

Mastering
* *the* **SAT**
Writing Test

Brought to you by the experts at **CliffNotes®**

**An In-Depth
Writing Workout**

Includes: **What graders and colleges look for**
Diagnostic writing test
Guidelines for writing cogent, concise essays
Review of grammar and usage
Four writing practice tests

Denise Pivarnik-Nova

SAT is a registered trademark of the College Board, which was not involved in the production of, and does not endorse, this product.

Mastering
** the* **SAT**
Writing Test

Mastering
****the* SAT**
Writing Test

**An In-Depth
Writing Workout**

Denise Pivarnik-Nova



Wiley Publishing, Inc.

Dedication

To all those students who will be taking the SAT writing test.

Acknowledgments

Special thanks to my juniors and seniors at Columbia Heights High School, Columbia Heights, Minnesota, who helped to make this book possible. My special thanks to Eric, Sartu, John, David, Suemee, Megan, Tobi, Sheena, Lauren, Salma, Doug, Ngawang, and the rest of you who helped with advice and input while this book was being written. I couldn't have done it without you. You are the best!

Table of Contents

PART I: THE NEW SAT

The NEW SAT Exam	3
Changes	4
Cost of the Exam	5
Special Circumstances	5
SAT Writing Section	5
The Essay	5
Multiple-choice Questions	6
The New SAT Writing Section—Diagnostic Test	9
Identifying Sentence Errors	9
Improving Sentences	10
Improving Paragraphs	12
Answers and Explanations	13
The Essay (25 minutes)	14
Explanations and Scoring	17
Suemee’s Response	18
John’s Response	19
You Finished the Diagnostic—Now What?	20

PART II: ESSAY AND VERBAL REVIEW

Tactics for Successful SAT Essay Writing	23
General Writing Skills	23
Specific Information about the SAT Essay	23
The SAT Essay Prompt (Question)	24
Developing Your Essay	24
Introduction	24
Suemee’s Response	24
John’s Response	24
Body Paragraphs	25
Conclusion	26
Your Turn	27
Assessing Your Response	30
Rachel’s Response	31
Kyle’s Response	32
Your Response	32
One More Time	34
Eric’s Response	37
Lauren’s Response	38
How Did You Do?	39
What to Write, What Not to Write, and How to Write It Better	39
Transition Words and Phrases	39
Trite Expressions	41
Improving Sentences	43
Errors to Anticipate	43
Run-on Sentences	44
Sentence Fragments	44

Faulty Parallelism	44
Lack of Conciseness	45
Faulty Coordination and Subordination	45
Misplaced Modifier	46
Dangling Modifier	46
Passive Voice	47
Practice Questions	47
Answers and Explanations	48
Punctuation Patterns	48
Coordination	48
Subordination	49
Practice Exercises	50
Answers and Explanations	52
Recognizing Sentence Errors	53
Find the Error	53
Common Grammar and Usage Errors	54
Subject-verb Agreement	54
Practice Questions	55
Answers and Explanations	56
Verbs	56
Verb Tense Problems	58
Practice Questions	58
Answers and Explanations	59
Idiomatic Expressions: Choosing the Correct Preposition after Certain Verbs	59
Misused and Confused	60
Perplexing and Provoking Pronouns	61
Pronoun Shift	61
Pronoun Number	62
Compound Pronoun Structures	62
Adjectives and Adverbs	62
Modifying Verbs	62
Modifying Adjectives	63
Modifying Adverbs	63
Faulty Comparisons	63
Double Negatives	63
Punctuation Patterns	63
Coordination	63
Subordination	64
Essential and Nonessential Information	64
Practice Questions	65
Answers and Explanations	67
Improving Paragraphs	69
General Organization of Sentences	69
Revising Sentences	70
Combining Sentences	70
Sentence in Context	70
Adding or Subtracting Sentences	70
Practice Questions	70
Answers and Explanations	76

