

Official SAT Practice

Lesson Plans

for Teachers by Teachers

LESSON 13

Reading—Relationships

Focus: Understanding relationship in a text

Objective:

Students will draw connections (such as cause-and-effect, comparison–contrast, and sequence) between people, events, ideas, and the like in a passage.

Before the Lesson:

- Preview and print (if necessary) the student materials.

Introductory Activity | 10 minutes

1. Ask students to look at the three types of relationships that are asked about on the Reading Test. All, or most, of these will likely be familiar to students.
2. Ask students to each write a short piece that utilizes one of the relationships. Possible topics could be:
 - a. Cause and effect: Explain the effect of cell phone usage on teenagers; explain how technology impacts learning in school.
 - b. Comparison–contrast: Describe two friends who are very different from each other; describe the differences between two places you have visited; describe the similarities and differences between two of your favorite holidays.
 - c. Sequence: Describe what you did today, starting with when you woke up; write an explanation on how to get to some location in your school or your neighborhood.
3. Direct students to read a partner’s paper and look for some of those signal words that are included in the list of relationships on the student materials page. Are there other, similar signal words not on that list? Discuss how these words help to signal the kinds of relationships at work in a text.

Pair/Group Practice | 10 minutes

1. In Lesson 12, students read the entire excerpt called “The Nature of the Future.” Ask them to review their annotations for that text.
2. Then, students should discuss the answers to Questions 14 and 15, which ask students about two topics being compared in the passage and the best evidence to support their response. Discuss the rationales as needed.

Rationale #14:

Choice D is the best answer. The passage explains that socially driven economies create new societies where “amplified individuals—individuals empowered with technologies and the collective intelligence of others in their social network—can take on many functions that previously only large organizations could perform, often more efficiently, at lower cost or no cost at all, and with much greater ease” (lines 66–72). It is clear from these lines that the author views some large organizations as less efficient and more expensive than individuals. Choices A, B, and C are incorrect because the passage offers no evidence that the author believes traditional organizations are more innovative, less regulated, or less reliable than individuals.

Rationale #15:

Choice D is the best answer. Lines 66–72 explain how socially driven economies are creating societies where individuals no longer rely on traditional organizations to perform specific tasks. Instead, individuals can use technology and social relationships to more efficiently perform these tasks at a lower cost. Choices A, B, and C are incorrect because they do not directly compare individuals to traditional organizations.

Independent Activity

1. Ask students to read independently a passage that they may have read in earlier lessons about an experiment with birds. As they read, they should look closely for some of those signal words that often designate relationships.
2. Ask them to complete Question 20 and explain why they selected the answer they did, and discuss the rationale as needed.

Rationale #20:

Explanation: Choice A is the best answer. The last paragraph of Passage 2 presents the results of an experiment in which the author scattered unfamiliar objects in the path of some ravens. According to the passage, the birds initially “contacted all new objects preferentially” but in “subsequent trials” only preferred those “previously novel items” that “were edible” (lines 69–74).

Choice B is incorrect because the ravens studied by the author only preferred those “previously novel items” that “were edible,” whereas “the inedible objects became ‘background’ items, just like the leaves, grass, and pebbles” (lines 74–76). In other words, plentiful items did not continue to interest the ravens unless the items were edible.

Choice C is incorrect because the ravens studied by the author only preferred those “previously novel items” that “were edible,” whereas “the inedible objects became ‘background’ items, just like the leaves, grass, and pebbles, even if they were highly conspicuous” (lines 74–77). In other words, conspicuous items did not continue to interest the ravens unless the items were edible.

Choice D is not the best answer because the ravens studied by the author only preferred those “previously novel items” that “were edible,” whereas “the inedible objects became ‘background’ items, just like the leaves, grass, and pebbles” (lines 74–76). In other words, natural items did not continue to interest the ravens unless the items were edible.

Homework | 20 minutes

- As students continue to practice on the Official SAT® Practice on Khan Academy®, they should make note of the questions that ask about relationships; they will not appear in every passage. Teachers may want to ask students to copy or take a screenshot of any relationships questions that students encounter for discussion in the next class.

Student Materials—Lesson 13

Opening Activity

Understanding Relationships

Some questions on the Reading Test may ask you to determine the relationship between people, ideas, events, and the like in passages. These questions tend to fall into one of three types:

- Cause-and-effect: Understanding how one thing caused another to happen; often signaled by words such as “because” or “since.”
- Comparison–contrast: Understanding how two things are similar and/or different; often signaled by words such as “more” and “less.”
- Sequence: Understanding the order in which things happened; often signaled by words such as “first,” “last,” “before,” and “after.”

Pair/Group Activity

These questions are based on the text “The Nature of the Future,” which you may have read in Lesson 12.

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The author indicates that, in comparison to individuals, traditional organizations have tended to be

- A) more innovative and less influential.
- B) larger in size and less subject to regulations.
- C) less reliable and less interconnected.
- D) less efficient and more expensive.

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Which choice provides the best evidence for the answer to the previous question?

- A) Lines 22-26 (“Empowered . . . connectedness”)
- B) Lines 40-42 (“We no longer . . . ideas”)
- C) Lines 47-50 (“We are moving . . . *socialstructing*”)
- D) Lines 66-72 (“amplified . . . ease”)

Independent Activity

Passage 2

For one month after they left the nest, I led my four young
45 ravens at least once and sometimes several times a day on
thirty-minute walks. During these walks, I wrote down
everything in their environment they pecked at. In the first
sessions, I tried to be teacher. I touched specific objects—
sticks, moss, rocks—and nothing that I touched remained
50 untouched by them. They came to investigate what I had
investigated, leading me to assume that young birds are aided
in learning to identify food from the parents' example. They
also, however, contacted almost everything else that lay
directly in their own paths. They soon became more
55 independent by taking their own routes near mine. Even while
walking along on their own, they pulled at leaves, grass stems,
flowers, bark, pine needles, seeds, cones, clods of earth, and
other objects they encountered. I wrote all this down,
converting it to numbers. After they were thoroughly familiar
60 with the background objects in these woods and started to
ignore them, I seeded the path we would later walk together
with objects they had never before encountered. Some of
these were conspicuous food items: raspberries, dead
meal worm beetles, and cooked corn kernels. Others were
65 conspicuous and inedible: pebbles, glass chips, red
winterberries. Still others were such highly cryptic foods as
encased caddisfly larvae and moth cocoons. The results were
dramatic.

The four young birds on our daily walks contacted all new
70 objects preferentially. They picked them out at a rate of up to
tens of thousands of times greater than background or
previously contacted objects. The main initial criterion for
pecking or picking anything up was its novelty. In subsequent
trials, when the previously novel items were edible, they
75 became preferred and the inedible objects became
“background” items, just like the leaves, grass, and pebbles,
even if they were highly conspicuous. These experiments
showed that ravens' curiosity ensures exposure to all or almost
all items in the environment.

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According to the experiment described in Passage 2, whether the author's ravens continued to show interest in a formerly new object was dictated primarily by whether that object was

- A) edible.
- B) plentiful.
- C) conspicuous.
- D) natural.