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IMPROVING PARAGRAPHS

Directions: The passage below is the draft of a student's essay. Some parts of the passage need improvement. Read the passage and answer the questions that follow. The questions are about revisions that might improve all or part of the passage's organization, development, sentence structure, or choice of words. Choose the answer that best follows the requirements of standard written English.

Questions 30–35 refer to the following passage.

[1] It is difficult to deny that modern technology has changed human behavior. [2] The style, sound, and recording techniques of pop music, for example, have been altered greatly. [3] Thousands of unknown musicians, aiming to become famous, have turned to the Internet to distribute their music digitally.

[4] For next to nothing, young musicians can put their music on the Web. [5] In the past, it would cost many thousands of dollars to put out a sample record or tape. [6] The members of a high school rock band rent a recording studio for hundreds of dollars an hour. [7] They might not do their best work in a rush to save money. [8] And they would incur huge expenses to record just one song. [9] It is expensive to distribute tapes or CDs to agents, radio stations, disk jockeys, clubs, or any other place where someone might give a listen. [10] Getting a tape or CD into record stores is almost impossible for musicians without a huge following or reputation. [11] Now, however, tens of thousands of musicians can bypass the usual route to stardom and record whatever they want, using the lyrics and sounds they like, and post their songs on Web sites. [12] Recording at their own pace, the songs won't be ready until the musicians are satisfied that it represents their best work. [13] Some musicians have released full-length albums on the Web. [14] A new award category has been added to the Video Music Awards. [15] MTV presents the awards annually. [16] The new award is called "Best Band Web Site."

[17] Using the Internet is no guarantee of success. [18] A group called the Bossa Nova Beatniks put a collection of their songs on the Web. [19] Within three months, over 4,000 listeners had downloaded their music.

30. The sentence that best states the main idea of the essay is

- (A) sentence 1
- (B) sentence 3
- (C) sentence 4
- (D) sentence 11
- (E) sentence 17

31. To best connect sentence 6 to the rest of the second paragraph, which is the best word phrase to insert after "rock band" in sentence 6 (reproduced below)?

The members of a high school rock band rent a recording studio for hundreds of dollars an hour.

- (A) can
- (B) will
- (C) might
- (D) shall
- (E) decided to

32. Which of the following is the best way to revise and combine the underlined portions of sentences 7 and 8 (reproduced below)?

They might not do their best work in a rush to save money. And they would incur huge expenses to record just one song.

- (A) in a rush to save money they would incur huge expenses.
- (B) rushing to save money, incur huge expenses
- (C) incurring huge expenses in their rush to save money
- (D) and rushing to save money, huge expenses would be incurred
- (E) in a rush to save money and would incur huge expenses

Which of the following is the best revision of the underlined portion of sentence 12 (reproduced below)?

Recording at their own pace, the songs won't be published until the musicians are satisfied that it represents their best work.

- (A) the work won't be published until the musicians are satisfied that the songs they have recorded represent their best work
- (B) musicians won't be satisfied publishing songs unless it represents their best work
- (C) musicians won't publish or be satisfied with any song that represents less than their best work
- (D) musicians know that their songs won't be ready for publication and they won't be satisfied until they represent their best work
- (E) the songs won't be published or satisfy the musicians until they represent their best work

In the context of the essay, which of the following is the best combination of sentences 14, 15, and 16 (reproduced below)?

A new award category has been added to the Video Music Awards. MTV presents the awards annually. The new award is called "Best Band Web Site."

- (A) A new award, called "Best Band Web Site," has been added to MTV's annual Video Music Awards.
- (B) The "Best Band Web Site," added as a category to the Video Music Awards, is presented by MTV annually.
- (C) Annually MTV presents Video Music Awards, and the category of "Best Band Web Site" has been added.
- (D) Having added the category "Best Band Web Site" to its Video Music Awards, MTV presents the awards annually.
- (E) The Video Music Awards presented annually has added "Best Band Web Site" to its awards, which is presented by MTV.

35. In the context of the last paragraph, which sentence would be most appropriate to follow sentence 19?

- (A) Consequently, the sound of the Bossa Nova Beatniks has great appeal.
- (B) The group's music, by the way, is an eclectic mix of ska, calypso, and rockabilly.
- (C) The Beatniks' leader, Tom Gould, says he doesn't want to be the next Bon Jovi or Pearl Jam.
- (D) The experience of the Bossa Nova Beatniks, however, is a rare exception to the rule.
- (E) In fact, it has been predicted that many musicians will start using the Web as a mode of distribution.

End of Section 2.

Do not return to Section 1. Do not proceed to Section 3 until the allotted time for Section 2 has passed.

31. **C** Choice A, a verb in the present tense, does not fit the context.
Choice B, a verb in the future tense, does not fit the context.
Choice C explains a situation that illustrates an idea introduced by the preceding sentence. It is the best answer.
Choice D expresses a future condition that, in context, is irrelevant.
Choice E, a verb in the past tense, is unrelated to the conditional *would*, used in sentences 5 and 8, and to *might*, used in sentence 7.
32. **E** Choice A is a run-on sentence. It needs punctuation between *money* and *they*.
Choice B contains mixed sentence construction that leaves the verb *incur* without a grammatical subject.
Choice C represents the work of a writer who has taken leave of his senses.
Choice D contains a problem in modification; the phrase *rushing to save money* must modify the performer of the action (*they*), not *expenses*.
Choice E is a direct and economical version of the original. It is the best answer.
33. **C** Choice A contains a dangling modifier. The phrase *Recording at their own pace* should modify *musicians*, not *work*.
Choice B contains pronoun–antecedent disagreement. *Songs* is plural, *it* is singular.
Choice C corrects the dangling modifier that marred the original sentence and clearly states the author’s intent.
Choice D, besides being wordy, contains two pronouns with ambiguous antecedents.
Choice E contains a dangling modifier. The phrase *Recording at their own pace* should modify *musicians*, not *songs*. In addition, the references of the pronouns *they* and *their* are ambiguous, if not downright confusing.
34. **A** Choice A combines all the important ideas in a clear statement. It supports the author’s intent to illustrate the coming-of-age of Web-based music. It is the best answer.
Choice B includes all the important ideas but ignores the author’s intent by emphasizing the frequency of the MTV presentation rather than the addition of an award recognizing achievement in Web-site publication of music.
Choice C is a compound sentence that includes two clauses—one in active voice, the other in passive voice.
Choice D stresses the frequency of the award presentation, a distortion of the author’s intended meaning.
Choice E, among other things, contains an ambiguous pronoun reference and noun–verb disagreement.
35. **D** Choices A, B, C, and E fail to develop the paragraph’s main idea—that using the Internet is no guarantee of success—stated in sentence 17. Because Choice D alludes to that point, it is the best answer.