

## *Certification Exams*

*CLEP-Composition-and-Literature  
American Literature, English Literature, Humanities*

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## Question: 1

Which of the following was NOT common in early Puritan literature? American Literature

- A. Poetry
- B. Sermons
- C. Theological tracts
- D. Short stories
- E. Histories

**Answer: D**

Explanation:

Puritan writing reflected their disapproval of lighthearted amusement. Short stories were not common in early Puritan literature.

## Question: 2

- (1) If your favorite rock star asked you to jump off a bridge, would you do it?
- (2) Of course not; no way!
- (3) You would tell the rock star to take his money.
- (4) Then go back to his mansion, and stuff it.
- (5) You make your own decisions; the idea of risking your life on the whim of a famous singer is just plain nonsense.
- (6) Even if you truly adore music, it is not a factor that dictates your every move.
- (7) Some young people would do anything for a particular music performer.
- (8) They would flock to jump off the bridge if their favorite music icon asked them to do so.
- (9) Because popular music, more than any other aspect of youth culture, holds an extremely powerful clutch on its very impressionable audience.
- (10) Occasionally that clutch can have a positive effect.
- (11) For example, some artists put forth positive messages.
- (12) More often, however, the messages in popular songs are destructive.
- (13) Children require guidance, and they are easily fooled by music that provides either false hope or hopelessness.
- (14) Adults need to learn about popular music to know which performers preach a positive (or at least harmless) message and those that can be truly destructive to a young person's life.
- (15) This is a tough job.
- (16) But it is an important job.

Which of the following inserted at the beginning of sentence 7 would best link the second paragraph to the first?

English Composition

- A. Moreover
- B. However,
- C. The thing is,
- D. Whereas,
- E. Therefore,

**Answer: B**

Explanation:

The first paragraph puts forth the idea that a sensible person would not listen to the absurd commands of a rock star. Sentence 7, which begins the second paragraph, contradicts that idea by saying that some young people would listen to anything a rock star says. Therefore, a contrast word would be the best to insert at the beginning of sentence 7. The only contrast word is B. A and E do not establish a contrast. C is colloquial and inappropriate. "Whereas" in D is used to start a dependent clause and cannot stand by itself.

### Question: 3

- (1) Education long been viewed as a tool for solving social problems.
- (2) Many people consider a school to be responsible for taking young people from diverse backgrounds and turning them into law-abiding citizens.
- (3) An important question arises.
- (4) If education is the answer to social problems, how can schools themselves be a social problem?
- (5) According to many critics, the answer is that schools are not performing their job good enough.
- (6) The above notion is tied to the belief that there is a serious problem with America's education system.
- (7) According to noted scholars, schooling in the United States lacks one essential ingredient for success.
- (8) This key factor is the involvement of the community.
- (9) Many are familiar with the old African proverb: "It takes a whole village to raise a single child."
- (10) Hence, one is surprised that education in America survives at all without it.
- (11) Education is considered a cure for societal problems, schools are often blamed for those same problems.
- (12) Yet the roots of failure start not in the classrooms but in the broader fabric of society; the workplace, city streets, and the home.
- (13) This was made evident by dramatic changes in American society over the last few decades.
- (14) First, economic growth has come at a tremendous cost to the nation's most disadvantaged citizens. Second, the number of people who vote has declined.
- (15) Finally, there has been a noticeable rise in single parent homes, and there has been a noticeable rise in homes in which both parents have entered the workforce.

Which of the following would be most appropriate to insert at the beginning of sentence 3?

English Composition

- A. In light of this,
- B. Fortunately,

- C. In other words,
- D. On the other hand,
- E. Overall,

**Answer: A**

Explanation:

The first two sentences establish the common view of the role of schools in society. The third sentence abruptly sets up a theoretical question. An appropriate insert would be one that links sentence 3 to the previous sentences. A pulls the sentences together by raising the question in light of the discussion that has already ensued. B is inappropriate; even though the author does see a problem with the common view of schools, she has not yet established this problem in the first paragraph. The fact that a question arises is not a restatement of the first two sentences, so C is incorrect. D does not work either; this choice indicates that the first two sentences contradict the fact that a question arises. Finally, E indicates a summation of what has been said so far, and sentence 3 does not perform this function

### Question: 4

Censorship by which of the following helped to determine the content of early American literature?  
American Literature

- A. Protestants
- B. Catholics
- C. Unitarians
- D. Evangelicals
- E. Agnostics

**Answer: A**

Explanation:

The Protestant clergy exerted great influence over the cultural life of early America. Written works could not be easily published without the approval of the religious establishment. Further, certain subjects were considered off-limits

### Question: 5

- (1) Education long been viewed as a tool for solving social problems.
- (2) Many people consider a school to be responsible for taking young people from diverse backgrounds and turning them into law-abiding citizens.
- (3) An important question arises.
- (4) If education is the answer to social problems, how can schools themselves be a social problem?
- (5) According to many critics, the answer is that schools are not performing their job good enough.
- (6) The above notion is tied to the belief that there is a serious problem with America's education system.
- (7) According to noted scholars, schooling in the United States lacks one essential ingredient for success.
- (8) This key factor is the involvement of the community.

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(9) Many are familiar with the old African proverb: "It takes a whole village to raise a single child."  
(10) Hence, one is surprised that education in America survives at all without it.  
(11) Education is considered a cure for societal problems, schools are often blamed for those same problems.  
(12) Yet the roots of failure start not in the classrooms but in the broader fabric of society; the workplace, city streets, and the home.  
(13) This was made evident by dramatic changes in American society over the last few decades.  
(14) First, economic growth has come at a tremendous cost to the nation's most disadvantaged citizens.  
(15) Second, the number of people who vote has declined.  
(16) Finally, there has been a noticeable rise in single parent homes, and there has been a noticeable rise in homes in which both parents have entered the workforce. The writer of this passage could best improve sentence 7 by

English Composition

- A. acknowledging that there are many lacking ingredients for success
- B. including a personal view on the subject at hand
- C. stating the opinion of people who disagree with the noted scholars
- D. naming some of the noted scholars
- E. removing the reference to noted scholars

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| <b>Answer: D</b> |
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Explanation:

In an academic essay of this type, it is important to establish the support of experts in the field, but doing so is much less effective without naming those references. A would confuse the argument – the author effectively ramps up to discuss one lacking element of success, so introducing other ingredients would not work out well. The author references the view of noted scholars, so the personal opinion in B would not be effective. C may be appropriate further along in the essay, but disagreeing opinions here would scuttle the author's thesis. E is incorrect because the reference to noted scholars strengthens the author's argument.

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