

SAT Writing and Language Sample Paper 9

The Ferry Godfather

[1] For much of the early part of American history, Pennsylvania and Virginia, two major early colonies and states, shared a border. [2] This part of Virginia became the modern state of West Virginia on June 20, 1863. [3] Then came the Civil War. [4] Amid the furor of secession and conflict, President Abraham Lincoln granted a special provision for that part of Virginia that was loyal to the Union.¹

Although this region is not in the news quite so often today, in America's early history one part of it was on the tip of everyone's tongue. The town of Harpers Ferry played a crucial role in pre-Civil War era. George Washington proposed that the United States station one of 2 their two major armories there, and by 1799, Harpers Ferry became 3 one of the major industrial towns, in the United States. Its position about 60 miles from Washington, D.C., and Baltimore put it close enough to major cities, but its place 4 in the hills at the meeting of the Potomac and Shenandoah Rivers made it difficult to access and easy to defend.

Because it was situated on the borderline between the Union and the Confederacy, and because its armory was full of the weapons being manufactured to fight the Civil War, 5 the Confederacy took it four times and the Union did also, and both sides saw it as a pivotal strategic base.

In the popular imagination today, Harpers Ferry is still seen as a crucial 6 place of great importance during the Civil War but mainly for events that occurred there before the war had even started. In 1859, radical abolitionist John Brown led a raid on Harpers Ferry, seeking to free slaves and begin a guerilla campaign to free slaves all over the country. While Brown's raid was ultimately a dismal failure and Brown was executed for treason, 7 his raid began a national conversation. Abolitionists in the North saw him as a hero and a freedom fighter while those in the South saw him as a 8 filthy terrorist. 9 The Civil War and the nation's movement towards it used John Brown's name as both sides' rallying cry.

Today, Harpers Ferry is a sleepy town in the mountains of West Virginia. Much of its heritage remains 10 intact. Historical tours run every day. Above all, Harpers Ferry is a living reminder that the crucial events in history are not limited to the big places and the major players. Without the catalyzing effect of this small 11 town: American history as we know it might have been much different.

1. For the sake of the logic and coherence of this paragraph, sentence 2 should be placed

- A. where it is now.
- B. before sentence 1.

- C. after sentence 3.
 - D. after sentence 4.
- 2.

- A. NO CHANGE
 - B. they're
 - C. its
 - D. it's
- 3.

- A. NO CHANGE
 - B. one, of the major industrial towns, in the United States.
 - C. one, of the major industrial towns in the United States.
 - D. one of the major industrial towns in the United States.
4. Which of the following gives accurate information based on the map?

- A. NO CHANGE
 - B. approximately 20 miles northeast of the town of Bolivar
 - C. across the Shenandoah River from Maryland
 - D. at the foot of the Adirondack Mountains
- 5.

- A. NO CHANGE
 - B. the war saw Harpers Ferry change hands eight times,
 - C. Harpers Ferry changed hands eight times during the war,
 - D. eight was the number of times Harpers Ferry changed hands,
- 6.

- A. NO CHANGE
 - B. place
 - C. place that was important
 - D. place where a great deal happened
7. The writer wants to include an idea here that shows that Brown's raid still had major importance. Which of the following true ideas would best fulfill this goal?

- A. NO CHANGE
 - B. Hermann Melville's poem about John Brown is very well-known.
 - C. the raid was based on some earlier well-known slave revolts.
 - D. he could not have chosen a more central location.
- 8.

- A. NO CHANGE
- B. heroic
- C. janky

D. vile

9.

A. NO CHANGE

B. Brown's name became a rallying cry for both sides as the nation moved toward Civil War.

C. Brown's cry was the rally that both sides named as the Civil War moved in on the nation.

D. both sides used Brown's name as the nation's Civil War was moving toward it.

10.

A. NO CHANGE

B. intact, historical

C. intact historical

D. intact; and historical

11.

A. NO CHANGE

B. town; American

C. town. American

D. town, American