

SAT and ACT Combo Test: Answer Explanations

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Section 1 – ACT English Test

9 minutes, 15 questions

1. **B is the correct answer** because “in the study of” is the correct idiomatic expression. A and C both use prepositions that aren’t commonly associated with the word “study.” D is incorrect because a comparison must have a parallel form. In other words, “studying” is not in the same grammatical form as “branch of astronomical science.”
2. **F is the correct answer** because it is the only option that is in the present tense. You know present is the correct tense because of the verb “is” earlier in the sentence.
3. Pay close attention to the word “specific” in the question. **D is the correct answer** because it gives specific numbers, whereas the other options give general observations.
4. When you see a question about a transition word, read the sentences before and after that word, and consider the relationship among them. **F is the correct answer** because the second sentence gives additional information with a stronger emphasis than the first. G and J are incorrect because there is no contrast, and H is incorrect because the second sentence isn’t an example.
5. **C is the correct answer** because “base any conclusion on” is the correct idiomatic expression. A, B, and D are incorrect because we don’t usually say that we base conclusions about, in, or after anything.
6. **H is the correct answer** because it places a period between two independent clauses. F creates a comma splice. G is incorrect because a colon should be used to introduce an explanation, example, or list. J is incorrect because the conjunction “so” implies a cause-and-effect relationship.
7. **D is the correct answer** because the pronoun “they” agrees with the antecedent “Photographs.” A and B both incorrectly use the singular “it,” and C creates the incorrect construction “that provided.”
8. **G is the correct answer** because it correctly joins two items in a compound predicate with a conjunction and without a comma. F is incorrect because it doesn’t use a second independent clause after the comma. H is incorrect because a conjunction should not follow a semicolon. J is incorrect because a sentence should not begin with a conjunction.

9. **C is the correct answer** because it correctly matches the dash at the end of the non-essential phrase. A, B, and D all fail to match the dash that is already there.
10. **F is the correct answer** because “it’s” is a contraction for “it is,” which supplies the needed subject and verb for this sentence. The option for G, “its” can be read as “belongs to it.” G, H, and J all remove the subject, verb, or both from the main clause of this sentence.
11. **D is the correct answer** because it correctly adds **’s** to make “eclipse” into a singular possessive adjective. A and B use eclipse as a noun rather than a possessive adjective. C is possessive, but the **s’** construction should be used for plurals.
12. **H is the correct answer** because it is the right form for a compound predicate. Notice that the two verbs, “designed” and “called,” are in parallel form. F and G do not follow parallel form. J is missing a comma before the word “which.”
13. **D is the correct answer** because “unfortunately” is placed near the idea of being lost. A and B put an unrelated concept between the word “unfortunately” and the idea of being lost. C incorrectly places “unfortunately” before a preposition.
14. **F is the correct answer** because this sentence is about the frequency of eclipses, and that is the topic discussed in the first paragraph. G, H, and J all insert this sentence into paragraphs with unrelated topics.
15. **D is the correct answer** because, while this passage does discuss the development of specific photographic methods, that is not its main focus. A and B are incorrect because of the word “yes.” C is incorrect because the passage does mention, at least in passing, the development of some photographic methods.