

Spotting and Fixing Errors: Sentence Structure, Punctuation, and Agreement

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After completing this chapter, you will be able to:

- Determine the correct punctuation and/or conjunctions to form a complete sentence
- Identify and correct inappropriate uses of semicolons
- Identify and correct inappropriate uses of commas, dashes, and colons
- Use punctuation to set off simple parenthetical elements
- Identify and correct verb agreement issues
- Identify and correct pronoun agreement issues
- Identify and correct modifier agreement issues
- Identify and correct inappropriate uses of apostrophes
- Identify and correct errors in parallel structure
- Identify and correct expressions that deviate from idiomatic English
- Determine the appropriate word in frequently confused pairs

SmartPoints®:

Sentence Structure and Punctuation, 85/300 (Very High Yield)

Agreement, 60/300 (High Yield, especially Verbs and Pronouns)

How Much Do You Know?

Directions: Try the following questions. The “Category” heading in the explanation for each question gives the title of the lesson that covers how to answer it. If you answered the question(s) for a given lesson correctly, you may be able to move quickly through that lesson. If you answered incorrectly, you may want to take your time on that lesson.

Questions 1–6 refer to the following passage.

The Hindenburg

Although they are best known today for their peculiar niche as floating commercials over sports **1** arenas, airships, now more commonly called “blimps,” widely used as passenger transportation in the early twentieth century. The most infamous was the *Hindenburg*. When the 804-foot *Hindenburg* was launched in 1936, it was the largest airship in the world. Like most airships, and more specifically zeppelins, of the period, **2** a light gas in the *Hindenburg* filled a simple balloon encased by a solid frame—in this case, hydrogen. In an age when airplanes could carry no more than 10 passengers at a time, **3** they could initially carry 50 passengers, a capacity that was later upgraded to 72. Transatlantic journeys in an airship could cut the travel time in half compared to voyages in ocean liners at the time.

Despite these advantages, the *Hindenburg* was hampered by many of the same drawbacks as other airships. Tickets to fly in the *Hindenburg* were not affordable for most people. The massive amount of fuel needed not only to fill the balloon **4** and to power the propellers made this airship very expensive to operate.

1. A) NO CHANGE
B) arenas; airships, more commonly called “blimps” today, widely used as
C) arenas, airships, more commonly called “blimps” today, were widely used as
D) arenas, airships, more commonly called “blimps” today, widely used to
2. A) NO CHANGE
B) the *Hindenburg*’s simple balloon was filled with a light gas encased by the solid frame
C) the solid frame of the *Hindenburg* encased a simple balloon filled with a light gas
D) the *Hindenburg* was built with a solid frame that encased a simple balloon filled with a light gas
3. A) NO CHANGE
B) it
C) the *Hindenburg*
D) each
4. A) NO CHANGE
B) but also
C) and also
D) nor

Worst of all was the safety concern: hydrogen gas is extremely flammable. Any spark or flame that came near the gas could cause a horrific **5** explosion, which is exactly what happened. On May 6, 1937, in Lakehurst, New Jersey, as the *Hindenburg* **6** landed, it suddenly burst into flames, killing 36 of the 97 passengers and crew on board. By the 1940s, commercial airplanes had advanced in development far beyond the airship's capacity. The airship thus became outdated as a mode of passenger service and acquired its modern-day role as an advertising platform.

5. A) NO CHANGE
B) explosion; which is
C) explosion: which is
D) explosion which—is
6. A) NO CHANGE
B) had landed
C) would have landed
D) was landing

Check Your Work

1. C

Difficulty: Hard

Category: Sentence Structure: The Basics

Getting to the Answer: The first sentence is long and grammatically complex. Identify the most important pieces and outline the structure. The sentence begins with the word “although,” which means that the first clause, “they are best known,” is dependent. The following clause, therefore, needs to be independent for the sentence to have a complete, grammatically correct structure. The second clause as written, “airships . . . widely used as passenger transportation,” is not an independent clause—it could not stand alone as its own complete sentence. Eliminate (A). Choice (B) is incorrect because the semicolon does not turn the second clause into an independent clause. Similarly, (D) does not make the second clause independent by replacing “as” with “to.” Choice (C) is correct because “airships . . . were widely used as passenger transportation” is an independent clause: it has a subject “airships” and a predicate verb “were used.”

2. D

Difficulty: Hard

Category: Agreement: Modifiers

Getting to the Answer: The phrases that precede the underlined portion are introductory modifiers. The subject of the sentence needs to immediately follow these modifiers. The introductory phrases talk about something that is like most airships; therefore, the subject must be comparable to most other airships. Neither “a light gas,” “the *Hindenburg*’s simple balloon,” nor the “solid frame” are comparable to “most airships.” The *Hindenburg* itself is a specific airship, which can be logically compared to most airships. Only (D) correctly places “the *Hindenburg*” immediately after the introductory phrase as the subject of the sentence. Additionally, the underlined portion must end with “a light gas” because the phrase after the dash specifies which gas: hydrogen.

3. C

Difficulty: Medium

Category: Agreement: Pronouns

Getting to the Answer: Complex sentences can often benefit from the use of pronouns, reducing wordiness and repetition. That said, make sure that the use of a

pronoun will not introduce ambiguity into the sentence. In a complicated sentence including multiple nouns, it is often better to avoid pronouns to preserve the clarity of the author’s claims. Choice (C) is correct because it avoids any confusion over what the pronoun refers to.

4. B

Difficulty: Medium

Category: Agreement: Idioms

Getting to the Answer: Check to see if the underlined section is part of an idiomatic expression, such as *either . . . or*. The sentence contains the first half of the idiomatic combination *not only . . . but also*. The use of “and” in this context is incorrect. Choice (B), “but also,” is correct.

5. A

Difficulty: Medium

Category: Sentence Structure: Commas, Dashes, and Colons

Getting to the Answer: Commas set off nonessential information from the main part of the sentence just as parentheses do. The sentence’s concluding phrase “which is exactly what happened” is not necessary for understanding the sentence’s main clause, which explains how a spark or flame could ignite the hydrogen and cause an explosion. The use of a semicolon or a colon is not appropriate for setting off nonessential information. Eliminate (B) and (C). A dash can replace a comma as a way to emphasize the parenthetical phrase, which would be appropriate here, but (D) misplaces the dash. Choice (A) is correct because it uses the necessary punctuation, a comma, in the proper location.

6. D

Difficulty: Hard

Category: Agreement: Verbs

Getting to the Answer: The sentence expresses a main action that occurs once, “burst,” while another action is in process, “landed.” An action that occurs once in the past should be in simple past tense. An action that is in process in the past—signaled by the word “as”—should be in past progressive tense, ending in *-ing*. Eliminate (A). Only (D) gives the verb in past progressive and is correct.

Sentence Structure: The Basics

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After this lesson, you will be able to:

- Determine the correct punctuation and/or conjunctions to form a complete sentence
- Identify and correct inappropriate uses of semicolons

To answer a question like this:

In the late spring of 1953, New Zealand mountaineer Sir Edmund Hillary and Nepalese Sherpa Tenzing Norgay became the first people to walk on the top of the world. After a grueling expedition that spanned several **1** months. They had finally reached the summit of Mount Everest.

- A) NO CHANGE
- B) months, and they
- C) months; they
- D) months, they

You need to know this:

Fragments and Run-Ons

A complete sentence must have both a subject and a verb and express a complete thought. If any one of these elements is missing, the sentence is a **fragment**. You can recognize a fragment because the sentence will not make sense as written. There are some examples in the table below.

Missing Element	Example	Corrected Sentence
Subject	<i>Ran a marathon.</i>	<i>Lola ran a marathon.</i>
Verb	<i>Lola a marathon.</i>	
Complete thought	<i>While Lola ran a marathon.</i>	<i>While Lola ran a marathon, her friends cheered for her.</i>

The fragment “While Lola ran a marathon” is an example of a dependent clause: it has a subject (Lola) and a verb (ran), but it does not express a complete thought because it starts with a subordinating conjunction (while). Notice what the word “while” does to the meaning: While Lola ran a marathon, what happened? To fix this type of fragment, eliminate the subordinating conjunction or join the dependent clause to an independent clause using a comma. Subordinating conjunctions are words and phrases such as *since*, *because*, *unless*, *although*, and *due to*.

Unlike a dependent clause, an independent clause can stand on its own as a complete sentence. If a sentence has more than one independent clause, those clauses must be properly joined. If they are not, the sentence is a **run-on**: *Lucas enjoys hiking, he climbs a new mountain every summer.* There are several ways to correct a run-on, as shown in the table below.

To Correct a Run-On	Example
Use a period	<i>Lucas enjoys hiking. He climbs a new mountain every summer.</i>
Use a semicolon	<i>Lucas enjoys hiking; he climbs a new mountain every summer.</i>
Use a colon	<i>Lucas enjoys hiking: he climbs a new mountain every summer.</i>
Use a dash	<i>Lucas enjoys hiking—he climbs a new mountain every summer.</i>
Make one clause dependent	<i>Since Lucas enjoys hiking, he climbs a new mountain every summer.</i>
Add a FANBOYS conjunction: For, And, Nor, But, Or, Yet, So	<i>Lucas enjoys hiking, so he climbs a new mountain every summer.</i>

Semicolons

Semicolons are used in two specific ways:

- A semicolon may join two independent clauses that are not connected by a FANBOYS conjunction (also called a coordinating conjunction), just as you would use a period.
- Semicolons may be used to separate items in a list if those items already include commas.

Use semicolons to . . .	Example
Join two independent clauses that are not connected by a comma and FANBOYS conjunction	<i>Gaby knew that her term paper would take at least four hours to write; she got started in study hall and then finished it at home.</i>
Separate sub-lists within a longer list when the sub-lists contain commas	<i>The team needed to bring uniforms, helmets, and gloves; oranges, almonds, and water; and hockey sticks, pucks, and skates.</i>

You need to do this:

To recognize and correct errors involving fragments, run-ons, and semicolons, familiarize yourself with the ways in which they are tested:

- Fragments
 - If a sentence is missing a subject, a verb, or a complete thought, it is a fragment.
 - Correct the fragment by adding the missing element.

- Run-ons
 - If a sentence includes two independent clauses, they must be properly joined.
 - Employ one of the following options to properly punctuate independent clauses:
 - Use a period.
 - Insert a semicolon.
 - Use a comma and a FANBOYS (for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so) conjunction.
 - Use a dash.
 - Make one clause dependent by using a subordinating conjunction (since, because, therefore, unless, although, due to, etc.).
- Semicolons
 - A semicolon is used to join two independent clauses that are not connected by a comma and FANBOYS conjunction.
 - Semicolons separate sub-lists within a longer list. (The items inside the sub-lists are separated by commas.)

Explanation:

The sentence before the period in the underlined segment is a fragment; it is a dependent clause that does not express a complete thought. Eliminate (A) because, as written, there is an error. Eliminate (B) because you need only one conjunction to join two clauses, not two. In (B), using both “although” and “and” creates an error. Eliminate (C) because it does not correct the original error: the semicolon serves exactly the same function as the period in the original. Choice **(D)** is correct.

If sentence formation or semicolons give you trouble, study the information above and try these Drill questions before completing the following Try on Your Own questions. Answers can be found on the next page.

Drill

- a. Correct the fragment by adding a subject: Brought snacks to the weekend study session.
- b. Correct the fragment by completing the thought: After getting to the stadium.
- c. Correct the run-on sentence with a punctuation mark: The new arts center just opened it has a crafts room for children under 13.
- d. Correct the run-on sentence with a punctuation mark: Herodotus is known as one of the first historians he is even called “The Father of History.”
- e. Make one clause dependent to correct the run-on sentence: Herodotus is sometimes accused of making up stories for his histories, he claimed he simply recorded what he had been told.

