

SAT Writing and Language Practice Test 20

Set 1

Seeing Her Way to Space

[1] On the strength of these achievements, Ochoa was selected for a NASA space mission in 1990. She became the first Hispanic female astronaut and the first in space in 1993. 1 Ochoa's career at NASA has been every bit as illustrious as one would expect 2 of Hispanic descent: in 2013, she became the first person and the second woman to become director of NASA's Johnson Space Center.

[2] Her second patent came in 1989, for a device that identifies the positional coordinates of objects with a new kind of precision, the kind required in military operations. The device, 3 which is characterized by its almost exact precision, uses the light and movement data to compute a specific spatial coefficient. The images produced by this device allow a mathematical precision that digital photography simply cannot provide. This invention has had popular applications as well, 4 including advances in face-recognition technology and airport-security scanning devices.

1.

- A. NO CHANGE
- B. Ochoas's
- C. Ochoas'
- D. Ochoa

2. If the punctuation were to be adjusted accordingly, the best placement for the underlined portion would be:

- A. where it is now.
- B. after the word she.
- C. after the word person.
- D. after the word Center.

3.

- A. NO CHANGE
- B. are characterized by their
- C. are characterized by its
- D. is characterized by its

4. Which of the following true choices would best support the idea presented in the first part of this sentence?

- A. NO CHANGE
- B. though scientists can sometimes be less interested in popular applications than in scientific soundness.
- C. but popular is a relative term when you're talking about high-level, complex scientific discoveries.
- D. which is not to say that like people were sitting around reading the patent for fun or anything.

[3] Ellen Ochoa was born in Los Angeles, CA, in 1958. She did her primary schooling in La Mesa and went on to get a bachelor's degree in physics from San Diego State University. She earned a Ph.D. from Stanford in electrical engineering in 1981. 5 San Diego State University is a good school, but Stanford is a truly great research institution.

[4] Ochoa was the first 6 revere for her research. Her most notable contribution is an optical system that can detect defects in a repeating pattern. Her first patent came in 1987 for a special camera that could correct in real-time. 7 Unlike digital technology, which can operate neither quickly nor accurately enough in space missions, Ochoa's optical analysis device uses laser light technology 8 instead of the traditional digital. The technology operates on electromagnetic wavelengths and produces instantaneous hologram images that are themselves incorporated into the final image output. This technology has enabled the further development of such optics technology as powerful telescopes that can see through electromagnetic aberrations to accurate images.

5. Which of the following true sentences would best conclude this paragraph and support the main idea of the passage?

- A. NO CHANGE
- B. Despite her fairly conventional beginnings, Ochoa has gone on to become one of the most revered Hispanic women in science.
- C. Ochoa is a fairly common surname for celebrities: Guillermo Ochoa is a soccer player, Amparo a singer, and Lorena a golfer.
- D. On average, it takes approximately five years to earn a doctorate in electrical engineering.

6.

- A. NO CHANGE
- B. reverent
- C. referred
- D. revered

7.

- A. NO CHANGE
- B. Rather than using digital technology,
- C. Using her knowledge of digital technology,
- D. A specialist in non-digital technology,

8.

- A. NO CHANGE
- B. in the place of digital.
- C. not digital technology.
- D. DELETE the underlined portion (ending the sentence with a period).

[5] Ochoa's third patent was issued in 1990. 9 This technology enables a user to filter 10 two-dimensional images to focus on particular parts of that image with equal precision. An electronic system ranks the components of the image, removing the "noise" that is irrelevant to the desired part of the image. This technology gives a three-dimensional perspective to two-dimensional objects, essentially offering users the ability to search an image with the same

range of motion and perspective that they could use when analyzing a real-life object. This patent has had an obvious role in high-definition cameras, but it has also led to innovations in other areas, such as fingerprint-recognition software.

9. At this point, the writer is considering adding the following true statement.

A design patent typically lasts for 14 years, but a utility patent lasts for 20.

Should the writer make this addition here?

- A. Yes, because it helps to clarify many parts of the passage that discuss patents.
- B. Yes, because the statement is true and advances the larger cause of education.
- C. No, because the statement removes the focus from Ellen Ochoa's career and accomplishments.
- D. No, because patents are a politically sensitive topic when there are competing claims to them.

