Practice Test for

Mod-HSA English
Welcome to the Mod-HSA Practice Test.

This sample test is designed to provide sample items and allow LEAs, Schools, and Students to review and practice samples of the types of items that will appear on the Mod-HSA Test. The items in this test are samples only, and do not cover the entire range of each content area which will be tested on the actual operational test forms.

- Section 3 is Mod-English (items 41-70)  
  [begins on page 3]
Terry is writing about the War of 1812 and the origin of the national anthem, “The Star-Spangled Banner.”

The draft of the first part of Terry’s essay requires revisions and edits. Read the draft. Then answer Numbers 41 through 45.

Oh, Say Can You See

After the American Revolution, America and Great Britain fought a second war known as the War of 1812. When British troops occupied Washington, D.C., in 1814, they arrested Dr. William Beanes of Maryland and imprisoned him on a British warship in the Chesapeake Bay. Friends of the doctor asked Francis Scott Key, a lawyer, and John Skinner of Baltimore to try to secure the doctor’s release.

Key and Skinner successfully reached the British fleet and negotiated Beanes’ release. Before they could head home, however, the British suddenly detained them aboard a truce ship. The British fleet was about to begin its assault on Fort McHenry a fort guarding the entrance to the harbor of Baltimore.

Key watched from the truce ship in the bay as British warships bombarded the fort throughout the afternoon and night. The Americans managed to defend the fort. On the following morning, they raised a large United States flag on the fort’s 90-foot flagpole. Key was so inspired by the sight that he composed a poem on the back of a letter he had in his pocket.

Originally titled “The Defense of Fort McHenry,” the poem soon became known as “The Star-Spangled Banner.” The poem was set to music in 1814 and became a patriotic song. It did not become America’s national anthem until 1931.
Read Sentence 1 of Terry’s draft.

1 After the American Revolution, America and Great Britain fought a second war known as the War of 1812.

Which of these sentences should Terry add after Sentence 1 to help make the focus of his essay clear?

A The War of 1812 lasted from June 1812 to December 1814.

B The national anthem of the United States was born during this second conflict.

C This second conflict started more than 30 years after the American Revolution.
Read Sentence 6 from Terry’s draft.

6 The British fleet was about to begin its assault on Fort McHenry, a fort guarding the entrance to the harbor of Baltimore.

What is the correct way to edit the bold, underlined part of this sentence?

A  it is assault on Fort McHenry a fort

B  its assault on Fort McHenry, a fort

C  it’s assault on Fort McHenry, a fort
Terry found this information in a language handbook.

Periods and commas are placed inside quotation marks.

Example: Sally decided to recite the poem “Birches,” but Stan chose to memorize “The Raven.”

According to this information, what is the correct way to edit Sentence 11?

A Originally titled “The Defense of Fort McHenry,” the poem soon became known as “The Star-Spangled Banner.”

B Originally titled “The Defense of Fort McHenry”, the poem soon became known as “The Star-Spangled Banner”.

C Originally titled “The Defense of Fort McHenry”, the poem soon became known as “The Star-Spangled Banner.”
Read Sentences 12 and 13 from Terry’s draft.

12 The poem was set to music in 1814 and became a patriotic song. 13 It did not become America’s national anthem until 1931.

Which of these BEST combines the ideas in Sentences 12 and 13 into one sentence?

A The poem was set to music in 1814 and became a patriotic song, and it did not become America’s national anthem until 1931.

B When the poem became a patriotic song after being set to music in 1814, it did not become America’s national anthem until 1931.

C Although the poem was set to music and became a patriotic song in 1814, it did not become America’s national anthem until 1931.
In his essay, Terry used information from a pamphlet published by the Smithsonian Institution.

Which information **MUST** be included in a bibliography entry for the pamphlet?

A  the publication date

B  the name of his school

C  the number of sections
Read the poem “Fireflies in the Garden.”

Then answer Numbers 46 through 48.

This poem has been removed from the mdk12.org website due to copyright restrictions. It can be found in poetry books at most local or school libraries or online on poetry websites.

In the poem "Fireflies in the Garden," Frost compares stars and fireflies. He differentiates that stars are in the sky while fireflies are on Earth. In the poem he questions if fireflies can fulfill the majestic role of stars in the night sky.
46 Read lines 1 and 2 of the poem “Fireflies In the Garden.”

