

1. Which of the following is the best revision of sentence 1 below?

There is an axiom used in urban planning and it is this: increasing safety for bicyclists will result in increased ridership

- A. Axiomatically, urban planners believe that by increasing safety for bicyclists, they can increase ridership.
- B. Urban planners are axiomatic about bike safety because they want to increase ridership.
- C. Following the axiom of urban planning, we can see that if you increase bike safety, you will increase ridership.
- D. It is an axiom of urban planning that increasing safety for bicyclists will result in increased ridership.
- E. Increasing ridership depends on the axiom of urban planning, which is to increase bike safety.

2. Which of the following is the best way to combine sentences 4 and 5?

- A. Because the experiment was quickly dismantled due to pedestrian's complaints, we can learn a lot from such a plan.
- B. Whether or not the experiment was quickly dismantled due to pedestrian's complaints, we can learn a lot from such a plan.
- C. Despite teaching us how to make such a plan work, the experiment was quickly dismantled due to pedestrian's complaints
- D. When the experiment was dismantled quickly due to pedestrian's complaints, we learned a lot about how such a plan might work.
- E. Even though the experiment was quickly dismantled due to pedestrian's complaints, it has lessons to teach in making such a plan work.

3. Which of the following is the best punctuation of the highlighted portion of sentence 9?

Pedestrians confused as to the nature of the lanes complained that they were more afraid of being hit by bicycles.

- A. Pedestrians, confused as to the nature of the lanes, complained
- B. Pedestrians confused, as to the nature of the lanes complained
- C. Pedestrians: confused as to the nature of the lanes; complained
- D. Pedestrians confused as to the nature of the, lanes complained
- E. Best as it is

4. In the context of the sentences preceding sentence 8, which of the following is the best revision of sentence 8?

- A. The ridership increase could not be measured because the lane was not long enough in one place.
- B. Since it was not in place long enough, ridership could not be measured significantly.
- C. If the lane had been in place longer, cyclists could have increased their ridership.

- D. The lane was not in place long enough to measure any significant changes in ridership, however.
- E. They could not measure significant increases in ridership, however, the lane was not in place long enough.

5. Which of the following is the best revision of the highlighted portion of sentence 12 below?

It doesn't matter so much that they failed it seems because the city is once again placing some bike lanes between parked cars and the sidewalk.

- A. Because they failed so miserably before,
- B. Despite the previous failure,
- C. Although the failure,
- D. With the failure of the bike lanes,
- E. They failed because

6. In relation to the passage as a whole, which of the following best describes the writer's intention in paragraph 2?

- A. To examine the results of a social experiment
- B. To provide an example of a historical accident
- C. To show that an opposing idea is false
- D. To explain how a political decision is made
- E. To describe psychological tests

QUESTIONS 7-10 are based on the following passage.

(1) The reed boats of Lake Titicaca may hold a clue to the origins of human life in the Americas. (2) Many people believe that human beings first reached the Americas across a land bridge. (3) An alternate theory is that people crossed the Pacific Ocean on boats. (4) In the opinion of many, the theoretical land bridge ostensibly stretched from Russia across the Bering Strait to Alaska.

(5) The reed boats found being used by the native inhabitants of the Lake Titicaca region are similar to those used on the Nile River in Chad. (6) The similarity of the two traditional boats is more than superficial. (7) Identical techniques are used to create the boats and they have been handed down for many generations. (8) Other circumstantial evidence, including indigenous plants of South America found in ancient Egyptian burial mounds, suggests that the gap between Africa and the Americas was bridged long before Columbus sails the ocean blue.

(9) Several modern expeditions using reed boats have been successfully attempted. (10) They have proven that prehistoric technology was capable of making the trip across the ocean. (11) Not everyone is convinced that it actually happened. (12) At least it bears further examination.

7. Which of the following would improve and clarify the structure of the first paragraph?

- A. Eliminate sentence 3
- B. Eliminate sentence 4
- C. Reverse the order of sentences 3 and 4
- D. Place the last sentence first
- E. No change is necessary

8. Which of the following is the best revision of sentence 4 below?

In the opinion of many, the theoretical land bridge ostensibly stretched from Russia across the Bering Strait to Alaska.

