Parallel Construction

1. Over the course of this week, we hiked, camped and went skiing. No error
   A  B  C  D  E

2. To graduate from high school, students must complete all of the academic requirements, participate in one extracurricular activity and have played on an athletic team. No error
   A  B  C  D  E

3. Running about 363 miles from Albany to Buffalo, containing 36 locks and it completes a navigable water route between the Atlantic Ocean and the Great Lakes, the Erie Canal is a waterway in New York. No error
   A  B  C  D  E

4. The Great Lakes St. Lawrence Seaway System extending over 2,000 miles from the Atlantic Ocean to the head of the Great Lakes and ranks as one of the most amazing engineering feats of the twentieth century.

   (A) extending over 2,000 miles from the Atlantic Ocean to the head of the Great Lakes and ranks
   (B) extends over 2,000 miles from the Atlantic Ocean to the head of the Great Lakes and ranks
   (C) extending over 2,000 miles from the Atlantic Ocean to the head of the Great Lakes and ranking
   (D) extending over 2,000 miles from the Atlantic Ocean to the head of the Great Lakes; ranking
   (E) extends over 2,000 miles from the Atlantic Ocean to the head of the Great Lakes; ranking

5. Westbrook High’s football team is undefeated and, therefore, is a much better team than Glendale High.

   (A) is a much better team than Glendale High
   (B) is a much better team than the football team that is Glendale High’s
   (C) is a much better team than Glendale High’s football team
   (D) is a much better team than the one that is at Glendale High
   (E) they are a much better team than Glendale High
Answers and Explanations

1. **The correct answer is D.** In order to make this sentence parallel in structure, we should say *hiked, camped and skied*. *Went skiing* defies the structure that was established with *hiked* and *camped*.

2. **The correct answer is D.** There are three things that students must do in order to graduate: *complete* all the academic requirements, *participate* in one extracurricular activity, and *play* on an athletic team. *Have played* is not parallel.

3. **The correct answer is C.** The sentence starts off with a long modifying phrase that consists of three items in a list, all of which describe the Erie Canal. Each of these must be in the same format. Since we are stuck with “*Running*...” the other two (“*containing*” and “*it completes*”) must conform to that format. The former matches; the latter does not. Choice C it is.

4. **The correct answer is B.** According to this sentence, the Great Lakes St. Lawrence Seaway Systems does two things: extends over 2,000 miles and ranks as a pretty cool engineering feat. Of the choices given, only choice B offers parallel construction and avoids other grammatical mistakes. Choice A is not parallel (*extending* and *ranks*). Choices C and D, while parallel (*extending* and *ranking*), are fragments. Finally, choice E is not parallel (*extends* and *ranking* and, similar to C and D, is also a fragment.

5. **The correct answer is C.** The correct comparison here is between Westbrook High’s *football team* and Glendale High’s *football team*. Choice A incorrectly compares Westbrook High’s football team to Glendale High and must be eliminated. Choice E repeats this error and also introduces a pronoun error, using *they* (plural) to refer to the *football team* (singular). Fortunately, choices B, C and D correct the parallelism mistake. However both choice B and choice D are wordy and awkward. Choice C demonstrates the clearest writing and is therefore the best answer.