PART III: FOUR PRACTICE TESTS

Practice Test I	83
The Essay	83
Essay Prompt	83
Multiple-Choice Questions, Set 1	86
Improving Sentences	86
Identifying Sentence Errors	88
Improving Paragraphs	89
Multiple Choice Questions, Set 2	92
Improving Sentences	92
Answer Key	95
Set 1	95
Set 2	95
Answers and Explanations	96
The Essay	96
Essay Prompt	97
Sheena’s Response	97
David’s Response	98
Multiple-Choice Questions, Set 1	100
Improving Sentences	100
Identifying Sentence Errors	101
Improving Paragraphs	102
Multiple-Choice Questions, Set 2	103
Improving Sentences	103
Rating Your Performance	104
Essay	104
Multiple Choice, Set 1	104
Multiple Choice, Set 2	104
Wrong Answers (Do Not Count Unanswered Questions)	104
Conversion Table	105
Practice Test II	109
The Essay	109
Essay Prompt	109
Multiple-Choice Questions, Set 1	112
Improving Sentences	112
Identifying Sentence Errors	114
Improving Paragraphs	116
Multiple Choice Questions, Set 2	118
Improving Sentences	118
Answer Key	121
Set 1	121
Set 2	121
Answers and Explanations	122
The Essay	122
Essay Prompt	123
Suemee’s Response	123
Sartu’s Response	124
Multiple-Choice Questions, Set 1	125
Improving Sentences	125
Identifying Sentence Errors	125
Improving Paragraphs	127

Multiple-Choice Questions, Set 2	128
Improving Sentences	128
Rating Your Performance	129
Essay	129
Multiple Choice, Set 1	129
Multiple Choice, Set 2	129
Wrong Answers (Do Not Count Unanswered Questions)	129
Conversion Table	130
Practice Test III	133
The Essay	133
Essay Prompt	133
Multiple-Choice Questions, Set 1	136
Improving Sentences	136
Identifying Sentence Errors	138
Improving Paragraphs	140
Multiple-Choice Questions, Set 2	143
Improving Sentences	143
Answer Key	147
Set 1	147
Set 2	147
Answers and Explanations	148
The Essay	148
Essay Prompt	149
Eric's Response	149
Megan's Response	150
Multiple-Choice Questions, Set 1	152
Improving Sentences	152
Identifying Sentence Errors	152
Improving Paragraphs	153
Multiple-Choice Questions, Set 2	155
Improving Sentences	155
Rating Your Performance	156
Essay	156
Multiple Choice, Set 1	156
Multiple Choice, Set 2	156
Wrong Answers (Do Not Count Unanswered Questions)	156
Conversion Table	157
Practice Test IV	161
The Essay	161
Essay Prompt	161
Multiple-Choice Questions, Set 1	164
Improving Sentences	164
Identifying Sentence Errors	166
Improving Paragraphs	168
Multiple-Choice Questions, Set 2	170
Improving Sentences	170
Answer Key	173
Set 1	173
Set 2	173
Answers and Explanations	174
The Essay	174
Essay Prompt	175
Marco's Response	175
Shannon's Response	176

Multiple-Choice Questions, Set 1	178
Improving Sentences	178
Identifying Sentence Errors	178
Improving Paragraphs	179
Multiple-Choice Questions, Set 2	181
Improving Sentences	181
Rating Your Performance	182
Essay	182
Multiple Choice, Set 1	182
Multiple Choice, Set 2	182
Wrong Answers (Do Not Count Unanswered Questions)	182
Conversion Table	183
Final Thoughts	185

PART I

THE NEW SAT



The NEW SAT Exam

You wouldn't be looking at this book if you weren't concerned about the significance of the SAT test to you and to your chances of gaining admission into the college(s) of your choice. As with any important event in your life, it is best to be as well-prepared as possible. *Mastering the SAT Writing Test* is a good way to help you with this preparation. You will find that this *in-depth writing workout* will provide you with the following:

- Explanation of the format of the new test
- Focus on the Writing Section
- Practice writing essays
- Basics of successful timed essay writing
- Practice with multiple-choice questions
- Review of grammar and usage you need to know
- Several opportunities to practice the entire Writing Section

In March 2005, the College Board administered the new SAT for the first time. Therefore, many colleges will require the new SAT with writing for students graduating from high school in 2006 and later. What you need to know is that the changes have not made the test any more difficult. Field tests show that you are as likely to do well on the new SAT as would have on the old SAT.

In addition, if you take the SAT for the first time in the spring of your junior year and try it a second time in the spring or in the fall of your senior year, chances are your score will increase the second time. Armed with that knowledge, as well as this guide to *Mastering the SAT Writing Test*, you are on your way!

If you are a 2006 high school graduate, perhaps you are feeling a bit put out by the fact that you're part of the guinea pig group. You may be wondering, why me? Why now? The SAT has been in existence since early in the 1900s. During that time it has had at least 10 major overhauls. Nothing was wrong with the old tests; the College Board SAT folks try to make the test as valid as possible as a predictor of your college success. The College Board never makes changes willy-nilly. In fact, this most recent alteration has been about six years in the making. Colleges from across the country offered suggestions and recommendations so that the test could be revised in a manner that best reflects what colleges are looking for from their incoming freshmen.

