Verb Tense

1. By the time it will get dark this evening, we will know who has made the team. No error
   A B C D E

2. Because the windows were open and the door was unlocked, the neighbors assumed that the homeowner is nearby. No error
   A B C
   D E

3. Maureen is happy with the outcome of the presidential election because she voted for the candidate who won. No error
   A B C
   D E

4. **When he behaved**, Tommy is the sweetest toddler in the world.
   (A) When he behaved
   (B) When he was behaving
   (C) When he behaves
   (D) When he was behaving
   (E) If he was behaving

5. When I was a child, I had to walk to school each day regardless of what the weather was like.
   (A) I had to walk to school each day regardless of what the weather was like
   (B) I had to walk to school each day regardless of what the weather is like
   (C) I had to walk to school each day regardless of what the weather had been like
   (D) I had to walk to school each day regardless of the weather
   (E) I had to walk every day to school no matter what the weather was like
Answers and Explanations

1. **The correct answer is A.** This is a complicated sentence, but to be correct, we would use present tense in the first phrase “By the time it gets dark this evening.”

2. **The correct answer is D.** Verb tenses should remain consistent unless there is a good reason to mix them. In this sentence, the other verbs (*were, was* and *assumed*) are all past tense, making *is* incorrect.

3. **The correct answer is E.** While it wouldn’t be incorrect to say that Maureen *was* happy, using the present tense (*is*) is fine as, presumably, her happiness continues.

4. **The correct answer is C.** The second part of the sentence uses present tense (*Tommy is*), therefore, absent any compelling reason to switch tense, the first part of the sentence should also use present tense.

5. **The correct answer is D.** It is the most concise of all the answer choices and avoids any pesky verb tense issues. The only other option would be choice A, but it is wordier. Thus, choice D is the credited response. Remember, you are selecting the best choice.