

## Writing and Language Sample Passage

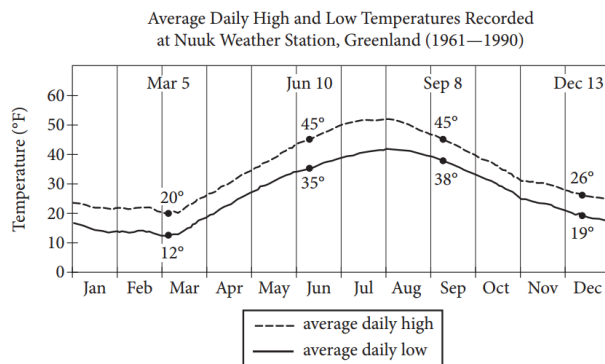
Questions 1-11 are based on the following passage and supplementary material.

### Dark Snow

Most of Greenland's interior is covered by a thick layer of ice and compressed snow known as the Greenland Ice Sheet. The size of the ice sheet fluctuates seasonally: in summer, average daily high temperatures in Greenland can rise to slightly above 50 degrees Fahrenheit, partially melting the ice; in the winter, the sheet thickens as additional snow falls, and average daily low temperatures can drop **1** to as low as 20 degrees.

1  
Which choice most accurately and effectively represents the information in the graph?

- A) NO CHANGE
- B) to 12 degrees Fahrenheit.
- C) to their lowest point on December 13.
- D) to 10 degrees Fahrenheit and stay there for months.



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Typically, the ice sheet begins to show evidence of thawing in late 2 summer. This follows several weeks of higher temperatures. 3 For example, in the summer of 2012, virtually the entire Greenland Ice Sheet underwent thawing at or near its surface by mid-July, the earliest date on record. Most scientists looking for the causes of the Great Melt of 2012 have focused exclusively on rising temperatures. The summer of 2012 was the warmest in 170 years, records show. But Jason 4 Box, an associate professor of geology at Ohio State believes that another factor added to the early 5 thaw; the “dark snow” problem.

2. Which choice most effectively combines the two sentences at the underlined portion?  
A) summer, following  
B) summer, and this thawing follows  
C) summer, and such thawing follows  
D) summer and this evidence follows
3. A) NO CHANGE  
B) However,  
C) As such,  
D) Moreover,
4. A) NO CHANGE  
B) Box an associate professor of geology at Ohio State,  
C) Box, an associate professor of geology at Ohio State,  
D) Box, an associate professor of geology, at Ohio State
5. A) NO CHANGE  
B) thaw; and it was  
C) thaw:  
D) thaw: being

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According to Box, a leading Greenland expert, tundra fires in 2012 from as far away as North America produced great amounts of soot, some 6 of it drifted over Greenland in giant plumes of smoke and then 7 fell as particles onto the ice sheet. Scientists have long known that soot particles facilitate melting by darkening snow and ice, limiting 8 it's ability to reflect the Sun's rays. As Box explains, "Soot is an extremely powerful light absorber. It settles over the ice and captures the Sun's heat." The result is a self-reinforcing cycle. As the ice melts, the land and water under the ice become exposed, and since land and water are darker than snow, the surface absorbs even more heat, which 9 is related to the rising temperatures.

- 6.
- A) NO CHANGE
  - B) soot
  - C) of which
  - D) DELETE the underlined portion.
- 7.
- A) NO CHANGE
  - B) falls
  - C) will fall
  - D) had fallen
- 8.
- A) NO CHANGE
  - B) its
  - C) there
  - D) their
- 9.
- Which choice best completes the description of self-reinforcing cycle?
- A) NO CHANGE
  - B) raises the surface temperature.
  - C) begins to cool at a certain point.
  - D) leads to additional melting

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[1] Box's research is important because the fires of 2012 may not be a one-time phenomenon. [2] According to scientists, rising Arctic temperatures are making northern latitudes greener and thus more fire prone. [3] The pattern Box observed in 2012 may repeat [10], with harmful effects on the Arctic ecosystem. [4] Box is currently organizing an expedition to gather this crucial information. [5] The next step for Box and his team is to travel to Greenland to perform direct sampling of the ice in order to determine just how much the soot is contributing to the melting of the ice sheet. [6] Members of the public will be able to track his team's progress—and even help fund the expedition—through a website Box has created. [11]

10.

