

**PASSAGE II: Down at the Laundromat**

[1] Down the street from the college, I attend,<sup>16</sup> the Save-U Laundromat is always open, and someone is always there. [2] It was<sup>17</sup> on a corner, across the street; from<sup>18</sup> a drugstore on one side and a big park on the other. [3] The park isn't really a park at all but part of the grounds of a private boarding school. [4] But no one is ever around to enforce the threats, and in the summer everyone enjoys the benches, the grass, and the coolly magnificence<sup>19</sup> of the shade trees. [5] Signs are posted all over the lawn threatening every sort of drastic action against trespassers who wrongfully enter the property.<sup>20</sup> [21]

The Save-U has a neon sign out front that says "Friendly 24-Hour Service," but as far as I can tell, no one really works there. The washers and dryers are lime green, and the paneling on the walls has been<sup>22</sup> painted to match, although it was later varnished with some kind of artificial wood grain finish. [23] I often stare at that paneling when I don't have a magazine or newspaper to read and don't want to do my schoolwork. Deep in thought, I contemplate the competence of the laundromat's interior designer.

Some machines even provide a certain amount of sustenance and entertainment.<sup>24</sup> This laundromat has three soda machines, two candy machines, two pinball machines, five video machines, and a machine that eats dollar bills and spits out too much or too few<sup>25</sup> quarters.

There are many regular customers whose faces have become familiar—mostly older people from around the neighborhood. [26] Usually a crowd of thirteen-year-old kids that<sup>27</sup> is gathered around the video machines, regardless of the time of day.

Imagining all these people, it is that I know they<sup>28</sup> remain there even after I have left. I know that I could go in there anytime, and someone would look up from playing pinball or folding clothes and  nods and smiles<sup>29</sup> at me. It is comforting to know that the Save-U Laundromat. And its<sup>30</sup> people are always nearby.

16.

- F. NO CHANGE
- G. college, I attend
- H. college I attend,
- J. college I attend

17.

- A. NO CHANGE
- B. is
- C. had been
- D. was located

18.

- F. NO CHANGE
- G. street-from,
- H. street, from
- J. street from

19.

- A. NO CHANGE
- B. cool magnificence
- C. magnificently cool
- D. cool magnificent

20.

- F. NO CHANGE
- G. those who trespass by walking on private property.
- H. trespassers who ignore the signs and walk on the grass.
- J. trespassers.

21.

For the sake of logic and coherence, Sentence 5 should be placed:

- A. where it is now.
- B. before Sentence 1.
- C. after Sentence 1.
- D. after Sentence 3.

22.

- F. NO CHANGE
- G. have been
- H. were
- J. are

23. At this point, the writer wants to add a sentence that would further describe the laundromat's paneling. Which of the following sentences would best accomplish this?

- A. I guess the brush strokes are intended to resemble wood grain, but they don't.
- B. I know that the varnish provides some protection for the wood paneling.
- C. To me, it seems that lime green was a bizarre choice for an interior wall paint.
- D. I imagine that the person who chose that color scheme must be a unique individual.

24. Which choice most effectively guides the reader from the preceding paragraph into this new paragraph?

- F. NOCHANGE
- G. The Save-U has to have friendly service because it is across the street from a park.
- H. Maybe what the Save-U means by friendly service is an abundance of machines.
- J. Washing machines are the Save-U's version of 24-hour service.

25.

- A. NO CHANGE
- B. many or too fewer
- C. many or too few
- D. much or few

26. The writer is considering deleting the following phrase from the preceding sentence: -mostly older people from around the neighborhood. If the writer were to make this deletion, the essay would primarily lose:

- F. specific descriptive material.
- G. detail providing a logical transition.
- H. foreshadowing of the conclusion.
- J. an understatement of important information.

27.

- A. NO CHANGE
- B. kids who
- C. kids, and they
- D. kids

28.

- F. NO CHANGE
- G. It being that I imagine all these people, they
- H. Imagining all these people, they
- J. I imagine that all these people

29.

- A. NO CHANGE
- B. nod and smile
- C. nodding and smiling
- D. nods to smile

30.

- F. NO CHANGE
- G. Laundromat. Its
- H. Laundromat and that its
- J. Laundromat and its

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**Question 16. The best answer is H** because it uses a comma after *attend* to appropriately set off the introductory phrase from the main clause. Without this comma, the reader might be confused and think that the narrator attended the laundromat.

**The best answer is NOT:**

**F** because it adds an unnecessary and confusing comma between *college* and *I*.

**G** because it, too, adds an unnecessary and confusing comma between *college* and *I*. In addition, it fails to add the appropriate comma after *attend*.

**J** because, like **G**, it omits the comma after *attend*, producing a potentially confusing statement for readers.

**Question 17. The best answer is B** because it appropriately uses the present tense to describe an event that is happening in the present time. Notice that the writer begins the essay in the present tense ("the Save-D Laundromat *is* always open").