Try on Your Own

Directions: Take as much time as you need on these questions. Work carefully and methodically. There will be an opportunity for timed practice at the end of the chapter.

Questions 2–6 refer to the following passage.

The Sun

It is perhaps impossible to overestimate the impact of the Sun on our planet Earth. **2** The Sun is situated roughly 100 million miles away from the Earth, the Sun provides essentially all of Earth’s heat. Functioning like a great thermonuclear reactor, **3** the Sun’s core temperature of nearly 30 million degrees Fahrenheit. The energy sources we use daily to fuel our cars and heat our homes, resources like oil and coal harvested from deep within the Earth’s crust, were produced by the power of the Sun acting upon living organisms millions of years ago. The radiant energy of the Sun is the reason the Earth has **4** light, warmth, and other forms of electromagnetic waves; plants, animals, and all metabolic life; weather patterns, atmospheric movement, and many more of the Earth’s natural phenomena. Yet, while the Sun’s ability to provide heat and light can be easily felt by simply lying out on a beach or gazing up into a brilliant blue sky, closer inspection of the Sun’s dynamic surface through special telescopes has revealed activity capable of affecting the Earth in less obvious ways.

Drill answers from previous page:

Note: These are not the only ways to correct the sentences; your answers may differ.

- a. **My friend** brought snacks to the weekend study session.
- b. After getting to the stadium, **we went looking for our seats.**
- c. The new arts center just opened. **It** has a crafts room for children under 13.
- d. Herodotus is known as one of the first historians; he is even called “The Father of History.”
- e. **Although** Herodotus is sometimes accused of making up stories for his histories, he claimed he simply recorded what he had been told.

2. A) NO CHANGE
B) However, the Sun
C) Not many know that the Sun
D) Even though the Sun
3. A) NO CHANGE
B) the Sun has a core temperature
C) the core temperature of the Sun
D) the temperature of the Sun’s core
4. A) NO CHANGE
B) light, warmth, and other forms of electromagnetic waves—plants, animals, and all metabolic life—weather patterns, atmospheric movement, and many more of the Earth’s natural phenomena.
C) light, warmth, other forms of electromagnetic waves, plants, animals, all metabolic life, weather patterns, atmospheric movement, and many more of the Earth’s natural phenomena.
D) light, warmth, and other forms of electromagnetic waves, plants, animals, and all metabolic life, weather patterns, atmospheric movement, and many more of the Earth’s natural phenomena.

One of the most curious features of the Sun's violent surface is sunspots, which are dark stormy areas half the temperature of the Sun's surface and as large as 19,000 miles across. They were first viewed by telescope as early as **5** 1610 but scientists today know relatively little about them. Scientists have noticed that these spots seem to erupt and fade in 11-year cycles, affecting the Sun's luminosity and, in turn, the Earth's climate. Studies have shown that the charged particles released by solar flares, associated with sunspots, can react with the Earth's magnetic **6** field, the radiation can disrupt satellite communications, radio broadcasts, and even cell phone calls. As scientists continue to carefully observe such occurrences, referred to as "space weather," they gain a greater understanding of the powerful ability of the Sun to impact our lives.

5. A) NO CHANGE
B) 1610, but scientists
C) 1610 still scientists
D) 1610, still scientists
6. A) NO CHANGE
B) field, however the radiation
C) field so the radiation
D) field; the radiation

Sentence Structure: Commas, Dashes, and Colons

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After this lesson, you will be able to:

- Identify and correct inappropriate uses of commas, dashes, and colons
- Use punctuation to set off simple parenthetical elements

To answer a question like this:

But climbing Mount Everest may be easier than answering the question posed by decades of non-climbers: Why? Perhaps Mallory said it best in 1923 before his ill-fated **7** climb; “Because it is there.”

- A) NO CHANGE
- B) climb: “Because it is there.”
- C) climb. “Because it is there.”
- D) climb “Because it is there.”

You need to know this:

Answer choices often move punctuation marks around, replace them with other punctuation marks, or remove them altogether. When underlined portions include commas, dashes, or colons, check to make sure the punctuation is used correctly in context.

Commas

There are two ways in which commas are not interchangeable with any other punctuation: a series of items and introductory words or phrases.

Use commas to . . .	Comma(s)
Set off three or more items in a series	<i>Jeremiah packed a sleeping bag, a raincoat, and a lantern for his upcoming camping trip.</i>
Separate an introductory word or phrase from the rest of the sentence	<i>For example, carrots are an excellent source of several vitamins and minerals.</i>

Commas and Dashes

In many cases, either a comma or a dash may be used to punctuate a sentence. Note that only a comma can be used to set off a leading dependent clause from an independent clause.

Use commas or dashes to . . .	Comma(s)	Dash(es)
Separate independent clauses connected by a FANBOYS conjunction (For, And, Nor, But, Or, Yet, So)	<i>Jess finished her homework earlier than expected, so she started an assignment that was due the following week.</i>	<i>Jess finished her homework earlier than expected—so she started an assignment that was due the following week.</i>
Separate a dependent clause from an independent clause when the dependent clause is first	<i>Because Tyson wanted to organize his locker before class, he arrived at school a few minutes early.</i>	N/A
Separate parenthetical elements from the rest of the sentence (use either two commas or two dashes, not one of each; see below for more on parentheticals)	<i>Professor Mann, who is the head of the English department, is known for assigning extensive projects.</i>	<i>Professor Mann—who is the head of the English department—is known for assigning extensive projects.</i>

Colons and Dashes

Colons and dashes are used to include new ideas by introducing or explaining something or by breaking the flow of the sentence. Note that the clause before the colon or dash must be able to stand on its own as a complete sentence.

Use colons and dashes to . . .	Colon	Dash
Introduce and/or emphasize a short phrase, quotation, explanation, example, or list	<i>Sanjay had two important tasks to complete: a science experiment and an expository essay.</i>	<i>Sanjay had two important tasks to complete—a science experiment and an expository essay.</i>
Separate two independent clauses when the second clause explains, illustrates, or expands on the first sentence	<i>Highway 1 in Australia is one of the longest national highways in the world: it circles the entirety of the continent and connects every mainland state capital.</i>	<i>Highway 1 in Australia is one of the longest national highways in the world—it circles the entirety of the continent and connects every mainland state capital.</i>

Unnecessary Punctuation

Knowing when punctuation should not be used is equally important. If an underlined portion includes punctuation, take time to consider if it should be included at all.

Do NOT use punctuation to . . .	Incorrect	Correct
Separate a subject from its verb	<i>The diligent student council, meets every week.</i>	<i>The diligent student council meets every week.</i>
Separate a verb from its object or a preposition from its object	<i>The diligent student council meets, every week.</i>	<i>The diligent student council meets every week.</i>
Set off elements that are essential to a sentence's meaning	<i>The, diligent student, council meets every week.</i>	<i>The diligent student council meets every week.</i>
Separate adjectives that work together to modify a noun	<i>The diligent, student council meets every week.</i>	<i>The diligent student council meets every week.</i>

Parenthetical Elements

Parenthetical elements may appear at the beginning, in the middle, or at the end of a sentence. They must be properly punctuated with parentheses, commas, or dashes for the sentence to be grammatically correct. A phrase such as *the capital of France* is considered parenthetical if the rest of the sentence is grammatically correct when it is removed. Do not mix and match; a parenthetical element must begin and end with the same type of punctuation.

Parenthetical Element Placement	Parentheses	Comma(s)	Dash(es)
Beginning	N/A	<i>The capital of France, Paris is a popular tourist destination.</i>	N/A
Middle	<i>Paris (the capital of France) is a popular tourist destination.</i>	<i>Paris, the capital of France, is a popular tourist destination.</i>	<i>Paris—the capital of France—is a popular tourist destination.</i>
End	<i>A popular tourist destination is Paris (the capital of France).</i>	<i>A popular tourist destination is Paris, the capital of France.</i>	<i>A popular tourist destination is Paris—the capital of France.</i>

You need to do this:

If the underlined portion includes punctuation, ask yourself:

- Is the punctuation used correctly?
The punctuation needs to be the correct type (comma, dash, or colon) and in the correct location.
- Is the punctuation necessary?
If you cannot identify a reason why the punctuation is included, the punctuation should be removed.

Explanation:

The underlined segment includes a semicolon that is used incorrectly because it neither joins two independent clauses nor separates items containing commas in a series or list. The underlined segment here is intended to emphasize a short quotation, so a colon or dash would be appropriate. **(B)** is correct.

If commas, dashes, and colons give you trouble, study the information above and try these Drill questions before completing the following Try on Your Own questions. Edit each sentence to correct the punctuation issue. Answers can be found on the next page.

Drill

- a. For my birthday, I asked for my favorite dessert chocolate pecan pie.
- b. The story of Emperor Nero playing the fiddle while Rome burned has been debunked by historians but the saying based on it remains popular.
- c. Koalas' fingerprints are nearly indistinguishable from human fingerprints which has occasionally led to mistakes at crime scenes.
- d. Invented by Sir John Harrington in 1596 the flush toilet actually precedes modern indoor plumbing.
- e. Toni Morrison born Chloe Wofford is one of America's most celebrated writers.

Try on Your Own

Directions: Take as much time as you need on these questions. Work carefully and methodically. There will be an opportunity for timed practice at the end of the chapter.

Questions 8–15 refer to the following passage.

Mauritius

8 Although, most of the products we buy today are made abroad in places well-known to Americans, such as Mexico and China, a quick check of many clothing labels will reveal the name of a country that might not be so 9 familiar. Mauritius. Named in honor of Prince Maurice of Nassau by the Dutch who colonized it in 1638, this small island in the Indian Ocean has a complicated history influenced by several international powers. Since gaining independence in 10 1968—Mauritius has emerged as a stable democracy with one of Africa’s highest per capita incomes. Mauritius is considered a significant 11 player: in the modern global economy one of the few in the Southern Hemisphere.

Yet, before its hard-won economic and political stability, Mauritius underwent several tumultuous phases. After the Portuguese landed on the island in 1511, they hunted a large, slow-moving, native bird known as the dodo into extinction. The Portuguese

8. A) NO CHANGE
B) Although most
C) Although; most
D) Most
9. A) NO CHANGE
B) familiar and it’s Mauritius
C) familiar: Mauritius
D) familiar which is Mauritius
10. A) NO CHANGE
B) 1968; Mauritius
C) 1968 as Mauritius
D) 1968, Mauritius
11. A) NO CHANGE
B) player in the modern global economy, one
C) player—in the modern global economy—one
D) player in the modern, global economy one

Drill answers from previous page:

Note: These are not the only ways to correct the sentences; your answers may differ.

- For my birthday, I asked for my favorite dessert: chocolate pecan pie.
- The story of Emperor Nero playing the fiddle while Rome burned has been debunked by historians, but the saying based on it remains popular.
- Koalas’ fingerprints are nearly indistinguishable from human fingerprints—which has occasionally led to mistakes at crime scenes.
- Invented by Sir John Harrington in 1596, the flush toilet actually precedes modern indoor plumbing.
- Toni Morrison, born Chloe Wofford, is one of America’s most celebrated writers. OR Toni Morrison—born Chloe Wofford—is one of America’s most celebrated writers.

were followed by the Dutch, who brought waves of **12** traders, planters, and slaves; and indentured laborers, merchants, and artisans, whose collective arrival brought international recognition to Mauritius. In 1715, the island again changed hands, this time to the French, and in 1810, with a successful invasion during the Napoleonic Wars, the British became the fourth European power to rule the island. Yet it was during this period of changing **13** colonial powers—Mauritius was traded like a commodity, that the demographics of the island began to experience important changes with great political ramifications.

