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1. In January there was a large drop in the number of new houses sold, because interest rates for mortgages were falling and many consumers were waiting to see how low the rates would go. This large sales drop was accompanied by a sharp rise in the average price of new houses sold. Which of the following, if true, best explains the sharp rise in the average price of new houses? (A) Sales of higher-priced houses were unaffected by the sales drop because their purchasers have fewer constraints limiting the total amount they pay. (B) Labor agreements of builders with construction unions are not due to expire until the next January. (C) The prices of new houses have been rising slowly over the past three years because there is an increasing shortage of housing. (D) There was a greater amount of moderate-priced housing available for resale by owners during January than in the preceding three months. (E) Interest rates for home mortgages are expected to rise sharply later in the year if predictions of increased business activity in general prove to be accurate.

2. An experiment was done in which human subjects recognize a pattern within a matrix of abstract designs and then select another design that completes that pattern. The results of the experiment were surprising. The lowest expenditure of energy in neurons in the brain was found in those subjects who performed most successfully in the experiments. Which of the following

hypotheses best accounts for the findings of the experiment ? (A) The neurons of the brain react less when a subject is trying to recognize patterns than when the subject is doing other kinds of reasoning. (B) Those who performed best in the experiment experienced more satisfaction when working with abstract patterns than did those who performed less well. (C) People who are better at abstract pattern recognition have more energyefficient neural connections. (D) The energy expenditure of the subjects brains increases when a design that completes the initially recognized pattern is determined. (E) The task of completing a given design is more capably performed by athletes , whose energy expenditure is lower when they are at rest than is that of the general population.

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