- A) NO CHANGE
- B) itself,
- C) itself, with damage and
- D) itself possibly,

11.

To make this paragraph most logical, sentence 4 should be placed

- A) where it is now.
- B) after sentence 1.
- C) after sentence 2.
- D) after sentence 5.

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### QUESTION 1 - Easy

Choice B is the best answer because the graph clearly indicates that, on March 5, average low temperatures are at their lowest point: 12 degrees Fahrenheit. Choice A is incorrect because the phrase “as low as” suggests that the temperature falls no lower than 20 degrees Fahrenheit, but the chart shows that in January, February, and March, the temperature frequently falls below that point. Choices C and D are incorrect because the information each provides is inconsistent with the information on the chart.

### QUESTION 2 - Easy

Choice A is the best answer because it concisely combines the two sentences while maintaining the original meaning. Choices B, C, and D are incorrect because each is unnecessarily wordy, thus undermining one purpose of combining two sentences: to make the phrasing more concise.

### QUESTION 3 - Medium

Choice B is the best answer because it provides a conjunctive adverb that accurately represents the relationship between the two sentences. “However” signals an exception to a case stated in the preceding sentence. Choices A, C, and D are incorrect because each provides a transition that does not accurately represent the relationship between the two sentences, and as a result each compromises the logical coherence of these sentences.

### QUESTION 4 - Easy

Choice C is the best answer because it provides commas to offset the nonrestrictive modifying clause “an associate professor of geology at Ohio State.” Choices A, B, and D are incorrect because each provides punctuation that does not adequately separate the nonrestrictive modifying clause about Jason Box from the main clause.

### QUESTION 5 - Medium

Choice C is the best answer because the colon signals that the other factor that contributed to the early thaw is about to be provided. Choice A is incorrect because it results in a sentence that deviates from grammatical standards: a semicolon should be used to separate two independent clauses, but in choice A the second clause only has a subject, not a verb. Choice B is incorrect because it is unnecessarily wordy. Choice D is incorrect because “being” is unnecessary and creates an incoherent clause.

### QUESTION 6 - Easy

Choice C is the best answer because it provides the correct preposition (“of”) and relative pronoun (“which”) that together create a dependent clause following the comma. Choices A, B, and D are incorrect because each results in a comma splice. Two independent clauses cannot be joined with only a comma.

### QUESTION 7 - Easy

Choice A is the best answer because the verb tense is consistent with the preceding past tense verbs in the sentence, specifically “produced” and “drifted.” Choices B, C, and D are incorrect because each utilizes a verb tense that is not consistent with the preceding past tense verbs in the sentence.

### QUESTION 8 - Hard

Choice D is the best answer because “their” is the possessive form of a plural noun. In this case, the noun is plural: “snow and ice.” Choices A and B are incorrect because the possessive pronoun must refer to a plural noun, “snow and ice,” rather than a singular noun. Choice C is incorrect because “there” would result in an incoherent sentence.

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QUESTION 9 - Medium

Choice D is the best answer. The preceding sentences in the paragraph have established that a darker surface of soot-covered snow leads to more melting 21 because this darker surface absorbs heat, whereas a whiter surface, free of soot, would deflect heat. As the passage points out, exposed land and water are also dark and cannot deflect heat the way ice and snow can. Only choice D reflects the self-reinforcing cycle that the preceding sentences already imply.

Choices A, B, and C are incorrect because the information each provides fails to support the previous claim that the “result” of the soot “is a self-reinforcing cycle.”

QUESTION 10 - Medium

Choice B is the best answer because it is free of redundancies. Choices A, C, and D are incorrect because each of the three presents a redundancy: Choice A uses “repeat” and “again”; Choice C uses “damage” and “harmful effects”; and Choice D uses “may” and “possibly.”

QUESTION 11 - Medium

Choice D is the best answer because sentence 5 describes the information Box seeks: “to determine just how much the soot is contributing to the melting of the ice sheet.” Unless sentence 4 comes after sentence 5, readers will not know what the phrase “this crucial information” in sentence 4 refers to. Choices A, B, and C are incorrect because each results in an illogical sentence progression. None of the sentences that would precede sentence 4 provides details that could be referred to as “this crucial information.”