By the time slavery was abolished in 1835, for example, the growing Indian population, the Creoles who could trace their roots back to island's sugarcane plantations, and the Muslim community originating from present-day Pakistan far outnumbered the remaining Franco-Mauritian elites. And with these demographic changes came political change. The first step toward self-rule came with the legislative elections of **14** 1947 and in March of 1968, an official constitution was adopted. Today, Mauritius peacefully balances the diversity of its multicultural society and flourishes in international **15** trade through its advantageous geographic location and large labor force.

12. A) NO CHANGE
 B) traders, planters and slaves, indentured laborers, merchants and artisans,
 C) traders, planters, slaves, indentured laborers, merchants, artisans,
 D) traders, planters, slaves, indentured laborers, merchants, and artisans,
13. A) NO CHANGE
 B) colonial powers—Mauritius was traded like a commodity that
 C) colonial powers—Mauritius was traded like a commodity—that
 D) colonial powers, Mauritius was traded like a commodity that
14. A) NO CHANGE
 B) 1947, and in March
 C) 1947 and, in March
 D) 1947 and in March,
15. A) NO CHANGE
 B) trade, through
 C) trade through,
 D) trade; through

Agreement: Verbs

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

After this lesson, you will be able to:

- Identify and correct verb agreement issues

To answer a question like this:

For example, the editors had their work cut out for them when the part of the book devoted to avalanches and landslides **16** were found to be inaccurate.

- A) NO CHANGE
- B) was found
- C) are found
- D) is found

You need to know this:

Verb Tense

Verb tense indicates when an action or state of being took place: in the past, present, or future. The tense of the verb must fit the context of the passage. Each tense can express three different types of action.

Type of Action	Past	Present	Future
Single action occurring only once	Connor planted vegetables in the community garden.	Connor plants vegetables in the community garden.	Connor will plant vegetables in the community garden.
Action that is ongoing at some point in time	Connor was planting vegetables in the community garden this morning before noon.	Connor is planting vegetables in the community garden this morning before noon.	Connor will be planting vegetables in the community garden this morning before noon.
Action that is completed before some other action	Connor had planted vegetables in the community garden every year until he gave his job to Jasmine.	Connor has planted vegetables in the community garden since it started five years ago.	Connor will have planted vegetables in the community garden by the time the growing season starts.

Subject-Verb Agreement

A verb must agree with its subject in person and number:

- Person (first, second, or third)
 - First: *I **ask** a question.*
 - Second: *You **ask** a question.*
 - Third: *She **asks** a question.*
- Number (singular or plural)
 - Singular: *The apple **tastes** delicious.*
 - Plural: *Apples **taste** delicious.*

The noun closest to the verb is not always the subject: *The chair with the lion feet is an antique.* The singular verb in this sentence, *is*, is closest to the plural noun *feet*. However, the verb's actual subject is the singular noun *chair*, so the sentence is correct as written.

When a sentence includes two nouns, only the conjunction *and* forms a compound subject requiring a plural verb form:

- Plural: *Saliyah and Taylor **are** in the running club.*
- Singular: *Either Saliyah or Taylor **is** in the running club.*
- Singular: *Neither Saliyah nor Taylor **is** in the running club.*

Collective nouns are nouns that name entities with more than one member, such as *group*, *team*, and *family*. Even though these nouns represent more than one person, they are grammatically singular and require singular verb forms:

- *The collection of paintings **is** one of the most popular art exhibits in recent years.*
- *The team **looks** promising this year.*

You need to do this:

If the underlined portion includes a verb, check that the verb:

- Reflects the correct tense: does it fit the context?
- Agrees with the subject in person and number

Explanation:

The subject of the verb “were found” is the noun “part,” which is singular. The verb is plural, so there is an error. Rule out (A) and (C). (Note that the test makers like to put prepositional phrases or other descriptive phrases, such as the phrase “devoted to avalanches and landslides,” between the subject and verb to make the subject-verb agreement error trickier to spot.)

To decide between (B) and (D), look at the context defined by the other verb tense in the sentence. The editors “*had* their work cut out for them,” so the sentence describes past events. Choice **(B)** is also in the past tense and is consistent with this context. It is the correct answer.

If verbs give you trouble, study the information above and try these Drill questions before completing the following Try on Your Own questions. Edit each sentence to correct the verb issue. Turn the page to see the answers.

Drill

- a. Angel audition for the school play next week.
- b. The song, with its upbeat rhythm and catchy lyrics, were wildly popular.
- c. Either the governor or the lieutenant governor usually present the award.
- d. By the time the last runner completed the marathon, the winner has crossed the finish line hours ago.
- e. Few people know that Stephen Hawking both revolutionized physics and co-written children’s books with his daughter.

Try on Your Own

Directions: Take as much time as you need on these questions. Work carefully and methodically. There will be an opportunity for timed practice at the end of the chapter.

Questions 17–22 refer to the following passage.

SMOM

At 69 Condotti Street in Rome sits what **17** is believed by many to be the smallest country in the world, a country that few have ever heard of. The Sovereign Military and Hospitaller Order of St. John of Jerusalem of Rhodes and of Malta, or SMOM, **18** were an ancient order of knights well known for its humanitarian activities. The order’s headquarters in Rome—a mere 6,000 square meters, or about one acre—is considered an independent state by at least 75 nations. How SMOM got to Rome is a story almost a millennium old, spanning as many places as the order’s official name suggests.

SMOM began in 1099, during the First Crusade, a large-scale military conflict pitting Christian armies against the Muslim rulers of what is now Israel. The order’s task was to protect and defend Christian pilgrims traveling to Jerusalem as well as **19** providing a hospital for their care. Though it began as a religious order, SMOM developed into a military knighthood as a result of the volatile political situation.

First because of the ongoing conflict between Muslims and Christians and, later, Napoleon Bonaparte’s expansionist ambitions, the order was forced to move a number of times. After the Muslims had taken Jerusalem in the 1170s, forcing SMOM to relocate first to the Mediterranean island of Cyprus and then to the nearby island of Rhodes, the Ottoman Turks

17. A) NO CHANGE
 B) are believed
 C) is to be believed
 D) are to be believed
18. A) NO CHANGE
 B) was
 C) are
 D) is
19. A) NO CHANGE
 B) to provide
 C) providing them
 D) ensuring availability of

20 had seized Rhodes in 1522, forcing SMOM to move again, this time to Malta. Then 21 Napoleon drives the order from Malta in 1798, and the island fell into British hands soon after. SMOM wandered from city to city in Italy, finally establishing its current headquarters in 1834.

Today, SMOM 22 will concentrate on providing humanitarian aid to everyone regardless of creed, establishing hospitals and charities in all corners of the world. Its many activities include vaccination programs, refugee relief, and philanthropic works to combat deadly diseases, such as leprosy and malnutrition.

20. A) NO CHANGE
B) seized
C) have seized
D) would have seized
21. A) NO CHANGE
B) Napoleon drove
C) Napoleon had driven
D) Napoleon was driving
22. A) NO CHANGE
B) will be concentrating
C) concentrates
D) concentrates and is concentrating

Drill answers:

Note: These are not the only ways to correct the sentences; your answers may differ.

- Angel **will** audition for the school play next week.
- The song, with its upbeat rhythm and catchy lyrics, **was** wildly popular.
- Either the governor or the lieutenant governor usually **presents** the award.
- By the time the last runner completed the marathon, the winner **had** crossed the finish line hours ago.
- Few people know that Stephen Hawking both revolutionized physics and **co-wrote** children's books with his daughter.

Agreement: Pronouns

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

After this lesson, you will be able to:

- Identify and correct pronoun agreement issues

To answer a question like this:

In their search for Ozark cavefish, the researchers were encouraged by the stability of the caves' ground-water as well as by ²³ its length and by the presence of bats.

- A) NO CHANGE
- B) it's
- C) their
- D) there

You need to know this:

Pronoun Forms

A pronoun is a word that takes the place of a noun. Pronouns can take three different forms, each of which is used based on the grammatical role it plays in the sentence.

Form	Pronouns	Example
Subjective: The pronoun is used as the subject.	I, you, she, he, it, we, they, who	<i>Rivka is the student who will lead the presentation.</i>
Objective: The pronoun is used as the object of a verb or a preposition.	me, you, her, him, it, us, them, whom	<i>With whom will Rivka present the scientific findings?</i>
Possessive: The pronoun expresses ownership.	my, mine, your, yours, his, her, hers, its, our, ours, their, theirs, whose	<i>Rivka will likely choose a partner whose work is excellent.</i>

Note that a pronoun in subjective form can, logically, be the subject in a complete sentence. Pronouns that are in objective form cannot.

When there are two pronouns or a noun and a pronoun in a compound structure, drop the other noun or pronoun to tell which form to use. For example: *Leo and me walked into town.* If you were talking about yourself only, you would say, "I walked into town," not "Me walked into town." Therefore, the correct form is subjective, and the original sentence should read: *Leo and I walked into town.*

Pronoun-Antecedent Agreement

A pronoun’s antecedent is the noun it logically represents in a sentence. If the noun is singular, the pronoun must be singular; if the noun is plural, the pronoun must be plural.

Antecedent	Incorrect	Correct
selection	<i>The selection of books was placed in their designated location.</i>	<i>The selection of books was placed in its designated location.</i>
A woman	<i>A woman visiting the zoo fed the giraffes all of the lettuce they had purchased.</i>	<i>A woman visiting the zoo fed the giraffes all of the lettuce she had purchased.</i>
sapling	<i>The sapling, along with dozens of flowers, was relocated to where they would thrive.</i>	<i>The sapling, along with dozens of flowers, was relocated to where it would thrive.</i>
apples	<i>If apples are unripe, it should not be purchased.</i>	<i>If apples are unripe, they should not be purchased.</i>

Ambiguous Pronouns

A pronoun is ambiguous if its antecedent is either missing or unclear. When you see an underlined pronoun, make sure you can identify the noun to which it refers.

Ambiguous Pronoun Use	Corrected Sentence
<i>Anthony walked with Cody to the ice cream shop, and he bought a banana split.</i>	<i>Anthony walked with Cody to the ice cream shop, and Cody bought a banana split.</i>

You need to do this:

If the underlined portion includes a pronoun, *find the logical antecedent*. If there is no clear antecedent, the pronoun is ambiguous and this error must be corrected. Then, check that the pronoun:

- Uses the correct form
 - If the pronoun is the subject of the sentence, use a subjective pronoun such as I, you, she, he, it, we, they, or who.
 - If the pronoun is an object within the sentence, use an objective pronoun such as me, you, her, him, it, us, they, or whom.
 - If the pronoun indicates possession, use a possessive pronoun such as my, mine, your, yours, his, her, hers, its, our, ours, their, theirs, or whose.
- Agrees with its antecedent
 - A singular antecedent requires a singular pronoun; a plural antecedent requires a plural pronoun.

Explanation:

The phrase “its length” logically refers to the caves, not the groundwater. You need the possessive form, but because the word “caves” is plural, you need the plural “their.” Choice (C) is correct.

If pronouns give you trouble, study the information above and try these Drill questions before completing the following Try on Your Own questions. Edit each sentence to correct the pronoun issue. Answers can be found on the next page.

Drill

- a. Although the teacher gave the student detention after school, she was not angry.
- b. My uncle likes to go bowling with my sister and I.
- c. The box of nails has been moved from their usual place in the shed.
- d. My favorite singer, who I have wanted to see in person for years, will give a concert a week after my birthday.
- e. The cathedral of Notre Dame, with vast vaulted ceilings and intricate carvings, never fails to amaze their visitors.