**The best answer is NOT:**

**A** because it makes a confusing tense shift from present (*is*) to past (*was*).

**C** because it makes another confusing tense shift-this time from the present tense to the past perfect tense.

**D** because, like **A**, it makes a confusing tense shift from present to past.

**Question 18. The best answer is J** because no punctuation is needed here. The absence of punctuation creates the clearest and most understandable sentence.

**The best answer is NOT:**

**F** because it places a semicolon between two descriptive phrases, which is a misuse of the semicolon.

**G** because it inserts an unnecessary and confusing comma between a preposition and its object.

**H** because it places an unnecessary comma between the two descriptive phrases. There is no pause or separation between the phrases "across the street" and "from a drugstore." They belong together as one description.

**Question 19. The best answer is B** because it is grammatically correct. In this sentence, *cool* is used as an adjective to modify the noun *magnificence*.

**The best answer is NOT:**

**A** because *coolly* is an adverb, and an adverb cannot be used to modify a noun. (Adverbs generally modify verbs or adjectives.)

**C** because it uses an adjective phrase-"magnificently cool"- where a noun is required. The complete phrase "The magnificently cool of the shade trees" is both ungrammatical and confusing.

**D** because it uses an adjective phrase-"cool magnificent"-where a noun is called for. The phrase "the cool magnificent of the shade trees" is ungrammatical.

**Question 20. The best answer is J** because it states the idea most clearly and concisely. It does not repeat the same idea twice, and it does not add unnecessary words to the sentence.

**The best answer is NOT:**

**F** because it is redundant (repeats the same idea) and wordy (adds unnecessary words). The descriptive phrase "who wrongfully enter the property" is really a repetition of the same idea expressed by the use of the word *trespassers*. In other words, the descriptive phrase restates the obvious.

**G** because it has the same problem that **F** does. The phrase "who trespass by walking on private property" adds wordiness and redundancy.

**H** because it, too, is wordy. It is not necessary to state the obvious. It is already clear to readers that people "who ignore the signs and walk on the grass" are trespassers.

**Question 21. The best answer is D** because placing Sentence 5 after Sentence 3 makes the paragraph logical and coherent. If you read Sentences 3, 4, and 5 carefully, you will notice that Sentence 4 does not logically follow Sentence 3. The opening clause in Sentence 4, "But no one is ever around to enforce the threats," has no antecedent to connect it back to Sentence 3. The *threats* in Sentence 4 refer to the "signs ... posted all over the lawn" that are referred to in Sentence 5. Therefore, Sentence 4 makes the best sense when it follows Sentence 5 rather than precedes it.

**The best answer is NOT:**

**A** because leaving Sentence 5 where it is now is not logical for the reasons explained above.

**B** because Sentence 5 would be a poor and illogical introduction to this paragraph because the reader would not know to what lawn the writer was referring. In addition, the paragraph would make no sense if Sentence 1 followed Sentence 5.

**C** because this arrangement of the sentences is also illogical and would confuse the reader. Placing Sentence 5 after the description of the laundromat in Sentence 1 makes no sense because the signs on the lawn are on the grounds of a school and are not part of the laundromat.

**Question 22. The best answer is F** because the singular verb *has* agrees with the singular noun *paneling*. Remember that the verb must agree in number with its subject (in this case, *paneling*) and not the object of the preposition (in this case, the plural noun *walls*).

**The best answer is NOT:**

**G** because the plural verb *have* does not agree in number with the singular noun *paneling*.

**H** because, like **G**, it has an agreement problem. The plural verb *were* does not agree in number with the singular noun *paneling*.

**J** because, like **G** and **H**, it has an agreement problem. The plural verb *are* does not agree in number with the singular noun *paneling*.

**Question 23. The best answer is A** because it provides the added detail asked for in the question. Pay close attention to the stated question. It asks for the sentence that would best accomplish the writer's wish to "further describe the laundromat's paneling." **A** is the only choice that accomplishes this goal. It further describes the "artificial wood grain finish" by showing that it was intended to resemble wood grain but doesn't.

**The best answer is NOT:**

**B** because it does *not* provide a detail that further describes the paneling. Although **B** mentions the paneling, it does not offer a further description of it. Rather, it adds a detail that is irrelevant to the paragraph.

**C** because it, too, fails to further describe the paneling. Instead, it offers an opinion about the color of the paneling.

**D** because it is incorrect in the same way that **C** is. It offers an opinion about the person who "chose that color scheme," but it does not further the description of the paneling.

**Question 24. The best answer is H** because it effectively links the new paragraph to the question implied by the preceding paragraph: Why does the neon sign promise friendly service? **H** also provides the most effective introduction to the information in the new paragraph.

