

# Verbal & Reading

November 12, 2020

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# PSAT Reading Sample

## Hot Vocabulary

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You are going to master the following vocabulary in this packet.

**abstention:** the act of abstaining.

**amenities:** courtesies.

**arrhythmic:** irregular; not rhythmic. (OR) arhythmic.

**bilge:** the lowest portion of a ship's hull.

**captious:** too picky; overly particular; fastidious; carping.

**cloister:** to hide; to seclude; to isolate.

**compound:** to resolve; to settle; to compromise.

**contemporaneous:** living, occurring, or existing at the same time.

**correlative:** mutually involving or implying one another.

**decamp:** to leave suddenly or unexpectedly.

**despoil:** to plunder; to spoil.

**disillusion:** to disappoint; disappointment.

**doldrums:** a spell of low feeling; an instance of sadness or stagnation.

**egress:** to go out; to exit; to go forth. (n) an exit.

**envision:** to imagine; to foresee.

**exempt:** free from a duty.

**fatalist:** someone who believes fate is in control of everything that happens.

**fraught:** loaded or filled with; accompanied by; involving.

**guise:** semblance; outer appearance; manner of dress.

**immediacy:** the quality or condition of being immediate.

**incursion:** temporary invasion; a sudden attack; raid.

**insouciant:** calm and carefree; indifferent.

**judicial:** pertaining to the administration of justice.

**linguist:** pertaining to language.

**maternal:** pertaining or peculiar to a mother or to motherhood.

**molecule:** the smallest particle (one or more atoms) of a substance, having all the properties of that substance.

**niggard:** stingy person; miser.

**ontology:** the study of existence or being.

**patrimony:** an inheritance, especially from a father; a legacy.

**piquant:** stimulating to the mind or interest; pleasantly sharp; stimulating to the taste; appetizing.

# PSAT Reading Sample

## Word List 1 \* \* \* \* \*

- (A) abstention
- (B) amenities
- (C) arrhythmic
- (D) bilge
- (E) captious

### Definition Matching:

Choose the closest word from the previous list to match each definition. Spell it correctly!

1. irregular. \_\_\_\_\_
2. courtesies. \_\_\_\_\_
3. the lowest portion of a ship's hull.  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. too picky. \_\_\_\_\_
5. the act of abstaining. \_\_\_\_\_

### Sentence Illustration:

Choose the best word from the previous list to fit in the sentences. Correct grammar is required!

6. Saying "Thank you" and holding the door open for another to pass through are \_\_\_\_\_ that should be taught to young children.
7. The patient's \_\_\_\_\_ heartbeat worried the doctor.
8. The sailors ventured down to the bowels of the ship to find that the \_\_\_\_\_ had sprung a leak.
9. Teresa says that her boyfriend's mother is a \_\_\_\_\_ person, always looking for faults in her son.
10. He gave several reasons for his \_\_\_\_\_ from signing the contract the fact of not voting.

## Word List 2 \* \* \* \* \*

- (A) cloister
- (B) compound
- (C) contemporaneous
- (D) correlative
- (E) decamp

### Definition Matching:

11. to resolve. \_\_\_\_\_
12. mutually involving or implying one another. \_\_\_\_\_
13. living, occurring, or existing at the same time. \_\_\_\_\_
14. to leave suddenly or unexpectedly.  
\_\_\_\_\_
15. to hide. \_\_\_\_\_

### Sentence Illustration:

16. Cramming for final exams, Sharon \_\_\_\_\_ herself in the college library.
17. They finally \_\_\_\_\_ their differences and shook hands.
18. \_\_\_\_\_ means happening or existing at the same period of time.
19. His father \_\_\_\_\_ to pursue other interests abroad.
20. A free community with \_\_\_\_\_ rights and duties belonging to every citizen.

