Name _____ Date _____

Commas, Semicolons and Colons Between Clauses

Directions: Read the draft feature for the school newspaper. Each question underlines a spot where two parts of a sentence meet; choose the version that is correct and keeps the writer's meaning, or keep the original if it is already correct.

The Weather Station on the Science Building

Most students at Harlan Ridge High have walked past the white mast above the science building without a second glance. It belongs to a weather station that the earth science club has operated for six years, collecting more than a million individual measurements along the way. The station sits on the roof of the science building, it records temperature, humidity, wind speed and rainfall every five minutes. Many students assume the morning forecasts come from a national service, however, they are written by members of the club.

Each morning, two club members check the same three instruments: the rain gauge, the wind vane and the thermometer. Then they compare the new readings with the station's records from the past week, looking for any number that seems out of place. The club's daily report includes: the high and low temperatures, the total rainfall and a short forecast for the afternoon. The club posts its forecast on the school's website before first period the morning announcements read it aloud a few minutes later. On days when a storm is coming, the club adds a warning in bold letters at the top of the page.

The work is not glamorous. Because the roof gets windy in the colder months, the club bolted the wind vane to a steel post. Last February, one member spent an entire lunch period chipping ice off the rain gauge with a plastic spoon. The forecasts are usually accurate; although the club once predicted sunshine on the morning of a thunderstorm. The next day's announcements began with an apology.

The club's biggest problem is not the weather but something much smaller; squirrels that chew through the sensor cables. The members have tried wire mesh, a motion-activated sprinkler and a plastic owl, and the squirrels have ignored all three. Last spring, one squirrel chewed through the same cable three times in a single week.

This year the club hoped to add a snow gauge before winter, the parts arrived too late for the first storm. The gauge finally went up in January, and it has measured every snowfall since. Every new member spends the first month learning to read the instruments before writing a single forecast. Next fall, the club hopes to share its records with the elementary school down the street, where younger students are beginning their own weather journals. For the seniors who will graduate in June, the station is a small piece of equipment and a large source of pride.

1. Which choice for the underlined portion joins the two clauses correctly?

"The station sits on the roof of the science building, it records temperature, humidity, wind speed and rainfall every five minutes."

A. building and, it B. Keep it as written. C. building it D. building; it

2. Which revision of the underlined portion punctuates the sentence correctly without changing its meaning?

"Many students assume the morning forecasts come from a national service, however, they are written by members of the club."

A. service however, they
B. Keep it as written.
C. service, but, they
D. service; however, they

3. Which version of the underlined portion introduces the list of instruments within the same complete sentence?

"Each morning, two club members check the same three instruments: the rain gauge, the wind vane and the thermometer."

A. instruments, these are the
B. instruments. The
C. instruments; the
D. Keep it as written.

4. How should the underlined portion be punctuated?

"The club's daily report includes: the high and low temperatures, the total rainfall and a short forecast for the afternoon."

A. Keep it as written.
B. includes the
C. includes; the
D. includes, the

5. Which choice for the underlined portion correctly separates the two independent clauses in this sentence?

"The club posts its forecast on the school's website before first period the morning announcements read it aloud a few minutes later."

A. Keep it as written.
B. period, the
C. period, and, the
D. period; the

6. Which option for the underlined portion correctly marks the end of the opening clause?

"Because the roof gets windy in the colder months, the club bolted the wind vane to a steel post."

A. Keep it as written.
B. months. The
C. months: the
D. months; the

7. Which revision of the underlined portion joins the two clauses in one correctly punctuated sentence?

"The forecasts are usually accurate; although the club once predicted sunshine on the morning of a thunderstorm."

A. Keep it as written.
B. accurate, although,
C. accurate. Although
D. accurate, although

8. Which choice for the underlined portion correctly sets up the explanation at the end of the sentence?

"The club's biggest problem is not the weather but something much smaller; squirrels that chew through the sensor cables."

A. Keep it as written.
B. smaller. Squirrels
C. smaller squirrels
D. smaller: squirrels

9. Which revision of the underlined portion fixes the punctuation while keeping the sentence logical?

"This year the club hoped to add a snow gauge before winter, the parts arrived too late for the first storm."

A. winter, so the
B. winter, but the
C. Keep it as written.
D. winter, but, the

10. Is the underlined portion punctuated correctly, or would one of these revisions be better?

"The gauge finally went up in January, and it has measured every snowfall since."

A. January, it
B. January and, it
C. January it
D. Keep it as written.