Try on Your Own

Directions: Take as much time as you need on these questions. Work carefully and methodically. There will be an opportunity for timed practice at the end of the chapter.

Questions 24–29 refer to the following passage.

Akira Kurosawa

What do samurai,¹ cowboys, shogun,² gangsters, peasants, and William Shakespeare all have in common?

24 He is just one of the varied influences on the work of Akira Kurosawa (1910–1998), a Japanese film director considered by movie critic Leonard Maltin to be “one of the undisputed giants of cinema.” Over his career, Kurosawa’s unique blend of Western themes and Eastern settings made **25** them arguably the most important Japanese filmmaker in history.

The most famous example of Kurosawa’s style is his 1954 film *Seven Samurai*. Although the setting is medieval Japan, with peasants and samurai, **26** its story is influenced by Western films: a village, terrorized by local bandits, turns to seven down-on-their-luck yet good-hearted samurai for the protection

24. A) NO CHANGE
B) His is just one
C) They are just some
D) Theirs are just some

25. A) NO CHANGE
B) he
C) him
D) his

26. A) NO CHANGE
B) their
C) the film’s
D) the setting’s

Drill answers from previous page:

Note: These are not the only ways to correct the sentences; your answers may differ.

- Although the teacher gave the student detention after school, **the student** was not angry.
- My uncle likes to go bowling with my sister and **me**.
- The box of nails has been moved from **its** usual place in the shed.
- My favorite singer, **whom** I have wanted to see in person for years, will give a concert a week after my birthday.
- The cathedral of Notre Dame, with vast vaulted ceilings and intricate carvings, never fails to amaze **its** visitors.

¹ samurai: noble warriors of medieval Japan, similar to European knights

² shogun: military dictators of Japan from 1603 to 1868

27 they need. Like movie cowboys, these samurai are romantic heroes, sure of their morals and battling clear forces of evil. The traditional Japanese version of a samurai was a noble and often distant symbol of Japan's imperial heritage, but Kurosawa considered the main characters differently. To 28 him, the film's samurai were distinctly human characters, each with a conscience and the will to act to correct the wrongs around them.

Although Kurosawa's films enjoy a lofty reputation in the West, many critics and moviegoers in his home country view his films as neither original nor particularly Japanese. His use of Western ideals and themes—even reinterpreting Western authors such as William Shakespeare and Fyodor Dostoyevsky—leads Japanese cinema lovers, many of 29 who see Kurosawa's use of Japanese culture as mere “window dressing” applied to essentially foreign stories, to regard his work with suspicion. Ironically, it was Kurosawa's success that opened the door for other, more “Japanese” directors, such as Yasujiro Ozu and Kenji Mizoguchi, to gain a wider audience.

27. A) NO CHANGE
 B) it needs.
 C) he needs.
 D) you need.

28. A) NO CHANGE
 B) me
 C) you
 D) us

29. A) NO CHANGE
 B) whose
 C) which
 D) whom

Agreement: Modifiers

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After this lesson, you will be able to:

- Identify and correct modifier agreement issues
- Identify and correct inappropriate uses of apostrophes

To answer a question like this:

30 Called “Mother of the Universe” by the Tibetan people, the lives of George Mallory and Andrew Irvine had already been claimed by Mount Everest, despite its maternal appellation, before Hillary and Norgay finally conquered its icy peak.

- A) NO CHANGE
- B) Hillary and Norgay, called “Mother of the Universe” by the Tibetan people, finally conquered the icy peak of Mount Everest, which had already claimed the lives of George Mallory and Andrew Irvine, despite its maternal appellation.
- C) The lives of George Mallory and Andrew Irvine, called “Mother of the Universe” by the Tibetan people, had already been claimed by Mount Everest, despite its maternal appellation, before Hillary and Norgay finally conquered its icy peak.
- D) Called “Mother of the Universe” by the Tibetan people, Mount Everest had already, despite its maternal appellation, claimed the lives of George Mallory and Andrew Irvine before Hillary and Norgay finally conquered its icy peak.

You need to know this:

A **modifier** is a word or phrase that describes, clarifies, or provides additional information about another part of the sentence. Modifier questions require you to identify the part of a sentence being modified and use the appropriate modifier in the proper place.

In order to be grammatically correct, the modifier must be placed as close to the word it describes as possible. Use context clues in the passage to identify the correct placement of a modifier; a misplaced modifier can cause confusion and is always incorrect on test day.

Note that a common way the SAT tests modifiers is with modifying phrases at the beginning of a sentence. Just like any other modifier, the modifying phrase grammatically modifies whatever is right next to it in the sentence. For example, consider the sentence, “While walking to the bus stop, the rain drenched Bob.” The initial phrase, “While walking to the bus stop,” grammatically modifies “the rain,” creating a nonsense sentence; the rain can’t walk to the bus stop. The writer meant that Bob was walking to the bus stop, so the sentence should read, “While walking to the bus stop, Bob was drenched by the rain.”

Modifier/Modifying Phrase	Incorrect	Correct
nearly	Andre nearly watched the play for four hours.	Andre watched the play for nearly four hours.
in individual containers	The art teacher handed out paints to students in individual containers .	The art teacher handed out paints in individual containers to students.
A scholar athlete	A scholar athlete , maintaining high grades in addition to playing soccer were expected of Maya.	A scholar athlete , Maya was expected to maintain high grades in addition to playing soccer.

Adjectives and Adverbs

Use adjectives only to modify nouns and pronouns. Use adverbs to modify everything else.

- **Adjectives** are single-word modifiers that describe nouns and pronouns: *Ian conducted an **efficient** lab experiment.*
- **Adverbs** are single-word modifiers that describe verbs, adjectives, or other adverbs: *Ian **efficiently** conducted a lab experiment.*

Note that nouns can sometimes be used as adjectives. For example, in the phrase “the fashion company’s autumn line,” the word “fashion” functions as an adjective modifying “company,” and the word “autumn” functions as an adjective modifying “line.”

Comparative/Superlative

When comparing similar things, use adjectives that match the number of items being compared. When comparing two items or people, use the **comparative** form of the adjective. When comparing three or more items or people, use the **superlative** form.

Comparative (two items)	Superlative (three or more items)
better, more, newer, older, shorter, taller, worse, younger	best, most, newest, oldest, shortest, tallest, worst, youngest

Possessive Nouns and Pronouns

Possessive nouns and pronouns indicate that something belongs to someone or something. In general, possessive nouns are written with an apostrophe, while possessive pronouns are not.

To spot errors in possessive noun or pronoun construction, look for . . .	Incorrect	Correct
Two nouns in a row	<i>The professors lectures were both informative and entertaining.</i>	<i>The professor's lectures were both informative and entertaining.</i>
Pronouns with apostrophes	<i>The book is her's.</i>	<i>The book is hers.</i>
Words that sound alike	<i>The three friends decided to ride there bicycles to the park over they're where their going to enjoy a picnic lunch.</i>	<i>The three friends decided to ride their bicycles to the park over there where they're going to enjoy a picnic lunch.</i>

Apostrophes

Use an apostrophe to . . .	Example
Indicate the possessive form of a single noun	<i>My oldest sister's soccer game is on Saturday.</i>
Indicate the possessive form of a plural noun	<i>My two older sisters' soccer games are on Saturday.</i>
Indicate a contraction (e.g., <i>don't</i> , <i>can't</i>)	<i>They've won every soccer match this season.</i>

Note that plural nouns are formed without an apostrophe.

Incorrect	Correct
<i>Sting ray's are cartilaginous fish related to shark's.</i>	<i>Sting rays are cartilaginous fish related to sharks.</i>
<i>There are many carnival's in this area every summer.</i>	<i>There are many carnivals in this area every summer.</i>

To check whether *it's* is appropriate, replace it in the sentence with *it is* or *it has*. If the sentence no longer makes sense, *it's* is incorrect. The following sentence is correct:

The tree frog blends perfectly into its surroundings. When it holds still, it's nearly invisible.

Note that *its'* and *its's* are never correct.

You need to do this:

If the underlined portion includes a modifier, determine whether the modifier:

- Is placed correctly
 - Is it as near as possible to the word it logically modifies?
 - If it is not in the correct place, where should it be moved?
- Agrees with the word or words it is describing
 - Does the sentence require an adjective or an adverb?
 - Does the noun or pronoun show proper possession?

If the underlined portion includes an apostrophe, make sure it correctly indicates either possession or a contraction. If an apostrophe is missing, select the answer choice that places it in the correct location.

Explanation:

The phrase “despite its maternal appellation” indicates that it was Mount Everest that was known in Tibetan culture as the “Mother of the Universe.” That means “Mount Everest” must be placed immediately next to the phrase, “[c]alled ‘Mother of the Universe’ by the Tibetan people.” This is not the case in the current sentence, so there is a modification error. The only choice that corrects the error is **(D)**.

If modifiers give you trouble, study the information above and try these Drill questions before completing the following Try on Your Own questions. Edit each sentence to correct the modifier or apostrophe issue. Answers can be found on the next page.

Drill

- a. Computers have grown exponential more efficient since their invention.
- b. Estella chose to take the route with the most attractively scenery to her destination.
- c. The leaf-tailed gecko’s amazing natural camouflage enables it to blend perfectly into it’s surroundings.
- d. Between basketball and baseball, basketball is the most popular sport in the United States.
- e. From Edgar Allan Poe to Monty Python, the infamous Spanish Inquisition has provided material for many artists.

Try on Your Own

Directions: Take as much time as you need on these questions. Work carefully and methodically. There will be an opportunity for timed practice at the end of the chapter.

Questions 31–37 refer to the following passage.

Sergei Eisenstein

Considered the father of the montage, a popular cinematic technique that involves a rapid succession of shots, often superimposed, ³¹ the modern movie has as one of its principal architects Russian director Sergei Eisenstein. Although his career was not particularly prolific—he completed only seven feature-length films—Eisenstein’s work contains a clarity and sharpness of composition that make the depth of his plots and the ³² powerfully complexity of his juxtaposed images easily accessible to most viewers. In fact, few filmmakers were ³³ most instrumental in pushing the envelope of the established, conservative nineteenth-century Victorian theatre than Eisenstein, whose films helped to usher in a new era of abstract thought and expression in art.

Eisenstein’s feature debut, a film entitled *Statchka* (*Strike* in English) released in 1925, was many ³⁴ moviegoer’s first experience of montage on the big screen. Based on the contemporary theory of biomechanics and criticizing the mechanical and

31. A) NO CHANGE
B) the modern movie has Russian director Sergei Eisenstein to thank as one of its principal architects.
C) the Russian director Sergei Eisenstein was one of the principal architects of the modern movie.
D) critics name the Russian director Sergei Eisenstein as one of the principal architects of the modern movie.
32. A) NO CHANGE
B) powerful
C) power
D) power of
33. A) NO CHANGE
B) more instrumental
C) the best at being instrumental
D) better at instrumentally
34. A) NO CHANGE
B) movie’s goer
C) moviegoers
D) moviegoers’

Drill answers from previous page:

Note: These are not the only ways to correct the sentences; your answers may differ.