10.

- A. NO CHANGE
- B. a two-dimensional image
- C. one or two-dimensional images
- D. a pair of dimensional images

11. The best sequence for the paragraphs would be

- A. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5
- B. 2, 4, 3, 5, 1
- C. 3, 4, 2, 5, 1
- D. 4, 2, 3, 1, 5

Set 2

I Object!

Crime stories are as old as narrative itself. Some of the earliest texts we have centered on questions of 1 murder, theft, and other transgressions. Still, while people often remember the crimes and criminals themselves, typically these stories will revolve around separate 2 issues, guilt, and innocence. Courtroom dramas in our own day attest to this correlative fascination.³

1.

- A. NO CHANGE
- B. murder, theft, and, other transgressions.
- C. murder theft and other transgressions.
- D. murder: theft and other transgressions.

2.

- A. NO CHANGE
- B. issue; guilt and innocence.
- C. issue: guilt and innocence.
- D. issue: guilt, and innocence.

3. Which of the following choices would most effectively conclude this paragraph and provide an effective transition into the next?

- A. The most famous courtroom drama of all time is probably To Kill a Mockingbird.
- B. Errol Morris has made many interesting films throughout his career.
- C. We all have our fascinations in life, and there's usually some TV show that lines up with these fascinations.
- D. One of the great modern examples of such a fascination is Errol Morris's famous documentary The Thin Blue Line (1988).

Morris's story takes up the real-life case of Randall Dale Adams, a Texas police officer was killed by this Ohio man allegedly. Although the evidence in the trial was thin, Adams was sentenced to life in prison. Morris's film in a sense reopens the case, interviewing many of those involved: many more people than just the defendant are involved in a case. All of the interviewees raise notable objections to Adams's murder charge, and the film concludes with a sobering message from the prosecutor's closing statement: the police are the "thin blue line" separating society from anarchy. At least they should be, the film wants us to see, but should this separation come at the expense of a man's legal rights?

4.

- A. NO CHANGE
- B. is a man from Ohio who would be convicted of the murder of a Texas police officer.
- C. a Texas police officer being killed by this Ohio man allegedly.
- D. a verdict of guilty was this Ohio man's fate for the murder of a Texas police officer.

5. Which of the following choices gives the most detailed explanation of the words involved, which appear before the colon?

- A. NO CHANGE
- B. witnesses, attorneys, detectives, and the judge who presided over the case.
- C. he couldn't interview the victim of the crime for obvious reasons.
- D. there is nothing that says those involved can't talk after the trial has concluded.

6. Which of the following alternatives to the underlined portion would be LEAST acceptable?

- A. lawlessness.
- B. chaos.
- C. tyranny.
- D. mayhem.

Within a year of the film's 1988 release, Adams's sentence was overturned. It's not hard to see that it was Morris's film that helped to build the appeals case. Such an event is remarkable, not only because of the relative rarity of a court overturning its verdict (one that peaked in the year of Morris's film) but also because it was seemingly done outside of the courts.

The significance of The Thin Blue Line is again with us today with the podcast Serial, hosted by journalist Sarah Koenig. The podcast analyzes the records from the 1999 trial and conviction of Adnan Syed, a then-17-year-old high school student, who was convicted of killing his ex-girlfriend. While Koenig's stated purpose is merely to understand the ins and outs of the trial, not necessarily to get Syed's sentence overturned, she does identify a degree of

uncertainty about the trial's verdict. Unlike Morris, Koenig is not quite convinced of her subject's innocence as Morris was, but she is equally interested in how the legal system determines that guilt and innocence, often showing how decidedly extralegal matters can play a serious role.⁹

