a big part in its use.

(2) Grammatical phrases such as "appositive" and "compound sentences" can be scary to any writer that has not mastered grammar. Appositives are pairings of two nouns that, in context, mean the same thing. For example, if one were to say, "My mother, Debra, is a good cook," then "Debra" would be the appositive. Notice that the appositive is enclosed in commas. Think of it as capturing a redundant noun and keeping it separate from the rest of the sentence. Compound sentences are a little friendlier. When you take two complete sentences and join them together, it is a compound sentence. These are usually separated by a linking word such as "and" or "but." However, the two sentences will fall apart unless you put a comma before the linking word: "The cats are gray, and the dogs are tan." Think of this comma as the pin that links two train cars together.

(3) Commas that do not have a rule are usually thought of as "style" commas. Depending on how one wants the sentence read, a comma can be placed in virtually any place. The comma can drastically change the meaning of the sentence. Some people will put a comma in a place where others would not. For example, lists of nouns require commas to separate each noun (e.g., dogs, cats, chickens). A linking word (from the same list of linking words used in compound sentences) is necessary before the last noun in the list (e.g., dogs, cats, and chickens). The controversy is over whether there should be a comma before the linking word ("and," in the previous example) as there is in compound sentences. There is no actual rule; this comma is a matter of style. Personally, if there were a list of pairs of items, it would make sense to me to put the comma there: "Cows and pigs, dogs and cats, and llamas and camels." It lets us know that "dogs and cats" is a separate pairing from "llamas and camels." Otherwise, it would seem as though dogs, cats, llamas, and camels are all linked together. Still, it is a matter of personal style whether that last comma is necessary.

(4) It is nearly as confusing to try to explain how to use a comma as it is to actually use them. However, as with anything, practice makes perfect. In the entirety of this essay, there are 42 commas. Most of these commas are not explained in this essay. Some are there because they must be there, due to grammatical rules. Others are there because I, the writer, feel that the sentences are easier read with the commas in the places I chose to put them (note the appositive in that sentence, caged like a rabid animal). It is natural now for me to place a comma where it should be, and I often do not even notice them. Ultimately, I assure you, the reader appreciates a good comma.

(Question 6)

6

Which statement *best* represents the controlling idea of the essay?

- A** Learning the rules of comma usage is important, but can be difficult.
- B** The correct use of commas in writing is an important part of grammar.
- C** Style can dictate the use of some commas.
- D** Appositives and compound sentences must use commas.

Read the passage and answer the following question(s).

Horsepower or Horse Power?



When steam trains and automobiles were first tested for speed, they were measured by "horsepower." If a car or train could move swiftly, it was compared with that great mammal, the horse. For centuries, the horse has mesmerized humankind. In fact, we associate them with mysterious legends and exciting myths. The handsome prince rides to the rescue on a white stallion. The daring princess escapes on a black mare. Horses are related to the legendary Pegasus and the exotic zebra. What sort of power does the horse have that it can fascinate, delight, terrify, provide transportation for so many centuries, and never lose its ability to attract? People once thought the car would make the horse completely unnecessary to humans. But it seems that, if anything, the horse has only increased in beauty and usefulness.

The horse still dominates the world. There are more than 300 breeds of horses, and the working horse is still considered the second strongest animal in the world, next to the elephant. Horses have been like dogs in many ways—humankind's best friend. Horses work with unstoppable energy. The oldest working horse in history was Old Billy, an English barge horse who lived until

he was 62! Many working horses live, without retiring, until they are more than 30 years old. But horses don't only work for us. They entertain us. Next to baseball, horseracing is the most popular American spectator sport.

We breed, train, and domesticate horses today. People import tiny Falabella horses, purchasing them for somewhere between \$8000 and \$20,000. Think of all that money for a horse that stands at only 2 feet, 2 inches tall! Though it may seem that we only like to dominate this great animal, we also enjoy its companionship and natural beauty. Whether they work, entertain, or befriend, we seem unable to resist the charm of the horse.

(Questions 7-8)

7

Which sentence offers the MOST well supported conclusion for the essay, "Horsepower or Horse Power?"

- A With the exception of elephants, horses are the strongest animals.
- B Horse racing is one of the most popular American pastimes.
- C Whether because they work with us, because they entertain us, or for their companionship, it is undeniable that people love horses.
- D Humans domesticated horses nearly 5,000 years ago and they continue to be an important animal to humans thousands of years later.

8

What is the MAIN message or MAIN idea of the passage?

- A The horse is humankind's best friend.
- B The horse is a very strong animal that has helped humans in many ways.
- C Horses have helped, entertained, and fascinated humans from the distant past and even through modern times.
- D Domesticated horses have changed history by helping humans during wartime and in everyday life.

Read the following passage and answer the question(s).

Coach of the Century

This is the first draft of Adrian's report. It may contain errors.

One of the most distinguished football coaches of all time was Vince Lombardi. He was devoted, showed a lot of wisdom, and was full of enthusiasm. Even though he only coached one sport, his inspirational wisdom has been shared in many locker rooms around the world. One amazing characteristic of his was that he never settled for anything less than excellence.

Vince Lombardi was born in Brooklyn on June 11, 1913. Being the first of five children, he often took the role of a leader. This leadership ability carried on throughout his life. His career in football began in high school when he starred as a fullback. Vince was a great athlete. He was a brilliant student too. While in college he graduated with honors. After that, he played semi-pro football while working for a financial company.

His career in coaching began when he took a job at St. Cecilia High school in New Jersey. Seven years later, he left St. Cecilia and coached at his alma mater. An alma mater refers to the college someone attended. A couple of years later, he was an assistant coach for the United States Military academy at West Point. While he was at West Point, he learned a lot about leadership and perfection on the field.

He took his expertise from West Point and moved on to the highest level of the sport, professional football. Lombardi took an assistant coaching job for the New York Giants. He got a losing team and helped turn them into a championship team. Even though it was quite an accomplishment, Vince wanted something more challenging. After being the assistant coach in New York for four years, he was ready for his own team.

Vince took over as the head coach for the Green Bay Packers of Wisconsin. The Packers had only won one game the previous season. He demanded perfection from each player and expected them to give everything they had. Vince promised his team that if they followed what he said, they would be champions. That was exactly what happened. Only three years after Vince took over as head coach, the Green Bay Packers won the National Football League Championship in 1961. During the rest of his time coaching the Packers, Vince led the team to five championships. Throughout his time in Wisconsin, Lombardi and his team committed to excellence, and it paid off.

Vince Lombardi's coaching ability was nothing short of outstanding. Not only did he have a winning career as a coach on the football field, but he also left a positive impression on players and fans for many years. Vince Lombardi is one of the most admired coaches in history. In fact, he was so extraordinary that the Super Bowl Championship trophy was named after him. Every team that wins the Super Bowl will always remember Vince Lombardi.

(Questions 9-10)

9

Which statement signifies the controlling impression of Adrian's report?

- A** Lombardi was one of the best athletes of all time.
- B** The Green Bay Packers were the best team in football for many years.
- C** While training under the head coach at West Point, Vince learned most of his coaching techniques.
- D** Vince Lombardi was one of the most remarkable coaches in the history of football.

10

Which sentence would make the *best* concluding sentence to Adrian's report?

- A** After Vince went into retirement, he decided he still wanted to coach and took a position as the head coach of the Washington Redskins.
- B** The Super Bowl is a championship game for the National Football League that was first played in 1967.
- C** The Green Bay Packers were undoubtedly the greatest team in football during the 1960s.
- D** Vince's incredible talent and the impact he left on the field made him a coach that would never be forgotten.