

Punctuation Subtest

This Subtest has the type of punctuation items found on the ACT. If you don't know an answer, eliminate the choices you know are incorrect, then guess. Circle the number of any guessed answer. Check page 132 for answers and explanations.

INSTRUCTIONS: Certain words or phrases in the following passage are underlined and numbered. There is a corresponding item for each underlined portion. Each item offers three suggestions for changing the underlined portion to conform to standard written English or to make it understandable or consistent with the rest of the passage. If the underlined portion is not improved by one of the three suggested changes, mark NO CHANGE.

Choose the best answer for each question based on the passage. Then fill in the appropriate circle on the answer grid.

1 A B C D	5 A B C D	9 A B C D
2 F G H J	6 F G H J	10 F G H J
3 A B C D	7 A B C D	
4 F G H J	8 F G H J	

It was cold dark and rainy as we set off on our
1
journey. Our plan was to make it to the mountains
by sunrise we would rest there a day before
2
setting out across the plains. We brought with
us only: a few clothes some money and food
3
for a week. In order to make it to the ship on time;
4
we needed to be at the coast by Saturday. Then as
4
we neared the mountains we heard something.
5

1. A. NO CHANGE
B. It was cold, dark, and rainy
C. It was: cold dark and rainy
D. It was: cold, dark, and rainy
2. F. NO CHANGE
G. by sunrise, we would rest there
H. by sunrise: we would rest there
J. by sunrise; we would rest there
3. A. NO CHANGE
B. us only: a few clothes, some money, and food
C. us only a few clothes some money and food
D. us only a few clothes, some money, and food
4. F. NO CHANGE
G. the ship on time: we needed to
H. the ship on time, we needed to
J. the ship on time we needed to
5. A. NO CHANGE
B. Then, as we neared the mountains, we
C. Then! As we neared the mountains we
D. Then as we neared the mountains, we

Boom? A loud echo rolled across the sky.
6
"What is that?" we asked each other. We saw
7
a horse (we could see no rider) galloping along
8
the path. The horse slowed its pace as it drew
9
near. Then we saw the rider lying low along the
10
horses' neck, urging him onward.
10

6. F. NO CHANGE
G. Boom. A loud
H. Boom! A loud
J. Boom, a loud
7. A. NO CHANGE
B. "What is that" we asked
C. "What is that!" we asked
D. "What is that." we asked
8. F. NO CHANGE
G. a horse we could see no rider galloping
H. a horse we could see no (rider galloping)
J. a horse, we could see no rider galloping
9. A. NO CHANGE
B. slowed its' pace
C. slowed its pace
D. slowed its's pace
10. F. NO CHANGE
G. the rider lying low along the horses' neck
H. the rider lying low along the horse's neck,
J. the rider: lying low along the horse's neck

(Answers on page 132)

PUNCTUATION SUBTEST (pages 126–127)

1. B

The items in the series need to be separated by commas.

2. J

The two independent clauses should be separated by a semicolon.

3. D

The series needs to be separated by commas but not set off by a colon.

4. H

The introductory phrase should be separated from the second part of the sentence by a comma.

5. B

The phrase *as we neared the mountains* is nonessential and so should be set off with commas.

6. H

Boom! is an exclamation.

7. A

No change.

8. F

No change.

9. C

The possessive form *its* has no apostrophe.

10. H

The first independent clause should be separated from the second clause by a comma; *horse* is singular, so its possessive form is *horse's*.