# PSAT Reading Sample

## Word List 3 \* \* \* \* \*

- (A) despoil
- (B) disillusion
- (C) doldrums
- (D) egress
- (E) envision

### Definition Matching:

- 21. to go out. \_\_\_\_\_
- 22. a spell of low feeling. \_\_\_\_\_
- 23. to disappoint. \_\_\_\_\_
- 24. to imagine. \_\_\_\_\_
- 25. to plunder. \_\_\_\_\_

### Sentence Illustration:

- 26. The stewardess's earnest request that we try to make an orderly \_\_\_\_\_ from the burning movie theater had little effect.
- 27. When Bert asked Irene for a date, he did not \_\_\_\_\_ that one day she would try to kill him.
- 28. If you do not yield, I am afraid the enemy will \_\_\_\_\_ the countryside.
- 29. Kyle is in the \_\_\_\_\_ because he doesn't have enough money to go to the concert with his buddies.
- 30. I hate to \_\_\_\_\_ you, but pregnancy is not always wonderful -- I was sick everyday for six months.

## Word List 4 \* \* \* \* \*

- (A) exempt
- (B) fatalist
- (C) fraught
- (D) guise
- (E) immediacy

### Definition Matching:

- 31. semblance. \_\_\_\_\_
- 32. the quality or condition of being immediate. \_\_\_\_\_
- 33. free from a duty. \_\_\_\_\_
- 34. someone who believes fate is in control of everything that happens. \_\_\_\_\_
- 35. loaded or filled with. \_\_\_\_\_

### Sentence Illustration:

- 36. The record companies settled on \_\_\_\_\_ as a promotional gambit.
- 37. David was \_\_\_\_\_ from jury duty, because he was self-employed.
- 38. Having assumed the \_\_\_\_\_ of a pirate for the costume ball, Tom looked dashing and dangerous for what may well have been the first time in his life.
- 39. The \_\_\_\_\_ believes that he can do nothing to alter his circumstances in life.
- 40. Buck accepted the task, although he knew it was \_\_\_\_\_ with pail.

# PSAT Reading Sample

## Word List 5 \* \* \* \* \*

- (A) incursion
- (B) insouciant
- (C) judicial
- (D) linguist
- (E) maternal

### Definition Matching:

- 41. pertaining to the administration of justice.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 42. pertaining to language. \_\_\_\_\_
- 43. temporary invasion. \_\_\_\_\_
- 44. pertaining or peculiar to a mother or to motherhood. \_\_\_\_\_
- 45. calm and carefree. \_\_\_\_\_

### Sentence Illustration:

- 46. Despite his dire surroundings, Herbert managed to remain \_\_\_\_\_ and at ease.
- 47. Dickens' novel 'Bleak House' is about the failings of the English \_\_\_\_\_ system in Victorian times.
- 48. His boyish nature appealed to her \_\_\_\_\_ instincts.
- 49. The nightly \_\_\_\_\_ into our neighborhoods from those across the border tried the patience of our country to the point where we decided to retaliate in force.
- 50. The modern tourist will encounter very little \_\_\_\_\_ difficulty as English has become an almost universal language.

## Word List 6 \* \* \* \* \*

- (A) molecule
- (B) niggard
- (C) ontology
- (D) patrimony
- (E) piquant

### Definition Matching:

- 51. the study of existence or being.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 52. an inheritance, especially from a father.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 53. stimulating to the mind or interest.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 54. stingy person. \_\_\_\_\_
- 55. the smallest particle (one or more atoms) of a substance, having all the properties of that substance. \_\_\_\_\_

### Sentence Illustration:

- 56. Normally, Mexican food is too hot for me, but Nancy's salsa dip was just \_\_\_\_\_ and delightful.
- 57. In Chemistry, we study how atoms and \_\_\_\_\_ react to form new substances.
- 58. A \_\_\_\_\_ cares very penny, shows no generosity and kindness.
- 59. Phoebe was pretty sure of her decision to major in philosophy, but she couldn't decide whether to concentrate in existentialism or \_\_\_\_\_.
- 60. This thorny patch of ground isn't much, but it's my \_\_\_\_\_; it's all that my father left to me in his will.

