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Question: 1

Geophysicist: Although scientists do not entirely agree on the causes of geomagnetic reversal, they do agree that the process has the potential for significant changes on the earth. A geomagnetic reversal occurs when the magnetic field of the earth adjusts in its orientation, so that the magnetic north becomes the magnetic south, and vice versa. What is more, studies indicate that the magnetic field is gradually losing its strength and that we might expect to see a reversal within the next few millennia. While this might not seem significant, the reversal of the magnetic fields would occur over a long period of time, leaving the earth potentially unprotected from the sun's radiation.

Reviewing the information in the passage above carefully, which of the following represents the geophysicist's primary argument?

- A. While there will be a few effects of a geomagnetic reversal, the negative effects will be limited.
- B. Geomagnetic reversals have occurred within the period of human existence on the earth, and since mankind has survived, there is no reason to fear human eradication from geomagnetic reversal.
- C. Scientists do not fully understand the causes or results of geomagnetic reversal, but there is evidence that the process should not be ignored.
- D. Given the severe possibilities that may arise from a geomagnetic reversal, governments should begin funding studies of this process.

Answer: C

Explanation:

Answer choice C best combines the main points into a unified thought: scientists do not necessarily know the causes or even the results of geomagnetic reversal, but there is enough evidence to indicate that they should be paying close attention to it. The passage states that the earth could be "potentially unprotected from the sun's radiation," so it is inaccurate to state that negative effects will be limited (choice A). While the passage indicates that geomagnetic reversals have occurred, there is no mention of mankind (choice B). And while the author might agree that studies should be conducted, he does not state this nor mention government funding (choice D).

Question: 2

The tourists tried to make the best of things despite the _____ weather.

- A. ugly
- B. inclement
- C. balmy
- D. insipid

Answer: B

Explanation:

Inclement weather is rough, severe, or stormy weather. The context of the sentence suggests that the weather is bad, so tourists are forced to make the best of the situation. Balmy weather is pleasant and warm, so this choice does not appear appropriate. Weather seldom is described as "ugly," and Choice D, "insipid," does not make sense.

Question: 3

The Ogallala Aquifer, which stretches from Texas to the Dakotas, is one of the major sources of water for the high plains, but it is rapidly being _____ by drought.

- A. used
- B. contaminated
- C. depleted
- D. undermined

Answer: C

Explanation:

To deplete means to decrease significantly or to exhaust the abundance of a thing. The effect of drought is to decrease the abundance of water in the aquifer. This word is stronger than merely to use (Choice A): it means to diminish or to use up. Choices B and D are not logical choices for this scenario.

Question: 4

Evan felt that he was always being _____ for things that were not his fault.

- A. castigated
- B. lauded
- C. interrogated
- D. rescinded

Answer: A

Explanation:

To castigate means to criticize severely, to rebuke. The use of the word fault in the sentence implies that Evan was chastised for detrimental events for which he bore no responsibility. As a result, lauded, which means to praise (choice B), is not an appropriate choice. Interrogated (choice C) is closer but does not give the connotation of unwarranted blame. Rescinded (choice D) does not make sense in this context.

Question: 5

What is the most effective way to rewrite sentence 2?

- A. Some of the outfits students wear to school, she is saying, are distracting and not appropriate.
- B. The outfits are distracting and inappropriate, she says, that students wear to school.
- C. She says some of the outfits that students wear to school are distracting and inappropriate.
- D. She says that it is distracting and inappropriate that students wear outfits to school.

Answer: C

Explanation:

This version begins with a subject and verb and is followed by a clause. It is also clear and concise. Choice A is incorrect because the words are out of order and don't logically follow the previous sentence. Sentence 2 should begin with "She says" because it is the school principal's opinion being expressed. This choice is also incorrect because it uses the words not appropriate instead of inappropriate. Choice B is incorrect because the clause "that students wear to school" should come after the word outfits. Choice D is incorrect because the word order changes the meaning of the sentence by stating that any outfits are distracting and inappropriate.

Question: 6

Simplify the expression: $\frac{2}{3}(3 - 2) + \frac{1}{2}(2 - 4)$

- A. $-\frac{1}{3}$
- B. $-\frac{1}{2}$
- C. $\frac{1}{2}$
- D. $\frac{1}{3}$

Answer: B

Explanation:

Evaluate the expression using the order of operations. Start by simplifying the operations inside parentheses.

$$\frac{2}{3}(3 - 2) + \frac{1}{2}(2 - 4)$$

$$\frac{2}{3}(1) + \frac{1}{2}(-2)$$

Then, simplify the multiplication.

$$\frac{2}{3} - \frac{2}{2}$$

Next, simplify the fraction $\frac{2}{2}$.

$$\frac{2}{3} - 1$$

Since we are subtracting fractions, change 1 to the equivalent fraction $\frac{3}{3}$ so the two fractions have the same denominator, and subtract the two fractions.

$$\frac{2}{3} - \frac{3}{3} = -\frac{1}{3}$$

Question: 7

Mrs. Patterson's classroom has sixteen empty chairs. All the chairs are occupied when every student is present. If $\frac{2}{5}$ of the students are absent, how many students make up her entire class?

- A. 16 students
- B. 24 students
- C. 32 students
- D. 40 students

Answer: D

Explanation:

There are 16 empty chairs. This gives $\frac{4}{5}$ of the total enrollment. So, the full class must be:

$$\text{Class} = \frac{5}{4} \times 16 = 40 \text{ students}$$

Another option is to use proportions.

$$\frac{2}{5} = \frac{16}{x}$$

First, cross multiply to get: $2x = 80$. Then, divide each side by 2 to solve for x . So, $x = 40$, which means there are 40 students in the entire class.

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