Here come real stars to fill the upper skies,
And here on earth come **emulating** flies,

In line 2, the word *emulating* means the speaker believes the fireflies are

A  imitating the stars

B  entering the skies

C  making soft sounds
Read lines 3 and 4 of the poem “Fireflies In the Garden.”

That though they never equal stars in size,
(And they were never really stars at heart)

In lines 3 and 4, the poet most likely uses the words never and never really in order to

A make the lines of the poem equal in length

B stress the inability of fireflies to shine like stars

C describe the unimportance of fireflies in the cycle of nature
According to the poem, which of these statements BEST explains a difference between fireflies and stars?

A  The stars look motionless.

B  Stars are older than fireflies.

C  The light in fireflies is temporary.
Read the essay “Bug Interrupted.”

Then answer Numbers 49 through 51.

Who was I setting free that night: myself, my daughter, or just the fireflies?

Summer nights on the Eastern Shore, when the sun finally settles below the lip of the land and a misty haze hangs like netting from the tops of the trees, the magic begins. Slowly at first, like dancers drifting onto a dance floor, fireflies begin to wink through the tall grass that rings our field. When I was a kid, this was the signal for me to race through the dark, flailing an open jam jar at the shimmering creatures. I’d try to scoop them all inside my jar so I could carry the magic with me forever. Then came the abrupt call to bed, and I’d punch holes in the jar lid with an ice pick and set the glassy cage on my night table.

I’d settle into my pillow to watch the firefly shadows on my walls. I thought they must be fairies, ready to transform into their true gauzy, winged selves while I slept. If I could stay awake long enough, I’d be able to get a glimpse of them and make a wish. Of course I would let them go in the morning. But morning would come, and I’d have a jar full of dead bugs on my table—little dried husks. I don’t know when it dawned on me that I’d been the instrument of their deaths, but I know at some point I stopped chasing fireflies and just sat on my porch and watched them, feeling vaguely guilty about the countless generations I’d snuffed.

Eventually I grew up and came to have a daughter of my own. She too would watch the flickers fill the evening. On the Shore they swarm through the woods at night, great clouds of flashing beacons moving every which way. When Lindsay was big enough, she toddled after them, cupping her hands to catch them and gazing in wonder at the firefly blinking on her palm. And then came
the jam jars, and she too would scoop and swipe in the dark, collecting a 
treasure-trove of flashing delight.

“I must have caught a hundred of them,” she said one night, breathless from 
careening around in the field. Sweat made its way in muddy streaks down her 
cheeks. Jagged snags of blood seeped from her bare calves where the blackberry 
brambles had grabbed her. She waved the jar triumphantly, and indeed she had 
captured a full horde of fireflies. “I’m going to put it next to my bed tonight,” she 
declared. “It will be my night-light.”

We washed off the sweat and prickles and she settled into bed. The jam jar 
stood straight and tall on the night table, its soft beads of light growing, fading, 
growing, fading. Faint shadows rose and fell on the wall. “It’s like stars 
breathing,” she said.

I looked at my daughter, watched her eyelids droop, saw her fingers relax. 
And I quietly lifted the jar and walked from the room. I couldn’t bear to leave 
the fireflies to die, trapped in the glass castle. I couldn’t bear to let Lindsay wake 
up and find the gentle creatures dead. So I unscrewed the lid and shook them 
free in the yard. When she woke the next morning and found the jar empty, 
Lindsay shrugged. “You let them go, didn’t you?” she said blithely⁴. I said, 
“They would have died if I hadn’t.”

Sooner or later, she found out the hard way that living things left in jars die. 
Maybe I should have allowed her that pang of guilt that wafts from a jar of 
lifeless bugs. But why? Surely life’s lessons needn’t deliberately come at such 
expense. And perhaps I, the parent, needed . . . oh, who knows? All I really know 
is that the fireflies appreciated my effort that night. For them, it must have been 
wonderful to tumble back into the night air, to feel the soft wind again, to light 
up the dance floor one more time.

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⁴blithely: cheerfully or lightheartedly

This essay mostly develops a theme of

A  the beauty of night skies

B  the benefit of outdoor activities

C  the effect of childhood memories
Read these sentences from the essay.