# PSAT Reading Sample

## Review List 1 \* \* \* \* \*

- (A) abstention
- (B) amenities
- (C) arrhythmic
- (D) bilge
- (E) captious
- (F) cloister
- (G) compound
- (H) contemporaneous
- (I) correlative
- (J) decamp

### Definition Matching:

- 61. to settle. \_\_\_\_\_
- 62. living, occurring, or existing at the same time. \_\_\_\_\_
- 63. overly particular. \_\_\_\_\_
- 64. to seclude. \_\_\_\_\_
- 65. mutually involving or implying one another. \_\_\_\_\_
- 66. the lowest portion of a ship's hull. \_\_\_\_\_
- 67. to leave suddenly or unexpectedly. \_\_\_\_\_
- 68. the act of abstaining. \_\_\_\_\_
- 69. courtesies. \_\_\_\_\_
- 70. not rhythmic. (OR) arrhythmic. \_\_\_\_\_

## Review List 2 \* \* \* \* \*

- (A) despoil
- (B) disillusion
- (C) doldrums
- (D) egress
- (E) envision
- (F) exempt
- (G) fatalist
- (H) fraught
- (I) guise
- (J) immediacy

### Definition Matching:

- 71. to foresee. \_\_\_\_\_
- 72. the quality or condition of being immediate. \_\_\_\_\_
- 73. outer appearance. \_\_\_\_\_
- 74. an instance of sadness or stagnation. \_\_\_\_\_
- 75. free from a duty. \_\_\_\_\_
- 76. to exit. \_\_\_\_\_
- 77. someone who believes fate is in control of everything that happens. \_\_\_\_\_
- 78. accompanied by. \_\_\_\_\_
- 79. disappointment. \_\_\_\_\_
- 80. to spoil. \_\_\_\_\_

# PSAT Reading Sample

## Review List 3 \* \* \* \* \*

- (A) incursion
- (B) insouciant
- (C) judicial
- (D) linguist
- (E) maternal
- (F) molecule
- (G) niggard
- (H) ontology
- (I) patrimony
- (J) piquant

### Definition Matching:

- 81. the study of existence or being.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 82. pertaining to language. \_\_\_\_\_
- 83. pertaining or peculiar to a mother or to  
motherhood. \_\_\_\_\_
- 84. the smallest particle (one or more atoms)  
of a substance, having all the properties of  
that substance. \_\_\_\_\_
- 85. a sudden attack. \_\_\_\_\_
- 86. indifferent. \_\_\_\_\_
- 87. pleasantly sharp. \_\_\_\_\_
- 88. pertaining to the administration of justice.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- 89. a legacy. \_\_\_\_\_
- 90. miser. \_\_\_\_\_

# PSAT Reading Sample

## Reading: For the sad state of .....

<i>Line</i>	For the sad state of criticism the writers must hold themselves much to blame. Literary artists, concerned solely in the creation of a book or story as close to perfection as their powers will permit, are generally quiet individuals, contemplative, retiring. On occasion they can be influenced to anger by some grievous social wrong that calls for desperate remedy. But	<i>Line</i>
5	mostly they are prone to sit in their towers reflecting on the absurdities of a foolish world, asking only to be left alone with their labor. Never aggressive in their own interest, seeking only peace, they lay themselves open to aggression.	5
10	Thus they do not see the enemy who has stolen into the shadows at the rear of their retreat and is slowly scaling the walls. Such has been the course of events. While the artists have slept, the critical dwarfs have appeared. They have evolved a new language, written out a new set of definitions. Black is white, and white is black. The ugly and the nauseous are beautiful; the beautiful is nightmare.	10