- Computers have grown **exponentially** more efficient since their invention.
- Estella chose to take the route with the most **attractive** scenery to her destination.
- The leaf-tailed gecko’s amazing natural camouflage enables it to blend perfectly into **its** surroundings.
- Between basketball and baseball, basketball is the **more** popular sport in the United States.
- The infamous Spanish Inquisition has provided material for many artists, **from Edgar Allan Poe to Monty Python.**

repetitive movements required of exploited factory workers, ³⁵ Eisenstein's montage consisted of a powerful sequence of conflicting images that were able to abbreviate time spans in the film while introducing new metaphors and allusions to the storyline. Essentially, Eisenstein sought to use the montage to create a cumulative emotional effect that was greater than the sum of the individual shots.

³⁶ Enormously, it was with the successful technique of montage that Eisenstein's work caught the eye of the new Communist Party leaders in Moscow, who saw in his cinematic style a film for the "common man." His next two films, *Battleship Potemkin* and *October: Ten Days That Shook the World*, were commissioned by party officials in an attempt to use Eisenstein's mass appeal to disseminate Soviet propaganda. As a result, these achievements have been frequently criticized ³⁷ for they're lack of artistic integrity. Yet, in the end, regardless of politics, Eisenstein's films continue to have an undeniably significant and lasting impact on filmmakers.

35. A) NO CHANGE
 B) Eisenstein arranged a powerful sequence of conflicting images into a montage that was
 C) Eisenstein used conflicting images in a powerful sequence, composing a montage that was
 D) Eisenstein created a montage consisting of a powerful sequence of conflicting images that were
36. A) NO CHANGE
 B) It was enormously with the successful technique of montage that Eisenstein's work caught the eye of the new Communist Party leaders
 C) It was with the enormously successful technique of montage that Eisenstein's work caught the eye of the new Communist Party leaders
 D) It was with the successful technique of montage that Eisenstein's work caught the eye of the enormously new Communist Party leaders
37. A) NO CHANGE
 B) therefore
 C) for their
 D) for there

Agreement: Parallelism

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

After this lesson, you will be able to:

- Identify and correct errors in parallel structure

To answer a question like this:

Like other ectotherms, Galapagos lava lizards are dependent on their environment for warmth, so they can often be seen basking in the sun to increase their body temperature, which in turn determines their speed of locomotion. The lizards can move very quickly during the day **38** but at night, only slowly.

- A) NO CHANGE
- B) but at nighttime, that they must move slowly.
- C) but at night, they are slower.
- D) but only slowly at night.

You need to know this:

Verbs in a list, a compound, or a comparison must be parallel in form.

Feature	Example	Parallel Form
A list	<i>Chloe formulated a question, conducted background research, and constructed a hypothesis before starting the experiment.</i>	3 simple past verb phrases
A compound	<i>Hunting and fishing were essential to the survival of Midwestern Native American tribes such as the Omaha.</i>	2 -ing verb forms
A comparison	<i>Garrett enjoys sculpting as much as painting.</i>	2 -ing verb forms

Note that parallelism may be tested using other parts of speech besides verbs. In general, any items in a list, compound, or comparison must be in parallel form. For example, if a list starts with a noun, the other items in the list must also be nouns; if it starts with an adjective, the other items must be adjectives, etc.

Incorrect	Correct
Naomi likes pumpkin pie and to drink coffee on chilly weekend afternoons.	Naomi likes pumpkin pie and coffee on chilly weekend afternoons.
Which of the dogs is the most docile and better behaved?	Which of the dogs is the most docile and best behaved?
	Which of the dogs is the more docile and better behaved?

You need to do this:

If the underlined segment contains part or all of a list, compound, or comparison, check that all elements are in parallel form.

Explanation:

The word “but” signals a compound. The elements before and after the word “but” must therefore be parallel. In the sentence as written, in the first half of the compound, the adverbial phrase “very quickly” precedes the prepositional phrase “during the day,” but in the second half, the phrase “only slowly” follows the phrase “at night.” Thus, the structure as written is not parallel, and (A) is incorrect. Choices (B) and (C) do not fix the issue; both place the phrase “at night” (or “at nighttime”) in the wrong place. Moreover, (B) introduces the word “that,” which creates a dependent clause, turning the sentence into a fragment that does not express a complete thought, and (C) creates a punctuation error: it turns the word “but” into a coordinating conjunction by introducing an independent clause with a subject and verb, “they are,” thus creating a need for a comma before the word “but.” That leaves (D), which does introduce parallel structure and is correct.

Try on Your Own

Directions: Take as much time as you need on these questions. Work carefully and methodically. There will be an opportunity for timed practice at the end of the chapter.

Questions 39–43 refer to the following passage.

Houses by Mail

Long before the advent of the giant internet retailers like Amazon and Wayfair, and long before there was an internet, there was the Sears Catalog. It was an immense book that ³⁹ exceeded 600 pages in length and there was seemingly every item that a person might buy or dream of buying. Furthermore, it offered a vastly larger selection and lower prices than local stores could do. From pocket watches to patent medicines, ⁴⁰ women’s gowns and water pumps, from hunting rifles to horse-drawn plows, the Sears Catalog offered it all. Whatever you wanted, you simply mailed your order form and payment to the company’s Chicago headquarters, and days or weeks later, your order would arrive at your ⁴¹ mailbox, local post office, or at the freight depot.

39. A) NO CHANGE
 B) exceeded 600 pages in length and in it was seemingly
 C) exceeded 600 pages in length and seemingly
 D) exceeded 600 pages in length and advertised seemingly
40. A) NO CHANGE
 B) as well as women’s gowns and water pumps
 C) from women’s gowns to water pumps
 D) and women’s gowns to water pumps
41. A) NO CHANGE
 B) mailbox, at the local post office, or freight depot.
 C) mailbox, local post office, or the freight depot.
 D) mailbox, local post office, or freight depot.

Amazingly, there was a period from 1908 to 1940 when you could order an entire house by mail from Sears. In fact, Sears issued a completely separate catalog—*Sears Modern Homes*—specifically to market these homes by mail. Over the 33 years of the program, buyers had the choice of some 370 home designs and floor plans. What’s more, the homes offered were not just simple cottages: designs ranged from modest, two-room bungalows to impressive, multi-story mansions that featured ⁴² intricate decorative elements, servants’ quarters, and wrap-around porches.

The homes came in kit form, with all lumber pre-cut and fitted. The kits were delivered by railroad freight cars to the local train depot to be picked up by the buyer and brought to the building site. Each kit could consist of as many as 30,000 pieces, and Sears guaranteed that “a man of average skills” could assemble the home in under 90 days. While many buyers built their own homes, ⁴³ for others, local contractors or builders did the work. It’s a tribute to the quality of the Sears homes, and their builders, that some 70 percent of these kit houses are still standing to this day.

42. A) NO CHANGE
 B) intricate decorative elements, quarters for servants, and wrap-around porches.
 C) intricate decorative elements, servants’ quarters, and porches that wrapped around the house.
 D) intricate elements of decoration, quarters for servants, and wrap-around porches.
43. A) NO CHANGE
 B) others hired local contractors or builders to do the work.
 C) local contractors or builders might be hired by others to do the work.
 D) the services of local contractors or builders could also be used.

Agreement: Idioms

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After this lesson, you will be able to:

- Identify and correct expressions that deviate from idiomatic English
- Determine the appropriate word in frequently confused pairs

To answer a question like this:

44 The goal of the conference was not only to find ways to reduce carbon emissions but to provide information to communities threatened by sea level rise as well.

- A) NO CHANGE
- B) Not only was the goal of the conference to find ways to reduce carbon emissions, albeit also to provide information to communities threatened by sea level rise.
- C) The goal of the conference was not only to find ways to reduce carbon emissions, and to provide information to communities whom sea level rise threatens.
- D) The goal of the conference was not only to find ways to reduce carbon emissions but also to provide information to communities threatened by sea level rise.

You need to know this:

An **idiom** is a combination of words that must be used together to convey either a figurative or literal meaning. Idioms are tested in three ways:

1. Proper preposition use in context: the preposition must reflect the writer's intended meaning.
*She waits **on** customers.*
*She waits **for** the bus.*
*She waits **with** her friends.*
2. Idiomatic expressions: some words or phrases must be used together to be correct.
*Simone will **either** bike **or** run to the park.*
***Neither** the principal **nor** the teachers will tolerate tardiness.*
*This fall, Shari is playing **not only** soccer **but also** field hockey.*
3. Implicit double negatives: some words imply a negative and therefore cannot be paired with an explicit negative. The words *barely*, *hardly*, and *scarcely* fall into this category.
*Correct: Janie **can hardly** wait for vacation.*
*Incorrect: Janie **can't hardly** wait for vacation.*

Frequently Tested Prepositions	Idiomatic Expressions	Words That Can't Pair with Negative Words
at	as . . . as	barely
by	between . . . and	hardly
for	both . . . and	scarcely
from	either . . . or	
of	neither . . . nor	
on	just as . . . so too	
to	not only . . . but also	
with	prefer . . . to	

Commonly Confused Words

English contains many pairs of words that sound alike but are spelled differently and have different meanings, such as *accept* (to take or receive something that is offered) and *except* (with the exclusion of).

Other words, such as *among* (in a group of, or surrounded by, multiple things or people) and *between* (distinguishing one thing from one other thing), do not sound alike but have similar meanings that are often confused.

You'll want to familiarize yourself with the following list of commonly misused words so you can spot them on test day.

Accept: to take or receive something that is offered	<i>My niece accepted her pile of birthday gifts with great enthusiasm.</i>
Except: with the exclusion of	<i>All of the presents are toys except for a box containing a popular book series.</i>

Affect: to act on, to have influence on something	<i>The dreary, rainy weather negatively affected Rahul's mood.</i>
Effect: something that is produced by a cause; a consequence	<i>A recent study explored the effects of weather on mental well-being.</i>

Lay: to put or place something	<i>My boss asked me to lay the report on her desk before I left for the day.</i>
Lie: to rest or recline	<i>After a long day of work, I just want to lie down on the couch.</i>

Raise: to build or lift up something; to support the growth of someone	<i>Many books are dedicated to the topic of raising children.</i>
Rise: to get up	<i>Ted likes to rise early in the morning to exercise before his children wake up.</i>
Whose: a possessive pronoun	<i>Whose uniform shirt is this?</i>
Who's: a contraction meaning "who is"	<i>Who's responsible for ordering new uniforms?</i>
Their: a possessive pronoun for a plural noun or pronoun	<i>The college students plan to travel internationally after their graduation.</i>
They're: a contraction for "they are"	<i>They're going to visit several countries in East Asia.</i>
There: at a certain point or place	<i>The students are excited to experience the foods and cultures there.</i>
There's: a contraction for "there is"	<i>There's a tour of an ancient palace that they're looking forward to seeing.</i>
Among: in a group of, or surrounded by, multiple things or people	<i>Navya was among many doctoral candidates who visited the university.</i>
Between: distinguishing one thing from one other thing	<i>Navya had to decide between her top two doctoral program choices.</i>
Amount: sum or quantity of multiple things that cannot be counted	<i>The amount of pollution in the ocean is affecting dolphin populations.</i>
Number: Sum or quantity of a finite collection that can be counted	<i>Scientists report that the number of dolphins has decreased significantly.</i>
Less: a smaller extent or amount of things that cannot be counted	<i>The common supermarket sign "10 items or less" is actually incorrect.</i>
Fewer: of a smaller number, referring to things that can be counted	<i>Since the items can be counted, the sign should read "10 items or fewer."</i>
Much: great in quantity, referring to things that cannot be counted	<i>My sister has much more patience than I have.</i>
Many: great in quantity, referring to things that can be counted	<i>Many of her friends admire her ability to stay calm in difficult situations.</i>

Good: satisfactory in quality, quantity, or degree; adjective	<i>Dakota considered both the good and bad effects of wind energy before composing her essay.</i>
Well: To perform an action in a satisfactory manner; adverb	<i>Dakota wrote her essay so well that her professor used it as an example of excellent persuasive writing.</i>

You need to do this:

- If the underlined portion includes a preposition, a conjunction, or *barely/hardly/scarcely*, look for a common idiom error.
- If the underlined segment includes a commonly misused word, check the context to determine whether it is used properly.

