

SAT Author's Purpose Worksheet

Name: _____ Date: _____

Read each text and question. Circle the best answer based on the text.

1. Some readers assume that maps simply record locations. Yet mapmakers choose which features to emphasize and which to omit. A transit map, for example, may distort physical distances to make routes easier to follow.

What is the main purpose of the text?

- A. To explain why all maps should use the same scale
 - B. To challenge a simple view of maps by explaining a design choice
 - C. To argue that transit maps are less accurate than other maps
 - D. To show that most readers misread transit maps
2. A new material is lighter than the metal commonly used in bicycle frames. However, it is also more difficult to repair after damage. Engineers are studying whether its weight advantage justifies that trade-off.

What is the function of the second sentence?

- A. It explains why the material is lighter than metal.
 - B. It restates the weight comparison in different words.
 - C. It gives the final result of the engineers' study.
 - D. It qualifies a benefit by introducing a drawback.
3. To study how a melody changed over time, a researcher compared recordings made in three decades. She first transcribed each recording, then marked differences in rhythm and pitch. Finally, she grouped the changes by decade.

Which choice best describes the structure of the text?

- A. It describes a research goal followed by the steps used to pursue it.
- B. It lists unrelated discoveries without explaining their relationship.
- C. It presents a finding and then explains its causes.
- D. It presents two conflicting theories and rejects both.

4. Urban trees can affect the experience of walking through a neighborhood. Their shade can reduce direct sun exposure, and their branches can create a sense of enclosure along a street. These effects help explain why planners consider trees when designing pedestrian spaces.

What is the main purpose of the text?

- A. To rank cities by the number of trees they contain
 - B. To argue that every street should be lined with trees
 - C. To explain why trees are relevant to the design of walking environments
 - D. To compare the shade provided by different tree species
5. One team dates a building by examining its timber. Another compares the building's decorative details with those of dated structures nearby. Using both approaches can help researchers evaluate whether the evidence points to the same period.

Which choice best describes the organization of the text?

- A. A claim is made, followed by evidence that disproves it.
 - B. Two approaches are introduced, followed by a reason to use them together.
 - C. Two approaches are compared, and one is shown to be more reliable.
 - D. A method is described, followed by the date it gives for the building.
6. The survey found that most respondents favored extending park hours. Because respondents volunteered to participate, the result may not represent all residents. The city plans to seek additional feedback before making a decision.

What is the function of the second sentence?

- A. It identifies a limitation of the survey evidence.
- B. It explains why most respondents favored longer hours.
- C. It states the city's final decision about park hours.
- D. It suggests that most residents oppose longer hours.

7. A city once measured a park's success mainly by its visitor count. Its current evaluation also considers accessibility, maintenance, and the range of activities available. These additional measures offer information that attendance alone cannot provide.

What is the main purpose of the text?

- A. To argue that visitor counts are useless for evaluating parks
 - B. To explain how to count individual park visitors
 - C. To describe a broader approach to evaluating parks
 - D. To explain why the city's parks have become more accessible
8. The new paint dries quickly, which can shorten construction schedules. However, it must be applied within a narrow temperature range. Contractors therefore need to consider local weather when choosing it.

What is the function of the second sentence?

- A. It explains why the paint dries quickly.
 - B. It repeats the drying-time advantage.
 - C. It explains how contractors choose among paints.
 - D. It introduces a constraint on using the paint.
9. To investigate a change in a river's course, researchers compared maps from three periods. They then checked the mapped positions against sediment layers found along the former channel.

Which choice best describes the organization of the text?

- A. A research objective and an initial method are followed by a way to check the evidence.
- B. A claim about the river is made and then disproved.
- C. Two unrelated events are listed without connection.
- D. Two research methods are compared to decide which is more accurate.

10. The phrase "silent film" can be misleading. Many films from that period were shown with live music, and some screenings included spoken commentary. The absence of a recorded soundtrack did not necessarily mean an audience heard nothing.

What is the main purpose of the text?

- A. To explain how live music was performed during screenings
 - B. To clarify a limitation of a common label
 - C. To argue that silent films should be given a new name
 - D. To describe how recorded soundtracks were invented
11. A historian located an unsigned letter among a merchant's papers. Its handwriting resembles the merchant's, but handwriting alone cannot establish authorship. The historian is now comparing the letter's references with dated entries in the merchant's diary.

What is the function of the second sentence?

- A. It identifies the recipient with certainty.
 - B. It establishes that the merchant wrote the letter.
 - C. It acknowledges a clue while explaining why further evidence is needed.
 - D. It explains why the letter was left unsigned.
12. Some researchers examine individual words to study a writer's style. Others measure sentence length or patterns of punctuation. Together, these methods reveal features at several scales of a text.

Which choice best describes the structure of the text?

- A. A prediction is followed by evidence that disproves it.
- B. A single method is described and then applied to one writer.
- C. One method is presented as the only valid approach.
- D. Several methods are introduced, followed by a statement of their combined value.

Answer key

1 B · 2 D · 3 A · 4 C · 5 B · 6 A · 7 C · 8 D · 9 A · 10 B · 11 C · 12 D

1. B: To challenge a simple view of maps by explaining a design choice

The text challenges the idea that maps only record locations, using a transit map as an example of a deliberate design choice. It doesn't rank transit maps against other maps or say that readers misread them.

2. D: It qualifies a benefit by introducing a drawback.

Harder repairs limit the appeal of the lighter weight, so the sentence adds a drawback. It doesn't explain the weight, repeat it, or report what the engineers decided.

3. A: It describes a research goal followed by the steps used to pursue it.

The opening gives the research goal; the remaining sentences outline transcription, comparison, and grouping. Those steps all serve the same investigation.

4. C: To explain why trees are relevant to the design of walking environments

The text links the effects of trees to how planners design pedestrian spaces. It doesn't recommend trees for every street, compare species, or rank cities.

5. B: Two approaches are introduced, followed by a reason to use them together.

The text introduces two ways to date a building, by its timber and by its decorative details, then says using both lets researchers check whether they agree. It never ranks the methods or gives a date.

6. A: It identifies a limitation of the survey evidence.

People who volunteer for a survey may differ from other residents, so the sentence limits how far the result applies. It doesn't reverse or explain the result, and the city hasn't decided yet.

7. C: To describe a broader approach to evaluating parks

The text moves from visitor counts alone to several measures. It says attendance can't show everything, not that counts are useless, and it reports no change in the parks themselves.

8. D: It introduces a constraint on using the paint.

The temperature range limits when the paint can be used, which qualifies the benefit in the first sentence. Contractors come up only in the third sentence.

9. A: A research objective and an initial method are followed by a way to check the evidence.

The first sentence gives the goal and the map comparison. The second uses sediment layers to check the mapped positions, so the methods work together and nothing is disproved.

10. B: To clarify a limitation of a common label

Live music and spoken commentary show why the label silent can mislead. Those examples support the point about the label; the text doesn't explain how the music was performed or propose a new name.

11. C: It acknowledges a clue while explaining why further evidence is needed.

The handwriting is a clue, but the sentence says it can't settle who wrote the letter. That limit leads to the diary comparison in the next sentence.

12. D: Several methods are introduced, followed by a statement of their combined value.

Word-level and sentence-level methods are described first. The final sentence explains what their combination can reveal.