91. According to the passage, literary artists are inclined to
- (A) ignore what is happening around them
  - (B) be perpetually aroused by social injustices
  - (C) slight the work involved in writing
  - (D) welcome the onset of aggression
  - (E) accept criticism gladly
92. Which best captures the meaning of the word “powers” [line 3]?
- (A) delegated authority
  - (B) physical energies
  - (C) written statements
  - (D) intellectual abilities
  - (E) political ascendancy
93. The word “retiring” [line 3] means
- (A) departing from office
  - (B) tending toward fatigue
  - (C) withdrawing from contact
  - (D) receiving a pension
  - (E) going to bed
94. Through his comments about the critical dwarfs in the second paragraph, the author wishes to convey the impression that critics
- (A) deserve praise for their linguistic originality
  - (B) lack the intellectual stature of those they criticize
  - (C) appreciate the fundamental oneness of apparent opposites
  - (D) are as able as writers to scale the literary heights
  - (E) are less hostile than the authors who look down upon them
95. According to the passage, the critics’ standards of criticism are
- (A) a natural outgrowth of former standards
  - (B) a complete reversal of accepted standards
  - (C) an invaluable guide to the literary artist
  - (D) a source of suggestions of new topics to write about
  - (E) the result of the artists’ neglect of good writing



# PSAT Reading Sample

first .....

## Reading: When John James Audubon

Line When John James Audubon first began painting birds, most birds were drawn as though stuffed and fastened to wooden perches. Audubon took birds out of glass cages and gave them a semblance of life. His paintings still have a dramatic impact seldom achieved by wildlife painters. Audubon did not accomplish this from the comfort of his armchair. He spent much of his time roaming the countryside and observing nature. He passionately believed that nature must first be seen alive before it can be represented on paper. Audubon painted his subjects with painstaking accuracy. To him, nature was a continual life-and-death drama. His birds, for instance, never just sit there. They feed one another; they attack their prey; they care for their young. They are always portrayed in their natural habitat. Audubon's art seems composed equally of scientific accuracy and passionate vision. Even now, more than 150 years after he published *The Birds of America*, Audubon remains America's best-known artist. His art is hailed the world over as pioneering work. His prints are available now for between \$800 and \$8000. That's not a bad investment, and it gives one a work of art that is also a decoration. Line

96. The main purpose of this passage is to  
(A) discuss Audubon's life  
(B) give a background of painting in Audubon's time  
(C) describe Audubon's painting techniques  
(D) give an insight into Audubon's philosophy of painting
97. The word "stuffed" [line 2] refers to  
(A) filled witty materials  
(B) packed closely together  
(C) scraped clean  
(D) braced with wire
98. When Audubon "took birds out of glass cages" [line 2], he  
(A) let the birds fly away unharmed  
(B) put the birds in a more natural place  
(C) painted them as if they were alive  
(D) nursed them back to life
99. Before Audubon began painting, other wildlife painters  
(A) stuffed birds  
(B) drew still birds  
(C) observed dead birds  
(D) tied birds to branches
100. Audubon spent much of his time  
(A) outside  
(B) in his studio  
(C) in his favorite chair  
(D) looking at bird pictures
101. Which of the following words is the closest in meaning to "painstaking" as used [line 7]?  
(A) thoughtless  
(B) conscientious  
(C) aching  
(D) sorrowful
102. Which of the following would Audubon probably NOT paint?  
(A) a bird feeding its babies  
(B) a bird eating a worm  
(C) a bird diving in the ocean  
(D) a bird singing in its cage
103. The word "prey" [line 9] could be best replaced by which of the following?  
(A) sick  
(B) enemies  
(C) victim  
(D) allies

## PSAT Reading Sample

104. Audubon most likely
- (A) is living now
  - (B) died recently
  - (C) worked in the 1800s
  - (D) worked in the 1700s
105. As used [line 10], the word “passionate” refers to which of the following?
- (A) hopeful
  - (B) prise
  - (C) vivid
  - (D) emotional
106. As used [line 12], the word “hailed” could best be substituted with
- (A) published
  - (B) showered
  - (C) greeted
  - (D) praised
107. The word “pioneering” as used [line 12] is most similar to which of the following?
- (A) innovative
  - (B) delicate
  - (C) exciting
  - (D) admirable
108. Audubon can best be characterized as
- (A) an artist
  - (B) an author
  - (C) an environmentalist
  - (D) a scientist
109. In the last sentence of the passage, the author implies which of the following?
- (A) It’s economically and personally satisfying to purchase Audubon’s prints.
  - (B) It’s expensive to spend this money, but you get a good work of art.
  - (C) If you invest \$800 you will likely get about \$8000 in return.
  - (D) It’s important to have decorations in your home even though you must first invest the money.