Explanation:

A sentence that contains the phrase *not only* must also contain the phrase *but also* (and vice versa). The only choice that includes the phrase *but also* is **(D)**, making it the correct answer.

If idioms give you trouble, study the information above and try these Drill questions before completing the following Try on Your Own questions. Edit each sentence to correct the incorrect idiom. Answers can be found on the next page.

Drill

- When Fatima returned home from school, she was unpleasantly surprised to find that her hamster had escaped to its cage again.
- The surgeon took great pride of her work, saying she was honored to be able to help when her patients thanked her.
- Neither apples or cherries will grow in the Phillipines due to its hot climate.
- The day after Kumar tried yoga for the first time, he was so sore he couldn't hardly move.
- The attorney wanted to except the case but couldn't because his caseload was already full.

Try on Your Own

Directions: Take as much time as you need on these questions. Work carefully and methodically. There will be an opportunity for timed practice at the end of the chapter.

Questions 45–50 refer to the following passage.

The Intriguing Opossum

Much maligned as a repulsive nuisance, the opossum is actually one of North America’s most interesting animals, exhibiting many notable characteristics. For example, opossums boast an incredible array of 50 razor-sharp teeth, the most of any mammal in the world. Also, because opossums are partially or totally immune, ⁴⁵ neither rabies or snake venom presents much of a danger to them.

While their beady eyes, pointy snouts, and bald tails might make them seem like a cousin of the rat, opossums are actually closely related to the kangaroo and are the only marsupial native to the continent. One of the most primitive animals, existing since the time of the dinosaurs, opossums have survived for millions of years by adapting to diverse habitats—including dense urban areas—and food supplies. ⁴⁶ There isn’t hardly anything that opossums will not eat; included in their possible diet are rodents, birds, frogs, eggs, insects,

45. A) NO CHANGE
 B) neither rabies nor snake venom presents much of a danger to them.
 C) not even rabies nor snake venom presents much of a danger to them.
 D) not much of a danger is presented by even rabies or snake venom.
46. A) NO CHANGE
 B) There is hardly nothing that opossums will not eat;
 C) There is hardly anything that opossums will not eat;
 D) Opossums will not eat hardly anything;

Drill answers from previous page:

Note: These are not the only ways to correct the sentences; your answers may differ.

- When Fatima returned home from school, she was unpleasantly surprised to find that her hamster had escaped **from** its cage again.
- The surgeon took great pride **in** her work, saying she was honored to be able to help when her patients thanked her.
- Neither apples **nor** cherries will grow in the Phillipines due to its hot climate.
- The day after Kumar tried yoga for the first time, he was so sore he **could hardly** move.
- The attorney wanted to **accept** the case but couldn’t because his caseload was already full.

snails, slugs, earthworms, plants, tree roots, fruits, and grains. Today, many opossums that live in areas densely populated by humans survive on garbage and small mice, even consuming the bones to satisfy their high need for calcium.

Of course, the opossum does have vulnerabilities. Its average three-year life span is not unusual for its size, typically **47** between two or three feet long. What is unusual is that opossums continue growing throughout their lifetimes. Such a state of constant development is linked with metabolic limitations **48** of the amount of food and energy that can be stored within the opossum's body, requiring that ready food sources be available year-round. In addition, opossums are highly susceptible to the cold, making it rather common to see opossums with frostbitten ears and tails.

Nevertheless, opossums have displayed amazing resilience over the years, often surviving attacks from intimidating predators like dogs and even hawks. While the opossum's first reaction when threatened is to begin running to the nearest tree, their primary defense **49** is an affect of the nervous system that, when sensing danger, throws the opossum's body into a catatonic state that dramatically slows its heart rate. The opossum will then **50** lay still, begin to drool, and appear dead, another trait that only adds to the fascinating nature of these animals.

47. A) NO CHANGE
 B) either two or three
 C) at least two or three
 D) between two and three
48. A) NO CHANGE
 B) on
 C) with
 D) for
49. A) NO CHANGE
 B) is an effect of the nervous system
 C) effects the nervous system so
 D) of the nervous system is an affect
50. A) NO CHANGE
 B) have laid
 C) lie
 D) have lain

How Much Have You Learned?

Directions: For testlike practice, give yourself 9 minutes to complete this question set. Be sure to study the explanations, even for questions you got right. They can be found at the end of this chapter.

Questions 51–61 refer to the following passage.

The Experts of Visual Communication

When people consider different types of **51** communication often, they think of only verbal or written forms. Few, perhaps, think of art as a **52** mode of communication; however, from early cave paintings and the intricate craftwork of ancient civilizations to contemporary, esoteric, abstract works that challenge traditional notions of aesthetic representation, art has played an essential role in visual communication. In the world of business, the intersection of art and communication is graphic design. **53** The explosion of media brought on by the digital age offered a growing platform for art, through graphic design, to express ideas and messages.

There is almost no detail too small, no space too unimportant to escape the attention of a graphic designer. **54** Their work is nearly ubiquitous in modern commercial life: **55** business logos, billboard advertisements; website layouts, T-shirt designs; and even the decorated cardboard of cereal boxes and coffee cups feature graphic design. In a culture increasingly wired for visual communication, graphic designers wield a powerful influence over the ordinary consumer. They craft the formats, styles, images, and symbols that shape how we perceive products, services, and ideas.

51. A) NO CHANGE
 B) communication often, they think of only verbal
 C) communication, often only they think of verbal
 D) communication, often they think of only verbal
52. A) NO CHANGE
 B) mode of communication; however from early cave paintings
 C) mode of communication, however, from early cave paintings
 D) mode of communication, however from early cave paintings
53. A) NO CHANGE
 B) The explosion of media brings on by the digital age offers
 C) The explosion of media brought on by the digital age offering
 D) The explosion of media brought on by the digital age offers
54. A) NO CHANGE
 B) The work of them
 C) The work of graphic designers
 D) The work of theirs
55. A) NO CHANGE
 B) business logos, billboard advertisements, website layouts, T-shirt designs, and even the decorated cardboard of cereal boxes and coffee cups feature graphic design.
 C) business logos, billboard advertisements, website layouts, T-shirt designs, and, even the decorated cardboard of cereal boxes, and coffee cups feature graphic design.
 D) business logos; billboard advertisements; website layouts; T-shirt designs; and even the decorated cardboard of cereal boxes, and coffee cups feature graphic design.

How do these visual innovators navigate a career path? Most **56** began by studying graphic design and earn a bachelor's degree at a four-year college, where they build skills through interactive class settings to hone expertise. These programs are heavily project-based and provide the sort of experience professional work will require. Students gradually compile design portfolios to showcase their best work. Once students have graduated, these portfolios are essential for the job search because **57** it demonstrates the ability and creative potential of designers.

Competition in the job market for graphic designers is **58** rigorous yet the field offers a variety of professional options. Some work in design studios. There they team with other graphic designers, taking on projects for external clients. Others work “in-house” for businesses that staff their own graphic designers to create media on a more frequent basis. Those with more entrepreneurial inclinations can work as freelance graphic designers, doing their own networking and contracting. Trying to expand their possibilities, **59** many graphic designers are also now applying their knowledge to website and web application design, which continues to be a growing field for tech-minded artists.

60 Although the demand for graphic designers persists the highly competitive job market gives some prospective artists pause. The trope of the “struggling artist” holds true, it seems, even in our highly visually oriented society. Still, most graphic designers find their **61** careers both satisfying and also invigorating. Perhaps, for the dedicated artists who seek a career in graphic design, the thrill and beauty of the work yields enough motivation and inspiration to persevere and succeed.

56. A) NO CHANGE
B) have begun by studying graphic design and earning
C) begin by studying graphic design and earning
D) will begin by studying graphic design and will earn
57. A) NO CHANGE
B) you demonstrate
C) they demonstrate
D) theirs demonstrate
58. A) NO CHANGE
B) rigorous, although the field offers
C) rigorous; even though the field offers
D) rigorous, but the field offers
59. A) NO CHANGE
B) much graphic design knowledge also now applies to website and web application design, which
C) many graphic designers' knowledge also now applies to website and web application design, which
D) website and web application design allows many graphic designers to apply their knowledge, which
60. A) NO CHANGE
B) Yet the demand for graphic designers persists; the highly competitive job market
C) While the demand for graphic designers persists, but the highly competitive job market
D) Even though the demand for graphic designers persists, the highly competitive job market
61. A) NO CHANGE
B) careers neither satisfying or invigorating.
C) careers both satisfying and invigorating.
D) career not only satisfying but invigorating.

Reflect

Directions: Take a few minutes to recall what you've learned and what you've been practicing in this chapter. Consider the following questions, jot down your best answer for each one, and then compare your reflections to the expert responses on the following page. Use your level of confidence to determine what to do next.

Name at least three ways to correct a run-on sentence.

How does the SAT test subject-verb agreement and parallelism?

What are the three different pronoun forms? When do you use each one?

What is the difference between an adjective and an adverb?

What are the three ways that apostrophes are tested on the SAT?

Which commonly confused words do you need to be especially careful to look out for?

Expert Responses

Name at least three ways to correct a run-on sentence.

There are a number of ways to fix a run-on sentence on the SAT. The six ways that you are likely to see are 1) use a period to create two separate sentences, 2) use a semicolon between the two independent clauses, 3) use a colon between the two independent clauses, 4) make one clause dependent, 5) add a FANBOYS conjunction after the comma, or 6) use a dash between the two independent clauses.

How does the SAT test subject-verb agreement and parallelism?

A subject and verb must always agree in person (first, second, or third) and number (singular or plural). You will need to be able to spot subject-verb mismatches and correct them. Parallelism requires that all items in a list, a compound, or a comparison are in parallel form. The SAT may test lists or comparisons in which one item is in the wrong form.

What are the three different pronoun forms? When do you use each one?

The three forms are subjective (when the pronoun is the subject), objective (when the pronoun is the object of a verb or preposition), and possessive (when the pronoun expresses ownership).

What is the difference between an adjective and an adverb?

An adjective is a single word that modifies a noun or a pronoun, while an adverb is a single word that modifies a verb, an adjective, or another adverb.

What are the three ways that apostrophes are tested on the SAT?

Apostrophes on the SAT are used to 1) indicate the possessive form of a singular noun ('s), 2) indicate the possessive form of a plural noun (s'), or 3) indicate a contraction (don't = do not).

Which commonly confused words do you need to be especially careful to look out for?

The answer to this question is specific to you. If you have concerns about more than half of the words out of the list of 24, consider making flash cards to help you practice. The extra effort will ensure that you do not confuse any of the commonly confused words on test day.

Next Steps

If you answered most questions correctly in the “How Much Have You Learned?” section, and if your responses to the Reflect questions were similar to those of the SAT expert, then consider sentence structure, punctuation, and agreement areas of strength and move on to the next chapter. Come back to these topics periodically to prevent yourself from getting rusty.

If you don't yet feel confident, review those parts of this chapter that you have not yet mastered. In particular, review punctuation usage in the Sentence Structure: The Basics and Commas, Dashes, and Colons lessons, as well as how to select the appropriate pronoun or modifier in the Agreement: Pronouns and Agreement: Modifiers lessons. Then try the questions you missed again. As always, be sure to review the explanations closely. Finally, **go online** (www.kaptest.com/moreonline) for additional practice on the highest yield topics in this chapter.