All I really know is that the fireflies appreciated my effort that night. For them, it must have been wonderful to tumble back into the night air, to feel the soft wind again, to light up the dance floor one more time.

Which word **BEST** describes the tone of these lines?

A instructive  
B mournful  
C satisfied
Read this sentence from the essay.

Slowly at first, like dancers drifting onto a dance floor, fireflies begin to wink through the tall grass that rings our field.

Which word is the subject of this sentence?

A  dancers

B  floor

C  fireflies
You will need to refer to both the poem “Fireflies in the Garden” and the essay “Bug, Interrupted” to answer question 52.

The two passages are provided for you again, below.

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**Fireflies In The Garden**

Here come real stars to fill the upper skies,
And here on earth come emulating flies,
That though they never equal stars in size,
(And they were never really stars at heart)
Achieve at times a very star-like start.

Only, of course, they can’t sustain the part.

—Robert Frost

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1 *sustain: keep up*

Bug, Interrupted
by Jane Meneely

Who was I setting free that night: myself, my daughter, or just the fireflies?

Summer nights on the Eastern Shore, when the sun finally settles below the lip of the land and a misty haze hangs like netting from the tops of the trees, the magic begins. Slowly at first, like dancers drifting onto a dance floor, fireflies begin to wink through the tall grass that rings our field. When I was a kid, this was the signal for me to race through the dark, flailing an open jam jar at the shimmering creatures. I’d try to scoop them all inside my jar so I could carry the magic with me forever. Then came the abrupt call to bed, and I’d punch holes in the jar lid with an ice pick and set the glassy cage on my night table.

I’d settle into my pillow to watch the firefly shadows on my walls. I thought they must be fairies, ready to transform into their true gauzy, winged selves while I slept. If I could stay awake long enough, I’d be able to get a glimpse of them and make a wish. Of course I would let them go in the morning. But morning would come, and I’d have a jar full of dead bugs on my table—little dried husks. I don’t know when it dawned on me that I’d been the instrument of their deaths, but I know at some point I stopped chasing fireflies and just sat on my porch and watched them, feeling vaguely guilty about the countless generations I’d snuffed.

Eventually I grew up and came to have a daughter of my own. She too would watch the flickers fill the evening. On the Shore they swarm through the woods at night, great clouds of flashing beacons moving every which way. When Lindsay was big enough, she toddled after them, cupping her hands to catch them and gazing in wonder at the firefly blinking on her palm. And then came
the jam jars, and she too would scoop and swipe in the dark, collecting a treasure-trove of flashing delight.

“I must have caught a hundred of them,” she said one night, breathless from careening around in the field. Sweat made its way in muddy streaks down her cheeks. Jagged snags of blood seeped from her bare calves where the blackberry brambles had grabbed her. She waved the jar triumphantly, and indeed she had captured a full horde of fireflies. “I’m going to put it next to my bed tonight,” she declared. “It will be my night-light.”

We washed off the sweat and prickles and she settled into bed. The jam jar stood straight and tall on the night table, its soft beads of light growing, fading, growing, fading. Faint shadows rose and fell on the wall. “It’s like stars breathing,” she said.

I looked at my daughter, watched her eyelids droop, saw her fingers relax. And I quietly lifted the jar and walked from the room. I couldn’t bear to leave the fireflies to die, trapped in the glass castle. I couldn’t bear to let Lindsay wake up and find the gentle creatures dead. So I unscrewed the lid and shook them free in the yard. When she woke the next morning and found the jar empty, Lindsay shrugged. “You let them go, didn’t you?” she said blithely. I said, “They would have died if I hadn’t.”

Sooner or later, she found out the hard way that living things left in jars die. Maybe I should have allowed her that pang of guilt that wafts from a jar of lifeless bugs. But why? Surely life’s lessons needn’t deliberately come at such expense. And perhaps I, the parent, needed . . . oh, who knows? All I really know is that the fireflies appreciated my effort that night. For them, it must have been wonderful to tumble back into the night air, to feel the soft wind again, to light up the dance floor one more time.

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1blithely: cheerfully or lightheartedly

Which of these descriptions of fireflies in “Bug, Interrupted” is BEST supported by the images in the poem “Fireflies In the Garden”?

A  “shimmering creatures”

B  “trapped in the glass castle”

C  “swarm through the woods”
Read the essay “Rough Road Ahead: Do Not Exceed Posted Speed Limit.”