# PSAT Reading Sample

## Analogy Games

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Select the best match for each of the following analogies.

110. the sun :: a planet =  
(A) the moon :: a star  
(B) the flower :: its stem  
(C) the hub :: the rim
111. predict :: foretell =  
(A) procrastinate :: expedite  
(B) lie :: prevaricate  
(C) prophesy :: vindicate
112. laurel :: victory =  
(A) olive branch :: peace  
(B) fig leaf :: license  
(C) black cat :: defeat
113. frog :: amphibian =  
(A) cow :: herbivorous  
(B) otter :: crustacean  
(C) whale :: mammalian
114. chairperson :: board =  
(A) wolf :: pack  
(B) captain :: team  
(C) mascot :: gang
115. diffident :: assert =  
(A) ambivalent :: decide  
(B) arrogant :: assume  
(C) sumptuous :: deny
116. jealousy :: dilapidation =  
(A) clue :: authorization  
(B) clasp :: separation  
(C) yoke :: conjunction
117. prevaricate :: deception =  
(A) humor :: amusement  
(B) distort :: truth  
(C) regulate :: uniformity
118. bibliographer :: list =  
(A) physician :: prevent  
(B) historian :: explain  
(C) mail carrier :: deliver
119. cipher :: decode =  
(A) message :: transmit  
(B) omen :: interpret  
(C) text :: transcribe

# PSAT Reading Sample

## Sentence Completion

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Select the best match to complete each of the following sentences.

120. Campers heard the booming thunder and took it as a(n) \_\_\_\_\_ of what lie ahead, a surprising departure from the weatherman's \_\_\_\_\_ forecast.  
(A) fortunate prediction .. uncertain  
(B) welcome promise .. customary  
(C) ominous portent .. optimistic  
(D) empty threat .. gloomy
121. Frequently used as a spice, ginger also has \_\_\_\_\_ properties: it can be used to help treat coughs, colds, and upset stomachs.  
(A) curative  
(B) invariable  
(C) timeworn  
(D) edible
122. This island is a colony; however, in most matters, it is \_\_\_\_\_ and receives no orders from the mother country.  
(A) distant  
(B) submissive  
(C) autonomous  
(D) amorphous
123. It was out of \_\_\_\_\_ that Professor Green, the author of several highly respected books in his field, described himself to his colleagues as \_\_\_\_\_.  
(A) egotism .. an apprentice  
(B) magnanimity .. an avenger  
(C) insolence .. a pedant  
(D) modesty .. a dilettante
124. Those who suffer from factitious disorders feign \_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_ reasons: they hope their pretended symptoms will win them sympathy, attention, and love.  
(A) unhappiness .. medical  
(B) illness .. psychological  
(C) wealth .. selfish  
(D) fatigue .. varied
125. To \_\_\_\_\_ Mexico's rich cultural legacy in the United States, scholars from both countries collaborated to \_\_\_\_\_ the impressive exhibit of Mexican artifacts.  
(A) validate .. mediate  
(B) celebrate .. circumvent  
(C) hoard .. differentiate  
(D) commemorate .. launch
126. Florida Congresswoman Ileana Ros-Lehtinen chose to focus on how national issues affect her own \_\_\_\_\_, those voters she represents.  
(A) constituents  
(B) mentors  
(C) opponents  
(D) successors
127. The pastoral playing field, the nineteenth-century uniforms, and the archaic rules make baseball the most \_\_\_\_\_ of American sports.  
(A) lucrative  
(B) exciting  
(C) colorful  
(D) traditional