Answers and Explanations

1. Review the Explanation portion of the Sentence Structure: The Basics lesson.

2. **D**

Difficulty: Medium

Getting to the Answer: The sentence as written is a run-on. Two independent clauses are joined incorrectly by a comma. Eliminate (A). Because the comma is not underlined, you cannot fix the run-on by adding a coordinating conjunction or by replacing the comma with a semicolon. Instead, you need to change one of the independent clauses into a dependent clause. Choice (D) is correct because it makes the first clause dependent.

3. **B**

Difficulty: Medium

Getting to the Answer: In the passage, the sentence has a subject but is missing a verb. In other words, there is no main action that “the Sun’s core temperature” is performing. Eliminate (A). The correct answer will add a verb to the underlined portion. Choice (B) is correct because it is the only answer choice that includes a verb, “has.”

4. **A**

Difficulty: Hard

Getting to the Answer: The underlined portion lists examples of benefits that the Sun provides for the Earth. The list is long, but it is broken up into three main parts: electromagnetic waves, metabolic life, and the Earth’s natural phenomena. Each is a category that has two specific items that precede it. When a list has multiple categories, each with its own members, then commas alone are often not sufficient to express the information clearly. Use semicolons to distinguish the main categories, and use commas to separate the items within each category. Choice (A) does exactly this and is correct.

5. **B**

Difficulty: Easy

Getting to the Answer: When two independent clauses are joined by a coordinating conjunction, such as “but,” as is the case in this sentence, the conjunction needs to be preceded by a comma. Eliminate (A) and (C). Also eliminate (D) because “still” is not a FANBOYS conjunction. Choice (B) is correct.

6. **D**

Difficulty: Medium

Getting to the Answer: Two independent clauses are joined incorrectly by a comma, so you need to combine them according to correct grammar. Eliminate (A). There are several ways to combine two independent clauses, but only one answer choice offers an acceptable method: (D) uses a semicolon to join the two independent clauses and is correct. (B) does not use a FANBOYS conjunction and (C) erroneously omits the comma.

7. Review the Explanation portion of the Sentence Structure: Commas, Dashes, and Colons lesson.

8. **B**

Difficulty: Medium

Getting to the Answer: When a comma is underlined, check to see if the parts of the sentence before and after the comma need to be separated. In this sentence, the comma separates the subordinating conjunction “although” from the clause it introduces and breaks the link between the dependent clause and the main clause. Choice (B) correctly eliminates the unnecessary punctuation.

9. **C**

Difficulty: Medium

Getting to the Answer: Technically, “Mauritius” is not a complete sentence; there is no verb. Eliminate (A). You need a choice that will either make “Mauritius” a complete sentence or combine it with the first sentence. Choice (C) correctly uses a colon to introduce important information. Both (B) and (D) are missing commas after “familiar,” making them grammatically incorrect.

10. **D**

Difficulty: Hard

Getting to the Answer: The beginning of the sentence, “Since gaining independence in 1968,” is a short introductory phrase that needs to be set off with a comma. Eliminate (A). Neither a dash nor a semicolon is appropriate in this scenario, so eliminate (B) as well. (C) incorrectly makes the independent clause that begins “Mauritius has emerged” dependent. (D) correctly uses a comma to separate the introductory phrase from the main clause.

11. B

Difficulty: Hard

Getting to the Answer: When a colon is used to introduce a short phrase, it emphasizes the information in the phrase. A colon that introduces and emphasizes information should be used only if the phrase is not connected to the sentence in another way. In this sentence, the phrase “in the modern global economy” is connected to the main clause with the preposition “in,” so the colon is unnecessary. Eliminate (A). Dashes set off unnecessary information, but the phrase “in the modern global economy” is essential to the meaning of the sentence because it describes what kind of player Mauritius is. Eliminate (C). The adjectives “modern” and “global” are cumulative, meaning that their order can change the sense of the phrase. In other words, “modern” describes “global economy,” and the phrase “global modern economy” has a different meaning from what is intended. Cumulative adjectives should not have a comma between them, so (D) is incorrect. The sentence’s final phrase, “one of the few in the Southern Hemisphere” does need to be set off with a comma because it is a parenthetical phrase that could have been omitted from the sentence. (B) is correct.

12. D

Difficulty: Easy

Getting to the Answer: When you have a list of three or more items in a series, separate them with commas, and separate the last two items with a comma and the conjunction “and.” This series contains six distinct items. In longer lists, it can be appropriate to use a semicolon to separate the list into logical groups of items. In the underlined portion, however, there is no logical grouping, so a semicolon is unnecessary. Eliminate (A). Choice (B) is incorrect because “and” should appear only between the last and second to last items in the list. (C) is incorrect because it omits “and” altogether. Only (D) offers the list correctly.

13. C

Difficulty: Easy

Getting to the Answer: If a dash is used to introduce a break in thought, a second dash must be used to end the parenthetical phrase unless a period ends both the phrase and the sentence. Determine whether the information after the dash is parenthetical by reading the sentence without that information. Although the phrase

provides a description of how the “colonial powers” treated Mauritius, the sentence makes logical sense without it. The phrase is therefore parenthetical and must be properly set off. Only choice (C) correctly sets off the phrase with both an opening and a closing dash.

14. B

Difficulty: Easy

Getting to the Answer: When two independent clauses are combined with a FANBOYS conjunction, a comma needs to precede the conjunction. Eliminate (A). Only (B) places the necessary comma in the appropriate spot.

15. A

Difficulty: Medium

Getting to the Answer: Avoid using unnecessary punctuation. Reread the sentence to determine how its parts are related. This sentence is correct as written because no punctuation is required. The phrase “through its advantageous geographic location and large labor force” completes the thought in the sentence by providing information on how Mauritius “balances” and “flourishes.” Choice (A) is correct.

16. Review the Explanation portion of the Agreement: Verbs lesson.

17. A

Difficulty: Medium

Getting to the Answer: When a verb is underlined, one of your tasks is to identify its subject to ensure that there is proper subject-verb agreement. The sentence construction is a little unusual, “what is believed,” but the vague word “what” is indeed the subject for the verb “is believed.” The subject, “what,” is singular, so eliminate (B) and (D), which use “are,” a verb that goes with a plural subject. The writer is referring to what is believed at the moment, not some time in the future; therefore, eliminate (C). Choice (A) is correct because “is” is the correct singular form of the verb and in the correct present tense.

18. D

Difficulty: Medium

Getting to the Answer: Determining whether a subject is singular or plural can be difficult sometimes, especially if the subject refers to many things. Here, “SMOM” is a group of knights, but because it is a single entity, the word functions as a singular. The use of the singular possessive pronoun “its” at the end of the sentence confirms that SMOM is singular. Eliminate (A) and (C). When a verb is underlined, also consider the tense. The entire first paragraph is in present tense and it is clear from the context that SMOM, though an “ancient” order, still exists, so maintain the same tense in this sentence. Choice (D) is correct because “is” is a singular verb in present tense.

19. B

Difficulty: Medium

Getting to the Answer: When a subject has multiple verbs, known as compound verbs, they must all be in the same form. The sentence begins with two verbs, both in infinitive form, “to protect” and “to defend.” The underlined portion includes a third verb, which needs to be in the infinitive form, as well, to maintain parallelism. (B) is correct because it matches the form of the verbs earlier in the sentence.

20. B

Difficulty: Hard

Getting to the Answer: The perfect forms of verbs (i.e., have/has, had, and will have + a past participle) present special challenges in interpretation. It is crucial to determine the order of events. Because the sentence is rather long, focus on the underlined verb, “had seized,” and the verb in the opening phrase, “had overrun.” The past perfect tense of “had overrun” signals that the action happened in the past and was completed in the past before some other action. The word “After” that begins the sentence and the dates show that the seizing of Rhodes happened after the overrunning of Jerusalem was completed. The only verb tense that expresses that temporal relationship is simple past tense. (B) is correct.

21. B

Difficulty: Easy

Getting to the Answer: The paragraph describes actions that occurred in the past and uses the simple past tense to do so, so the underlined portion should follow suit.

Simple past describes a single event that occurred in the past, which is what Napoleon did. (B) is correct.

22. C

Difficulty: Easy

Getting to the Answer: The first word of the last paragraph is “Today,” which signals a shift from the past tense of the previous paragraphs to present tense. The following sentence’s main verb “include” is in present tense and confirms the shift. (C) is correct.

23. Review the Explanation portion of the Agreement: Pronouns lesson.

24. C

Difficulty: Medium

Getting to the Answer: When a pronoun is underlined, identify its antecedent. In the passage’s first sentence, the writer gives a list, and in the second sentence, you find that these are the varied influences. The pronoun “He” is singular, but it refers to the plural group of “samurai, cowboys, shogun, gangsters, peasants, and William Shakespeare.” Eliminate (A). The plural third-person subject pronoun “they” is needed to refer to the list. (C) is correct.

25. C

Difficulty: Medium

Getting to the Answer: The underlined portion should refer to “the most important Japanese filmmaker” as stated later in the sentence. “Filmmaker” is singular, but “them” is plural, so eliminate (A). In addition to being singular, the pronoun needs to be in the objective form because it is the “themes” and “settings” that are acting on the filmmaker, the object. The singular objective (and third-person) pronoun is “him.” (C) is correct.

26. C

Difficulty: Medium

Getting to the Answer: Pronouns can be in the grammatically correct form, but if they lack a clear referent, they need to be replaced with a specific word. The singular pronoun “its” is underlined and several singular nouns precede it, which makes it ambiguous. Eliminate (A). The underlined pronoun “its” is also possessive, so ask yourself whose story the writer is referring to. The logical answer is “the film’s story.” (C) is correct.

27. B

Difficulty: Hard

Getting to the Answer: When a pronoun's antecedent is far away from the pronoun itself, it can be difficult to identify the antecedent. Checking for agreement between a pronoun and its antecedent is also tricky when the noun being replaced is singular in grammar but plural in concept. Both hurdles are present in this question. The entity seeking protection is the "village," which grammatically is singular. The third-person singular pronoun "it" is required. (B) is correct.

28. A

Difficulty: Medium

Getting to the Answer: The pronoun "him" is replacing the third-person noun "Kurosawa." The end of the previous sentence raises the topic of what the samurai (in the film *Seven Samurai*) meant to Kurosawa. Any other change in person would cause an undesired shift in the passage. (A) is correct.

29. D

Difficulty: Hard

Getting to the Answer: In the passage, the word "of" means that the pronoun that follows should be in the objective form. However, the next word, "who," is in the subjective form; therefore, eliminate (A). Choice (B) is incorrect because "whose" is a possessive pronoun, but an objective pronoun is needed. Choice (C) is incorrect because "many" refers to people and "which" is for inanimate objects. Only (D) has the right pronoun in objective form and is correct.

30. Review the Explanation portion of the Agreement: Modifiers lesson.

31. C

Difficulty: Hard

Getting to the Answer: The sentence begins with a modifier, "Considered the father of montage," which means that the subject of the sentence must be the father of montage. Typically, the subject will immediately follow the opening modifying phrase, but in this sentence the next phrase, beginning "a popular cinematic technique," is an additional description, not the main clause. The underlined section is where the main clause begins, and the first words need to be the subject, the father of montage, Sergei Eisenstein. (C) is correct.

32. B

Difficulty: Easy

Getting to the Answer: Because the underlined word modifies "complexity," a noun, the underlined word needs to be an adjective. Choice (B) is correct.