Then answer Numbers 53 through 57.

FORGET THAT OLD SAYING ABOUT NEVER TAKING CANDY FROM STRANGERS.

No, a better piece of advice for the solo cyclist would be, “Never accept travel advice from a collection of old-timers who haven’t left the confines of their porches since Carter was in office.” It’s not that a group of old guys doesn’t know the terrain. With age comes wisdom and all that, but the world is a fluid place. Things change.

At a reservoir campground outside of Lodi, California, I enjoyed the serenity of an early-summer evening and some lively conversation with these old codgers. What I shouldn’t have done was let them have a peek at my map. Like a foolish youth, the next morning I followed their advice and launched out at first light along a “shortcut” that was to slice away hours from my ride to Yosemite National Park.

They’d sounded so sure of themselves when pointing out landmarks and spouting off towns I would come to along this breezy jaunt.

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1Carter: Jimmy Carter, President of the United States, 1977–1981
2codgers: eccentric men
Things began well enough. I rode into the morning with strong legs and a smile on my face. About forty miles into the pedal, I arrived at the first “town.” This place might have been a thriving little spot at one time—say, before the last world war—but on that morning it fit the traditional definition of a ghost town. I chuckled, checked my water supply, and moved on. The sun was beginning to beat down, but I barely noticed it. The cool pines and rushing rivers of Yosemite had my name written all over them.

Twenty miles up the road, I came to a fork of sorts. One ramshackle shed, several rusty pumps, and a corral that couldn’t hold in the lamest mule greeted me. This sight was troubling. I had been hitting my water bottles pretty regularly, and I was traveling through the high deserts of California in June.

I got down on my hands and knees, working the handle of the rusted water pump with all my strength. A tarlike substance oozed out, followed by brackish water feeling somewhere in the neighborhood of two hundred degrees. I pumped that handle for several minutes, but the water wouldn’t cool down. It didn’t matter. When I tried a drop or two, it had the flavor of battery acid.

The old guys had sworn the next town was only eighteen miles down the road. I could make that! I would conserve my water and go inward for an hour or so—a test of my inner spirit.

Not two miles into this next section of the ride, I noticed the terrain changing. Flat road was replaced by short, rolling hills. After I had crested the first few of these, a large highway sign jumped out at me. It read: ROUGH ROAD AHEAD: DO NOT EXCEED POSTED SPEED LIMIT.

The speed limit was 55 mph. I was doing a water-depleting 12 mph. Sometimes life can feel so cruel.

I toiled on. At some point, tumbleweeds crossed my path and a ridiculously large snake—it really did look like a diamondback—blocked the majority of the pavement in front of me. I eased past, trying to keep my balance in my dehydrated state.

The water bottles contained only a few tantalizing sips. Wide rings of dried sweat circled my shirt, and the growing realization that I could drop from
heatstroke on a gorgeous day in June simply because I listened to some gentlemen who hadn’t been off their porch in decades, caused me to laugh.

It was a sad, hopeless laugh, mind you, but at least I still had the energy to feel sorry for myself. There was no one in sight, not a building, car, or structure of any kind. I began breaking the ride down into distances I could see on the horizon, telling myself that if I could make it that far, I’d be fine.

Over one long, crippling hill, a building came into view. I wiped the sweat from my eyes to make sure it wasn’t a mirage, and tried not to get too excited. With what I believed was my last burst of energy, I maneuvered down the hill.

In an ironic twist that should please all sadists reading this, the building—abandoned years earlier, by the looks of it—had been a Welch’s Grape Juice factory and bottling plant. A sandblasted picture of a young boy pouring a refreshing glass of juice into his mouth could still be seen.

I hung my head.

That smoky blues tune “Summertime” rattled around in the dry honeycombs of my deteriorating brain.

I got back on the bike, but not before I gathered up a few pebbles and stuck them in my mouth. I’d read once that sucking on stones helps take your mind off thirst by allowing what spit you have left to circulate. With any luck I’d hit a bump and lodge one in my throat.

It didn’t really matter. I was going to die and the birds would pick me clean, leaving only some expensive outdoor gear and a diary with the last entry in praise of old men, their wisdom, and their keen sense of direction. I made a mental note to change that paragraph if it looked like I was going to lose consciousness for the last time.