**The best answer is NOT:**

**F** because it does not link the theme of friendly service that is questioned in the preceding paragraph to the description of the machines in this new paragraph. In addition, it shifts to a more formal tone.

**G** because it makes no sense. Being "across the street from a park" has nothing to do with friendly service. Besides, in the first paragraph, the writer states that "the park isn't really a park at all."

**J** because it misleads the reader into thinking that the topic of the new paragraph will be "washing machines."

**Question 25. The best answer is C** because it provides the correct adjectives (*many*, *few*) to describe the quarters. The phrase "too many or too few quarters" describes a relationship of number.

**The best answer is NOT:**

**A** because it is ungrammatical. It incorrectly uses an adjective of quantity (*much*) when an adjective of number (*many*) is required.

**B** because it incorrectly adds the modifier *too* to the comparative adjective *fewer*.

**D** because it is incorrect in the same way that **A** is. It incorrectly uses an adjective of quantity (*much*) when an adjective of number (*many*) is required.

**Question 26. The best answer is F** because the phrase "mostly older people from around the neighborhood" specifically describes the group of "regular customers" mentioned in the first part of the sentence. If the phrase were deleted, specific descriptive material would be lost.

**The best answer is NOT:**

**G** because the phrase is not a detail that provides a logical transition because the sentence that follows describes a different group of customers.

**H** because the phrase does not foreshadow the conclusion. The writer does not conclude the essay with "older people from around the neighborhood"; rather, the essay ends with all the people who frequent the laundromat.

**J** because this information is not understated. Also, it is not "important information" - essential to the essay - but, rather, an interesting and relevant side note.

**Question 27. The best answer is D** because it results in a complete sentence. The complete subject of the sentence is "a crowd of thirteen-year-old kids." The predicate *is* immediately follows this subject.

**The best answer is NOT:**

**A** because it creates an incomplete sentence. It improperly inserts the pronoun *that* between the subject and predicate, which results in a sentence fragment.

**B** because it is incorrect in the same way that A is. It inserts the relative pronoun *who* between the subject and the predicate and creates an incomplete sentence.

**C** because the use of the comma and the conjunction *and* generally indicates that the sentence contains two independent clauses, but in this case, there is only one independent clause. "Usually a crowd of thirteen-year old kids" is a phrase, not a clause, because it has no verb. Meanwhile, in the main clause, the predicate *is* is disagreeing in number with the subject *they*.

**Question 28. The best answer is J** because it is clear, concise, and structurally sound. It clearly expresses the idea that it is the writer who is imagining.

**The best answer is NOT:**

**F** because it has an ineffective sentence structure that results in a dangling modifier. When a modifying phrase containing a verbal comes at the beginning of a sentence, the phrase is followed by a comma ("Imagining all these people,"). Following the comma is the word that this phrase modifies. Notice in this sentence that the pronoun *it* incorrectly follows the introductory phrase. The modifying word should be the pronoun *I*.

**G** because it creates a confusing and unclear statement. In the clause "It being that I imagine all these people," the reader does not know to what the pronoun *It* refers.

**H** because it has a dangling modifier. It has a problem that is similar to the one in **F**. The pronoun *I* should follow the introductory clause, not the pronoun *they*.

**Question 29. The best answer is B** because it is grammatically correct, and the verbs in the sentence are parallel (maintain the same verb tense). The appropriate verbs here are "nod and smile" because they correctly follow the auxiliary (helping) verb *would*: "someone *would* look up ... and [would] nod and smile at me." Although the helping verb *would* is not repeated before "nod and smile," it is implied.

**The best answer is NOT:**

**A** because is ungrammatical. It incorrectly uses the third-person singular verb form ("nods and smiles") after the implied helping verb *would*.

**C** because the use of the present participle ("nodding and smiling") after the helping verb *would* is ungrammatical. Note also that that sentence lacks parallelism: "someone would look up ... and nodding and smiling at me." There is an illogical tense shift from the present tense ("would look") to the present participle ("nodding and smiling").

**D** because it makes the same mistake as **A**. In addition, it results in an illogical statement.

**Question 30. The best answer is J** because it is the only choice that is a complete sentence with appropriate sentence structure. Notice that this sentence has a compound subject ("the Save-U Laundromat" and "its people"). This construction makes the subject of the sentence clear.

**The best answer is NOT:**

**F** because it inserts incorrect punctuation (a period) that results in two sentence fragments (incomplete sentences).

**G** because it also inserts incorrect punctuation. The clause after the period does create a complete sentence, but the opening phrase "It is comforting to know that the Save-U Laundromat" is *not* a complete sentence; the relative clause does not contain a predicate.

**H** because it has a confusing and ineffective sentence structure. Inserting the relative pronoun *that* between the conjunction *and* and the pronoun *its* results in a sentence with faulty parallelism. The first of these two relative clauses ("that the Save-U Laundromat") is incomplete.