33. B

Difficulty: Medium

Getting to the Answer: When making a comparison, you should note whether it is between two things or among three or more. In this sentence "few filmmakers" are being compared to Eisenstein. Although "filmmakers" is plural, the logic of the sentence treats them as one thing, so there are two things being compared. The comparative form "more" is needed. Choice (B) is correct.

34. D

Difficulty: Medium

Getting to the Answer: The qualifier "many" that precedes the underlined word shows that "moviegoers" is meant to be plural. The plural possessive is constructed by adding an apostrophe after the last "s." Choice (D) is correct.

35. A

Difficulty: Hard

Getting to the Answer: The sentence opens with an opening modifying phrase. Whatever that phrase modifies must immediately follow it. Ask yourself what is "[b]ased on the contemporary theory of biomechanics." The answer is Eisenstein's montage, so the underlined segment is correct and no change is needed. Choice (A) is correct.

Note that while Eisenstein could be using the montage to make a criticism, it does not make sense to say that Eisenstein is based on the theory of biomechanics. Therefore, the correct answer will not have "Eisenstein" as its subject; eliminate (B), (C), and (D). Choice (A) is correct because "Eisenstein's montage" is the subject, and the montage can both criticize and be based on the theory of biomechanics.

36. C

Difficulty: Medium

Getting to the Answer: The only difference among the underlined section and the answer choices is the placement of the word “enormously.” The word is an adverb, so it needs to modify a verb, an adjective, or another adverb. Also, modifiers need to be placed near the word or phrase that they modify. Choice (C) is correct because it provides the closest placement to “successful,” the only word that could be logically modified by “enormously.”

37. C

Difficulty: Medium

Getting to the Answer: An apostrophe can signal a contraction, a shortening of two words. The underlined “they’re” is a contraction of “they are,” which does not make sense in the context of the sentence. Eliminate (A). You need a plural possessive pronoun because it refers back to “achievements.” Choice (C) is correct.

38. Review the Explanation portion of the Parallelism lesson.

39. D

Difficulty: Medium

Getting to the Answer: “Exceeded 600 pages in length and there was . . .” is not parallel. “Exceeded” is a verb in simple past tense, so it should be followed by another verb in the same tense; “exceeded . . . and advertised . . .” is the correct parallel form, so (D) is correct.

40. C

Difficulty: Medium

Getting to the Answer: The sentence contains a list with three phrases: the first is “from pocket watches to patent medicines,” and the last is “from hunting rifles to horse-drawn plows.” Therefore, the middle phrase must be in the same form—that is, “from (X) to (Y).” Only (C) maintains this form and is correct.

41. D

Difficulty: Easy

Getting to the Answer: The three items in the list should all be in the same form; only (D) accomplishes this and is the correct answer.

42. A

Difficulty: Medium

Getting to the Answer: The nouns in this three-part list are “elements,” “quarters,” and “porches.” Additionally, there are modifiers attached to each of these nouns. For the sake of parallelism, these modifiers should all appear in the same form. In the original version, all three modifiers appear as adjectives preceding each noun (“intricate decorative elements,” “servants’ quarters,” and “wrap-around porches”). In all of the other choices, the modifiers appear in inconsistent forms. Thus, (A) is correct.

43. B

Difficulty: Medium

Getting to the Answer: The portion of the sentence preceding the underlined section contains the subject-predicate phrase “buyers built . . .” The portion that follows should be in the same subject-predicate form to maintain parallelism. Only (B), “others hired . . .,” does so. Therefore, (B) is correct.

44. Review the Explanation portion of the Idioms lesson.

45. B

Difficulty: Easy

Getting to the Answer: The construction “neither . . . nor” is idiomatic, so a phrase beginning with “neither” must be followed by “nor.” Choice (B) is correct.

46. C

Difficulty: Easy

Getting to the Answer: The word “hardly” is a negative like “not.” Double negatives, like “not hardly,” are grammatical mistakes. Eliminate (A). The word “nothing” is another negative, so eliminate (B). Choice (C) is correct because it removes the double negative around “hardly.”

47. D

Difficulty: Medium

Getting to the Answer: The construction in the underlined section is not idiomatic: “between . . . or” is incorrect. Eliminate (A). The three answer choices are all correct idiomatically, but only one makes logical sense in the sentence. (B) makes it sound as if an opossum

cannot be two and a half feet long, which doesn't make sense. Similarly, (C) does not fit in the context of the passage because the word "typically" means that the opossum length given will be authoritative and precise, not a loose estimation as "at least" suggests. (D) is correct because it has the appropriate idiomatic phrase "between . . . and."

48. B

Difficulty: Hard

Getting to the Answer: Make sure that the proper prepositions are being used in the passage. As written, "of" implies that the metabolic limitations belong to the amount of food and energy that can be stored, but the intended meaning is that the metabolic limitations belong to the opossum and put a restriction on the amount of food and energy that can be stored. Eliminate (A). The preposition "on" is correct, given the context because there is a restriction *on* the amount of food that can be stored. Choice (B) is correct. If idioms are tricky, think of an analogous situation. A computer's limited warranty has limitations *on* the parts of the computer that are covered if something breaks. It doesn't have limitations *of* or *with* or *for* the parts of the computer.

49. B

Difficulty: Medium

Getting to the Answer: It will help to memorize commonly confused words like "affect" and "effect" and know what they mean and how to use them in various contexts. As written, the underlined portion incorrectly uses "affect," which is almost always a verb, as a noun. Eliminate (A). The intended word is "effect," which means some sort of change brought on by some cause (think *cause and effect*). Choice (B) is correct. Choice (C) also uses the word "effect" but incorrectly as a verb. "Effect" is almost always a noun, a thing that happens, but when "effect" is a verb, it means to cause or bring about. The nervous system is not an action that can be caused to happen, so (C) is incorrect.

50. C

Difficulty: Hard

Getting to the Answer: The distinction between "lay" and "lie" is mostly lost in everyday speech, but in formal written English, the difference is important. The word "lay" takes an object; the word "lie" does not. In other words,

you lay down your book, but you lie down. Because the opossum is doing the action (the opossum is not, for example, laying down some food it had just picked up), "lie" is the appropriate verb. (C) is correct. The word "laid" is the past participle of "lay," and "lain" is the past participle of "lie." Neither (B) nor (D) offer verb tenses that make sense in the context of the sentence.

51. D

Difficulty: Medium**Category:** Agreement: Modifiers

Getting to the Answer: Scan the answer choices to see that the difference is the placement of the words "often" and "only." These two words are modifiers, so they need to be placed as closely as possible to words or phrases that they modify. The word "often" tells the frequency with which people think of verbal or written forms; therefore, it needs to be at the beginning of the phrase. Eliminate (A) and (B), which put "often" before the comma so that it incorrectly modifies the previous phrase. The word "only" describes the limits of which forms of communication people think of, so the word needs to be nearest those forms of communication, "verbal and written." (D) is correct. (C) incorrectly places "only" so that it modifies "they."

52. A

Difficulty: Medium**Category:** Sentence Structure: The Basics

Getting to the Answer: The underlined section is part of a long sentence that has two independent clauses. To join them you need to use a semicolon, a comma and coordinating (i.e., FANBOYS) conjunction, or a dash. The word "however" is not a coordinating conjunction; eliminate (C) and (D). While "however" does help in connecting the ideas of the first and second clauses, the word is not necessary, and should therefore be set off by a comma. (A) is correct.

53. D

Difficulty: Medium**Category:** Agreement: Verbs

Getting to the Answer: Verb tense should stay consistent unless a certain thought requires a shift. In the underlined portion, the main verb is “offered,” which is past tense, but the rest of the paragraph is in present tense. Eliminate (A). The correct verb form is present tense. Eliminate (C) because the *-ing*, or progressive, form is not a main verb. The passive voice “brought” is correct because it is the digital age that is bringing on the explosion of media; (D) is correct.

54. C

Difficulty: Medium**Category:** Agreement: Pronouns

Getting to the Answer: Pronouns need to agree with their antecedents. In the underlined portion, the plural pronoun “their” incorrectly refers to the singular “a graphic designer” at the end of the previous sentence. Eliminate (A). Also, eliminate (B) and (D) because the pronouns they use are also plural and incorrectly refer to a singular antecedent. (B) is also incorrect because “them” is not possessive. (C) is correct because it replaces the pronoun with the correct plural referent.

55. B

Difficulty: Medium**Category:** Sentence Structure: Commas, Dashes, and Colons

Getting to the Answer: You can treat the underlined portion after the colon as a long list, but also notice that it is a compound subject. All of the underlined items do the same thing: they feature graphic design. Sometimes, it can be helpful to use semicolons to organize complicated and long lists into groups of items, but in this case, the placement of the semicolons is not logical. There is no obvious reason why website layouts and T-shirt designs should be grouped together, nor why they should belong to a group that is separate from business logos and billboard advertisements. Eliminate (A). Both (C) and (D) are incorrect because the last item in the list is decorated cardboard, not cereal boxes and coffee cups. Placing a comma between “the decorated cardboard of cereal boxes” and “and coffee cups” would mean that the coffee cups are not decorated cardboard. (B) is correct because it separates each item in the list with a comma.

56. C

Difficulty: Medium**Category:** Agreement: Verbs

Getting to the Answer: Verb tense should remain constant unless there is shift in meaning. The second half of the sentence has “they build,” which is present tense. The sentence before and the sentence after also have main verbs in present tense, so the main verb of the underlined clause needs to be in present tense, too. (C) is correct.

57. C

Difficulty: Medium**Category:** Agreement: Pronouns

Getting to the Answer: Pronouns need to match the noun that they are replacing. In the underlined portion, the singular pronoun “it” is supposed to replace the plural “portfolios,” so eliminate (A) and (B). The word “portfolios” is not a possessive like “theirs,” so (D) is also incorrect. Only (C) is left and is correct because “they” correctly replaces “portfolios.”

58. D

Difficulty: Medium**Category:** Sentence Structure: The Basics

Getting to the Answer: The sentence as constructed has two independent clauses, which need to be joined correctly either with a comma and FANBOYS (coordinating) conjunction, or with a semicolon, or with a dash. As written, there is no comma between “rigorous” and “yet,” so eliminate (A). Only (D) uses a comma and FANBOYS conjunction, so it is correct.

59. A

Difficulty: Medium**Category:** Agreement: Modifiers

Getting to the Answer: When a sentence begins with a modifying phrase, whatever follows must be the thing that is modified and is the subject of the sentence. Logically, the modifying phrase “Trying to expand their possibilities” can refer only to the graphic designers. The pronoun “their” is plural and so is “graphic designers.” (A) is correct.

60. D

Difficulty: Medium

Category: Sentence Structure: The Basics

Getting to the Answer: The word “Although” in the underlined portion signals that the first clause is a dependent clause and the second clause is independent. A comma is required to separate the two, but the sentence as written has no comma. Eliminate (A). A semicolon is not appropriate for subordinating one clause to another, and “yet” is a coordinating (FANBOYS) conjunction, not a subordinating conjunction. Eliminate (B). Choice (C) is incorrect because “while” makes the first clause dependent, and “but” cannot be used to join a dependent and an independent clause. That leaves (D), which is correct because “Even though” subordinates the first clause and uses a comma to separate it from the second clause.

61. C

Difficulty: Medium

Category: Agreement: Idioms

Getting to the Answer: Idiomatic expressions have no logical rules, so they must be memorized. The construction “both . . . and also” is not a valid idiomatic phrase in formal written English. Eliminate (A). The correct construction is “both . . . and,” which makes (C) correct. (B) is an incorrect form of “neither . . . nor,” and it does not make sense in the context of the sentence. The idiom in (D) should be “not only . . . but also,” so it is incorrect, too.