## PSAT Reading Sample

128. Today's high-technology education scare resembles the Sputnik scare of the 1950s, which led to federal programs in support of science education; in both cases, some national \_\_\_\_\_ was needed to focus popular attention on the needs of our \_\_\_\_\_.
- (A) threat .. allies  
(B) alarm .. schools  
(C) consensus .. scientists  
(D) crisis .. people
129. Dr. Angelese would neither confirm nor deny the allegations; she remained \_\_\_\_\_, allowing the committee members to \_\_\_\_\_ whatever they wished.
- (A) defiant .. decide  
(B) motionless .. consider  
(C) uncommunicative .. infer  
(D) fearful .. propose
130. The quotation attributing to the mayor's view that funds for police services should be cut was \_\_\_\_\_; it completely \_\_\_\_\_ the mayor's position that more police should be hired.
- (A) egregious .. underscored  
(B) spurious .. misrepresented  
(C) meticulous .. misstated  
(D) abbreviated .. curtailed
131. To the optimist, nothing is \_\_\_\_\_ except death and taxes.
- (A) avoidable  
(B) inevitable  
(C) self-defeating  
(D) perilous
132. Because of Brazil's ideal climate, its production of coffee \_\_\_\_\_ that of any other country in the world.
- (A) suppresses  
(B) equals  
(C) surpasses  
(D) trifles
133. By virtue of her extensive experience and her \_\_\_\_\_ of practical knowledge, 87-year-old Louisa Vigil was \_\_\_\_\_ by her family in New Mexico as its chief advice - giver and matriarch.
- (A) modicum .. abandoned  
(B) store .. condemned  
(C) wealth .. regarded  
(D) supply .. dismissed
134. Andrew has enrolled in a specialized culinary arts program as a way of indulging his \_\_\_\_\_ French cuisine.
- (A) predilection for  
(B) tenacity over  
(C) distaste for  
(D) acquisition of

# PSAT Reading Sample

## Reading: PASSAGE 1 .....

*In Passage 1, the author discusses British attitudes toward Americanisms. In Passage 2, the author deals with the same topic, but in a somewhat different manner. The authors of both passages are American.*

Line	PASSAGE 1	Line
5	Twenty years before the Revolution, Samuel Johnson was already denouncing a book by an American as “a tract of corruption, to which every language widely diffused must always be exposed.” Johnson’s own experience and common sense certainly told him that linguistic change was inevitable, but his intense conservatism also told him that any change was likely to be for the worse—especially if it was the work of ignorant provincials, remote from the civilizing influence of London. Johnson considered even the Scots semibarbarous; it would have been surprising had he viewed the Americans any less sourly.	5
10	Johnson’s view of American English remained typical of English literary opinion for well over a century. Thus in 1808, an English magazine denounced the “torrent of barbarous phraseology” that threatened to “destroy the purity of the English language.” Another critic found American writing loaded with “a great multitude of words that are ... as utterly foreign as if they had been adopted from Chinese or Hebrew.” The first criticism was obviously fatuous: how can one talk of the “purity” of a language that had been borrowing from foreign tongues, with both hands, for centuries? The second was simply ignorant: the much-deplored “Americanisms” of the early nineteenth century were, in their great majority, English, not borrowed. Some were English words that had fallen out of cultivated use in the old country; thus Americans said “fall” where educated Englishmen said “autumn.” Indeed, of the two, “fall” was the more authentically “English” if the term means anything—being directly derived from Old English, while “autumn” was a French import. Likewise, the phrase “I guess” meaning “I suppose,” used by English writers until well into this century as a virtual trademark of eccentric American speech, goes back to Chaucer (Of twenty yeer of age he was, I gesse.) Others, as we’ve seen, were old English words with new meanings, while still others were new compounds—but compounded out of English elements, according to the rules of English syntax. “Belittle,” target of several critics, was modeled on such respectable English verbs as “befoul,” used since the fourteenth century, while “lengthy,” another supposed barbarism, was equally analogous to “weighty,” used since around 1500.	10
15		15
20		20
25		25
30		30
35	American commentators, then and later, repeatedly made these points—with an occasional assist from colleagues across the Atlantic—but it made no difference to most English travelers and critics, who continued to berate American English, along with American manners and morals, in terms that were at best unreasonable and at worst viciously dishonest. Frances Trollope, mother of the novelist, reported in 1832 that during her entire stay in America she had seldom “heard a sentence elegantly turned and correctly pronounced.” A few years later, Dickens, after his fabulously successful American tour, wrote that outside New York and Boston, grammar was “more than doubtful” and that “the oddest vulgarisms” were acceptable. Perhaps the lowest blow came in 1863, from Henry Alford, Dean of Canterbury.	35
40	Though he had never visited America, he bewailed “the process of deterioration which our Queen’s English has undergone at the hands of the Americans,” and finished by denouncing them for conducting “the most cruel and unprincipled war in the history of the world.” Since earlier writers had denounced America for tolerating the slavery that the unprincipled war would abolish, it was clear that for a certain type of Englishman, anything America did, in	40