Somehow, I climbed away from the abandoned factory of juices and dreams, slowly gaining elevation while losing hope. Then, as easily as rounding a bend, my troubles, thirst, and fear were all behind me.

GARY AND WILBER’S FISH CAMP–IF YOU WANT BAIT FOR THE BIG ONES, WE’RE YOUR BEST BET!
“And the only bet,” I remember thinking.

As I stumbled into a rather modern bathroom and drank deeply from the sink, I had an overwhelming urge to seek out Gary and Wilber, kiss them, and buy some bait—any bait, even though I didn’t own a rod or reel.

An old guy sitting in a chair under some shade nodded in my direction. Cool water dripped from my head as I slumped against the wall beside him.

“Where you headed in such a hurry?’’

“Yosemite,’’ I whispered.

“Know the best way to get there?’’

I watched him from the corner of my eye for a long moment. He was even older than the group I’d listened to in Lodi.

“Yes, sir! I own a very good map.’’

And I promised myself right then that I’d always stick to it in the future.

“Rough Road Ahead” by Joe Kurmaskie, from Metal Cowboy, copyright © 1999 Joe Kurmaskie. Used by permission of Breakaway Books.
Carefully examine the details of the photograph below.

Which of these sentences from the essay would be the most appropriate caption for the photograph?

A. I rode into the morning with strong legs and a smile on my face.

B. The cool pines and rushing rivers of Yosemite had my name written all over them.

C. Over one long, crippling hill, a building came into view.
Which of these is the most challenging problem faced by the author during his journey?

A  the lack of water

B  the poisonous snakes

C  the condition of the road
Which of these BEST characterizes the mood changes of the author during the journey he describes?

A  doubt followed by despair and then anger
B  cautiousness followed by terror and then pride
C  confidence followed by determination and then relief
When the author cautions cyclists against accepting advice from “old-timers who haven’t left the confines of their porches since Carter was in office,” he is suggesting that the men’s

A  information is out of date

B  knowledge of cycling is limited

C  politics differ from the author’s
Read this sentence from the essay.

I eased past, trying to keep my balance in my dehydrated state.

The word past is used as a

A noun

B verb

C modifier
After reading the essay “Rough Road Ahead: Do Not Exceed Posted Speed Limit,” Maria wrote an article for her school newspaper about bicycle safety tips.

Numbers 58 through 60 are about activities Maria completed while planning and researching her article.
Maria wants to include the recommendations of an authority on her topic. Which of these people would be **BEST** for her to interview?

A  Jasmine, her best friend who rides a bike to school every day

B  her grandfather, who has researched the history of the bicycle

C  Mr. Jackson, an instructor of a bicycling course offered in her community
Maria received this advice during an interview.

Watch out for parallel-slat sewer grates, gravel, ice, or debris.

In which section of her article should Maria include this information?

A  Road hazards

B  Bicycle maintenance

C  Rules of the highway
With her article, Maria wants to include a list of recreational bicycle trails in Maryland. Which of these Internet links would most likely have the information she needs?

A  Bicycling Community Page  
   Events, news, weather, bike shops, etc.

B  Bicycling Roads Online  
   Public park facilities for walking and biking

C  Bicycling Federation  
   Improvement of bicycle accommodations on state roads
Read the poem “Unfolding Bud.”

Then answer Numbers 61 through 63.

Unfolding Bud

One is amazed
By a water-lily bud
Unfolding
With each passing day,
Taking on a richer color
And new dimensions.

One is not amazed,
At first glance,
By a poem,
Which is as tight-closed
As a tiny bud.

Yet one is surprised
To see the poem
Gradually unfolding,
Revealing its rich inner self,
As one reads it
Again
And over again.

Naoshi Koriyama

“Unfolding Bud” by Naoshi Koriyama, copyright © 1957 The Christian Science Monitor. All rights reserved. Reproduced with permission.
The main idea of “Unfolding Bud” is that poems are

A  filled with clear and obvious images

B  appreciated more fully after many readings

C  understood better by those who appreciate nature
Read lines 12 through 16 of the poem “Unfolding Bud.”