Figure 2C: Direct Appeal Reversal Rate
by Year of Review, 1973-1995

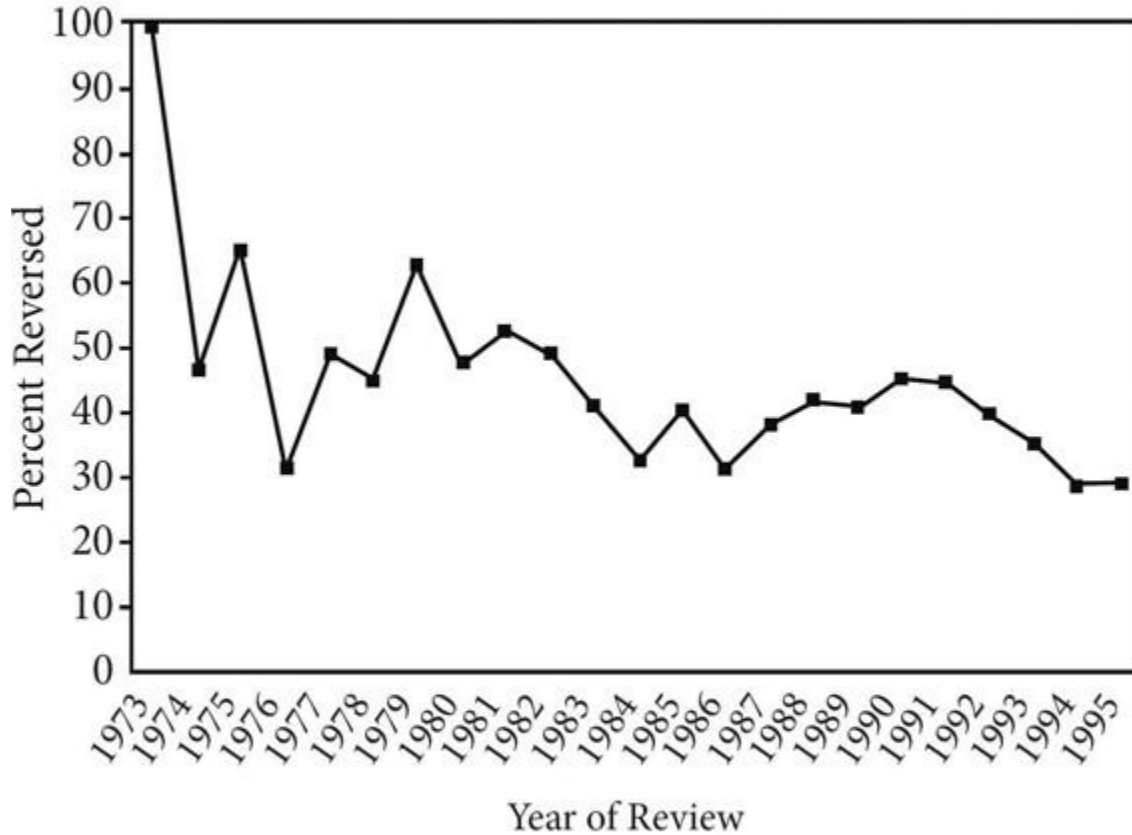


Image courtesy of Columbia Law School

7. Which of the following gives accurate information based on the graph?
- A. NO CHANGE
 - B. (the data do not account for repeated attempts to overturn verdicts),
 - C. (in 1989, the direct-appeal reversal rate was approximately 14%),
 - D. (one that actually trended downward in the years after Morris's film),
- 8.
- A. NO CHANGE
 - B. Koenig's stated purpose
 - C. Because Koenig's stated purpose
 - D. However, Koenig's stated purpose
9. The author is considering deleting the phrase as Morris was, placing the comma after the word innocence. Should the phrase be kept or deleted?
- A. Kept, because the contrast with Errol Morris's project is not clear without it.

- B. Kept, because Koenig is clearly interested in duplicating Morris's work in the podcast format.
- C. Deleted, because the information is given elsewhere in the sentence.
- D. Deleted, because it is not reasonable to suppose that a film and a podcast could be usefully compared.

Morris's film and 10 Koenig's podcast both raise some serious questions about the legal system. For instance, how conclusive does the evidence have to be to prove someone's guilt? And how can questions of innocence or guilt ever be determined by so many imperfect human actors? 11 They both remind us that even though justice itself may be blind, and the U.S. court system prides itself on legal objectivity, such a thing may not be possible, especially as it promises that all of those on trial is innocent until proven guilty.

10.

- A. NO CHANGE
- B. the podcast of Koenig's
- C. the podcast Koenig is making
- D. Koenig's

11.

- A. NO CHANGE
- B. Koenig and Morris
- C. The two
- D. DELETE the underlined portion (beginning the sentence at the word Both).