# PSAT Reading Sample

45 language or politics, was wrong. 45

Though nobody has conducted a poll on the subject, my own feeling is that most British  
writers today take a less jaundiced view of American English. They may or may not use  
50 Americanisms themselves, but see no reason why Americans should not use them. Many,  
perhaps the majority, would agree with the view put forward by the American critic Brander  
Matthews nearly a century ago: “A Briticism is none the worse because it is known only to  
the inhabitants of the British Isles, and an Americanism is not to be despised because it is  
current only in America. The question is not Where it was born, but whether it is worthy to  
live.” 55

PASSAGE 2

In the field of language an Americanism is generally regarded by the English as ipso facto  
obnoxious, and when a new one of any pungency begins to force its way into British usage  
60 the guardians of the national linguistic chastity belabor it with great vehemence and predict  
calamitous consequences if it is not put down. If it makes progress despite these alarms, they  
often switch to the doctrine that it is really old English and search the Oxford Dictionary for  
examples of its use in Chaucer’s time; but while it is coming in they give it no quarter. Here  
65 the unparalleled English talent for discovering moral obliquity comes into play, and what  
begins as an uproar over a word sometimes ends as a holy war to keep the knavish Yankee  
from undermining and ruining the English Culture and overthrowing the British Empire. 65

135. The corruption to which Johnson refers [line 4] is
- (A) philosophical
  - (B) moral
  - (C) physical
  - (D) linguistic
  - (E) financial

137. By the phrase “*with both hands*” [line 17], the author most likely intends to suggest that the borrowing has been
- (A) evenhanded
  - (B) immoderate
  - (C) foolish
  - (D) enervating
  - (E) ambidextrous

136. The author of Passage 1 is unsurprised by Johnson’s sour view of Americans because
- (A) Americans are descended from the Scots, whom Johnson also despised
  - (B) given America’s even greater distance from London than Scotland’s, Johnson was sure to find anything American barbarous
  - (C) as a British writer, Johnson despised Americans for stealing many of their common phrases from his fellow authors
  - (D) Johnson was still smarting from the American colonies’ rebellion against the British crown
  - (E) in sharp contrast to Johnson, Americans are determined proponents of change

138. Passage 1’s author states in defense of Americanisms that many of the new compound words coined by Americans
- (A) are patterned on traditional English usage
  - (B) possess a liveliness unmatched by comparable English words
  - (C) have fallen out of cultivated use in America
  - (D) are actually Latinate in derivation
  - (E) are less barbarous than Chaucerian spelling

## PSAT Reading Sample

139. The word “*turned*” [line 36] means  
(A) revolved  
(B) transformed  
(C) shifted  
(D) phrased  
(E) diagrammed
140. The author of Passage 1 quotes Brander Matthews [lines 51-54] in order to  
(A) cite a contemporary viewpoint  
(B) present a measured judgment  
(C) provide a happy ending  
(D) propose a hypothesis  
(E) expose a logical fallacy
141. According to Passage 2, if an Americanism finds acceptance in British usage, the English  
(A) refuse to allow the word to be included in the dictionaries  
(B) deny that it really is an Americanism  
(C) feel that their cultural level is lowered  
(D) will not admit that it is accepted  
(E) claim that it is not American slang but good American usage
142. With which one of the following statements about British English would the author of Passage 2 be most likely to agree?  
(A) British English contains less slang than American English.  
(B) British English is lacking in humor.  
(C) British English is no longer a growing language.  
(D) The alertness of literary critics has preserved the purity of British English.  
(E) The absorption of Americanisms into British English is inevitable.
143. The author of Passage 2 regards the British assumption of American linguistic inferiority with  
(A) wholehearted approval  
(B) grudging acceptance  
(C) bitter resentment  
(D) sardonic humor  
(E) watchful concern
144. The phrase “*put down*” [line 61] is best taken to mean that Americanisms should be  
(A) written down  
(B) set in an appropriate context  
(C) ranked below foreign phrases  
(D) thoroughly suppressed  
(E) badly expressed
145. The author of Passage 2 would most likely react to the opinion voiced [lines 47-48] that most British writers today take a less jaundiced view of American English with  
(A) marked relief  
(B) grudging approval  
(C) deceptive caution  
(D) wholehearted regret  
(E) outright incredulity