- A. This land bridge ostensibly stretched from Russia across the Bering Strait to Alaska.
- B. It is an opinion about the land bridge that it stretched from Russia across the Bering Strait to Alaska.
- C. The theoretical land bridge was opined to stretch from Russia across the Bering Strait to Alaska.
- D. The theory of the land bridge is based upon its stretching from Russia across the Bering Strait to Alaska.
- E. A land bridge of this type would probably stretch from Russia across the Bering Strait to Alaska.

9. Which of the following is the best revision of the highlighted portion of sentence 5 below?

The reed boats found being used by the native inhabitants of the Lake Titicaca region are similar to those used on the Nile River in Chad.

- A. The reed boats made by the native inhabitants of Lake Titicaca
- B. Lake Titicaca's native inhabitants' reed boats
- C. The boats which the native inhabitants of Lake Titicaca make from reeds
- D. The boats, reed-made by Lake Titicaca's natives
- E. The reed boats, the likes of which are made by the native inhabitants of Lake Titicaca

10. Which of the following is the best revision of the highlighted portion of sentence 6 below?

The similarity between the two kinds of boats is more than superficial

- A. The two boats' similarity
- B. This similarity
- C. The first boat the same as the second
- D. The sameness amongst the boats
- E. If the boats are similar or not

CLEP College Composition Practice Question Answer Key

1. D is the best answer. In this sentence the author is introducing an axiom, which is a proposition that has been established as truth. By using "It" as the subject of the sentence, the author can define the axiom using an adjective clause. Answer A uses an adverb at the beginning of the sentence modifying the verb "believe." B uses the adjective "axiomatic" unsuccessfully. C introduces "we" into the conversation unnecessarily. E implies that urban planning only has a single axiom.
2. E is the best answer. The relationship between sentences four and five is unexpected. A failed attempt should not be a model for future experiments, but there is something to learn from failure. That "but" is present in both C and E with the words "despite" and "even though." C puts the cause and unexpected consequence in reverse order. E makes the most sense.
3. A is the best answer. In this sentence we have an adverb clause disguising itself as an adjective clause. The clause really could be written "because they were confused about the nature of the lanes."
4. D is the best answer. In answer D the subject is clearly delineated and removes the unnecessary adjective clause and "the problem was" header of the original sentence. E is grammatically incorrect because it connects two clauses inappropriately. A, B, and C change the obvious intended meaning of the sentence by misusing adverb connectors.
5. B is the best answer. "Despite" must be followed by a noun phrase instead of a full clause. "Although" must be followed by a full clause. A, D, and E all imply that the failure would naturally lead to further attempts to separate bike lanes from traffic, which does not follow logically.
6. A is the best answer. The first paragraph introduces the idea of a dedicated bike lane. The second paragraph details the experiment tried in New York City. It was surely a social experiment because it depended on altering people's behavior. The bike lane was placed intentionally, so B is incorrect. There is only one idea proposed throughout the essay. The writer does not mention how the decision was made to separate the bike lane.
7. C is the best answer. All of the ideas in the first paragraph are relevant to the main topic. The idea of a land bridge is presented as the dominant theory while reed boats are suggested as an alternate theory. The problem is that sentence 4 is a supporting idea to sentence 2. Sentence 3 is the thesis statement of the entire essay and would be more effective as the last sentence of the introductory paragraph.
8. A is the best answer. The original sentence posits the land bridge as theoretical then hedges that bet by stating that it is an opinion. It also calls its own facts into further question by using the adverb "ostensibly." It seems the author is afraid to present this information lest it be proven wrong. The correct answer chooses one of the words to let readers know that this is a theory and not a fact. This simplifies and clarifies the idea.
9. A is the best answer. It makes the head subject clear by placing reed boats first without resorting to the passive voice. Answer B uses a shorter, but more laborious, construction that features too many possessives. Answers C and E are lengthier and less clear than the correct version. Answer D uses a compound noun-verb form in "reed-made" which is unacceptable.
10. B is the best answer. It uses a pronoun that has a clear antecedent in the previous sentence. This short form is the most clear and concise subject possible for this particular sentence. It is simpler than answer A. Answer C uses multiple subjects that lack verbs to complete the clause. D uses "sameness" instead of the more clear and common "similarity." E creates a noun clause that obscures the head subject.