Yet one is surprised
To see the poem
Gradually unfolding,
*Revealing its rich inner self,*
As one reads it

The poet *most likely* uses the words “Revealing its rich inner self” in line 15 to show

A  that a poem is like nature

B  how difficult it is to write poetry

C  that poetry often has deeper meaning
In line 12 of the poem, the word *Yet*

A. provides elaboration

B. decreases the surprise

C. indicates a shift in thought
Read the essay “Down with the Forests.” Then answer Numbers 64 through 68.

Down with the Forests
by Charles Kuralt

BALTIMORE, MARYLAND. I was waiting for breakfast in a coffee shop the other morning and reading the paper. The paper had sixty-six pages. The waitress brought a paper placemat and a paper napkin and took my order, and I paged through the paper.

The headline said, “House Panel Studies a Bill Allowing Clear-Cutting¹ in U.S. Forests.”

I put the paper napkin in my lap, spread the paper out on the paper placemat, and read on: “The House Agriculture Committee,”² it said, “is looking over legislation that would once again open national forests to the clear-cutting of trees by private companies under government permits.”

The waitress brought the coffee. I opened a paper sugar envelope and tore open a little paper cup of cream and went on reading the paper: “The Senate voted without dissent yesterday to allow clear-cutting,” the paper said. “Critics have said clear-cutting in the national forests can lead to erosion and destruction of wildlife habitats. Forest Service and industry spokesmen said a flat ban on clear-cutting would bring paralysis to the lumber industry.” And to the paper industry, I thought. Clear-cutting a forest is one way to get a lot of paper, and we sure seem to need a lot of paper.

The waitress brought the toast. I looked for the butter. It came on a little paper tray with a covering of paper. I opened a paper package of marmalade and read

¹Clear-Cutting: cut all trees in a certain area
²House Agriculture Committee: a committee formed of members of the United States House of Representatives
on: “Senator Jennings Randolph, Democrat of West Virginia, urged his colleagues to take a more restrictive view and permit clear-cutting only under specific guidelines for certain types of forest. But neither he nor anyone else voted against the bill, which was sent to the House on a 90 to 0 vote.”

The eggs came, with little paper packages of salt and pepper. I finished breakfast, put the paper under my arm, and left the table with its used and useless paper napkin, paper placemat, paper salt and pepper packages, paper butter and marmalade wrappings, paper sugar envelope, and paper cream holder, and I walked out into the morning wondering how our national forests can ever survive our breakfasts.

“Down with the Forests” from Dateline America by Charles Kuralt, copyright © 1979 by Harcourt, Inc., reprinted by permission of the publisher.
This essay was most likely written from the point of view of someone who

A  worries about the effect people have on the environment

B  believes it is important to read the newspaper every day

C  supports the use of natural resources for product packaging
Which of these statements BEST explains the effect of repeating the word paper throughout the essay?

A. It emphasizes the essay’s main idea.

B. It highlights the benefits of clear-cutting forests.

C. It stresses the author’s anger toward the lumber industry.
With which statement would the author of “Down with the Forests” most likely agree?

A  Natural resources should be used.

B  People should respect the environment.

C  Political action improves environmental conditions.
I finished breakfast, put the paper under my arm, and left the table with its used and useless paper napkin, paper placemat, paper salt and pepper packages, paper butter and marmalade wrappings, paper sugar envelope, and paper cream holder, and I walked out into the morning wondering how our national forests can ever survive our breakfasts.

Which of these statements BEST expresses the main idea of this sentence?

A  Paper is an acceptable substitute for plastic.

B  Paper products create environmental problems.

C  The widespread use of paper products threatens forests.
The waitress brought a paper placemat and a paper napkin and took my order, and I paged through the paper.

In this sentence, how are the bold, underlined words used?

A  both as verbs
B  both as nouns
C  both as modifiers
Read this sentence that is written in a disrespectful tone.

The principal is crazy if he thinks the students will tolerate such an insane proposal.

Revise to a more respectful tone.

A  The principal fools himself if he thinks that students will agree with the absurd proposal.

B  The principal is mistaken if he believes the students will accept the questionable proposal.

C  The principal is out of touch if he thinks that students will go along with the ridiculous proposal.
Read this sentence that is written in an informal style.

We really need to be responsible for the stuff we do.

Revise to a formal style.

A We should accept responsibility for our actions.

B We’ve gotta bear responsibility for the things that we do.

C We really need to take responsibility for the stuff we cause to happen.