# Answer Key

## Hot Vocabulary

1. (C) arrhythmic
2. (B) amenities
3. (D) bilge
4. (E) captious
5. (A) abstention
6. (B) amenities
7. (C) arrhythmic
8. (D) bilge
9. (E) captious
10. (A) abstention
11. (B) compound
12. (D) correlative
13. (C) contemporaneous
14. (E) decamp
15. (A) cloister
16. (A) cloistered
17. (B) compounded
18. (C) Contemporaneous
19. (E) decamped
20. (D) correlative
21. (D) egress
22. (C) doldrums
23. (B) disillusion
24. (E) envision
25. (A) despoil
26. (D) egress
27. (E) envision
28. (A) despoil
29. (C) doldrums
30. (B) disillusion
31. (D) guise
32. (E) immediacy
33. (A) exempt
34. (B) fatalist
35. (C) fraught
36. (E) immediacy
37. (A) exempt
38. (D) guise
39. (B) fatalist
40. (C) fraught
41. (C) judicial
42. (D) linguist
43. (A) incursion
44. (E) maternal
45. (B) insouciant
46. (B) insouciant
47. (C) judicial
48. (E) maternal
49. (A) incursions
50. (D) linguistic
51. (C) ontology
52. (D) patrimony
53. (E) piquant
54. (B) niggard
55. (A) molecule
56. (E) piquant
57. (A) molecules
58. (B) niggard
59. (C) ontology
60. (D) patrimony
61. (G) compound
62. (H) contemporaneous
63. (E) captious
64. (F) cloister
65. (I) correlative
66. (D) bilge
67. (J) decamp
68. (A) abstention

# PSAT Reading Sample

- 69. (B) amenities
- 70. (C) arrhythmic
- 71. (E) envision
- 72. (J) immediacy
- 73. (I) guise
- 74. (C) doldrums
- 75. (F) exempt
- 76. (D) egress
- 77. (G) fatalist
- 78. (H) fraught
- 79. (B) disillusion
- 80. (A) despoil
- 81. (H) ontology
- 82. (D) linguist
- 83. (E) maternal
- 84. (F) molecule
- 85. (A) incursion
- 86. (B) insouciant
- 87. (J) piquant
- 88. (C) judicial
- 89. (I) patrimony
- 90. (G) niggard

Reading: For the sad state of .....

- 91. A
- 92. D
- 93. C
- 94. B
- 95. B

Reading: When John James Audubon first .....

- 96. D
- 97. A
- 98. C
- 99. B
- 100. A
- 101. B
- 102. D

- 103. C
- 104. C
- 105. D
- 106. D
- 107. A
- 108. A
- 109. A

## Analogy Games

- 110. C
- 111. B
- 112. A
- 113. C
- 114. B
- 115. A
- 116. C
- 117. C
- 118. C
- 119. B

## Sentence Completion

- 120. C
- 121. A
- 122. C
- 123. D
- 124. B
- 125. D
- 126. A
- 127. D
- 128. B
- 129. C
- 130. B
- 131. B
- 132. C
- 133. C
- 134. A

## Reading: PASSAGE 1 .....

- 135. D
- 136. B

## PSAT Reading Sample

- 137. B
- 138. A
- 139. D
- 140. B
- 141. B
- 142. E
- 143. D
- 144. D
- 145. E