The new test does the following:

- Better reflects classroom practices and curriculum by replacing analogies with short reading passages and quantitative comparisons with more math problems, some including content from third-year, college-preparatory math
- Reinforces the importance of writing skills
- Measures the kind of reasoning skills needed for college by assessing how students apply what they have learned in school
- Helps colleges make better admissions and placement decisions

In fact, when colleges were surveyed by the College Board regarding their responses to the new SAT, in particular to the Writing Section, the Board found that 74 percent of respondents said they would use the new SAT writing score in admissions decisions. Sixty-eight percent of respondents plan to download and print applicants' essays, and 35 percent of these said they would read all essays; 19 percent said they would read most essays. Thirty-two percent of respondents will use the essay itself for course placement.

If you are wondering about the SAT requirements of the college you are hoping to attend, you can check the College Board Web site (www.collegeboard.com) for a list of schools that have announced they will require the standardized writing test for admission beginning with the entering high school graduating class of 2006. If you are still unsure,

check with the schools to which you are applying to get the most recent, accurate information about admissions requirements. Also, you need to remember that colleges and universities use the SAT as only one of many factors in admissions decisions. The SAT shows colleges how you apply what you have learned in school.

Changes

The following chart shows the breakdown of question types on the new SAT; the new time specifications of the SAT, which has been extended from three hours to three hours and 45 minutes; and the breakdown of the test scores on the new SAT.

	Critical Reading	Math	Writing
Test Content and Questions Types	<i>Sentence Completion</i>	<i>Multiple-choice items and student-produced responses reassuring:</i>	<i>Multiple-choice:</i> Improving sentences and paragraphs and identifying errors
	<i>Critical Reading</i> short and long reading passages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> —Numbers and Operations —Algebra I, II and Functions —Geometry and Statistics, Probability and Data Analysis 	<i>Student-written essay:</i> Effectively communicate a point of view on an issue, supporting a position with reasoning and examples
Time Specifications	70 minutes:	70 minutes:	85 minutes:
3 hours 45 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> —two 25-minute sections —one 20-minute section 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> —two 25-minute sections —one 20-minute section 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> —one 25-minute essay —two multiple-choice sections (one 25-minute section and one 10-minute section)
Test Scores	200–800 points	200–800 points	200–800 points
Total points = 2400			Includes 2 subscores: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> —Essay 2–12 (1/3 of writing score) —Multiple choice 20–80 (2/3 of writing score)

In summary, here's how the SAT exam has changed:

- **Writing:** Students are asked to write an essay that requires them to take a position on an issue and to use examples to support their positions. It is similar to the type of writing required on college tests. Multiple-choice questions will test a student's ability to identify sentence errors, improve sentences, and improve paragraphs.
- **Math:** The revised math section includes topics from third-year, college-preparatory math, such as exponential growth, absolute value, functional notation, and negative and fractional exponents. Greater emphasis is placed on other topics such as linear functions and scatterplots.
- **Critical Reading:** Formerly known as the verbal section, Critical Reading includes short and long reading passages. Analogies have been eliminated, and sentence-completion questions have been retained.

Overall, the new SAT better reflects today's classroom practices and curriculum by replacing analogies with short reading passages and quantitative comparisons with more math problems, some including content from third-year, college-preparatory math. In addition, the new SAT reinforces the importance of writing skills. These changes will help college

admissions staff make better admissions and placement decisions. The SAT measures the kinds of reasoning skills (your scholastic aptitude) that you will need for college. It does this by assessing how you apply what you've learned so far in school to the questions you are asked.

Cost of the Exam

In the spring of 2005, the exam cost is \$42. You must register by certain dates in order not to be charged a late registration fee. All the latest costs and test dates are available at the College Board Web site (www.collegeboard.com). Information booklets about the SAT exam, as well as registration forms, which include a practice test, are probably available in your high school's Guidance Office.

If you qualify for free or reduced lunches at school, you will receive a fee waiver for the cost of the SAT. In fact, you can take the SAT twice with fee waivers. In 2002, for instance, \$4.5 million in fee waivers were given for the SAT. The waivers were administered by the high schools. This must be arranged ahead of time, however. See your guidance counselor about fee waivers if you think you might be qualified; he or she will have the appropriate information and forms.

Special Circumstances

The College Board will make accommodations for students with disabilities or students who qualify for special time or other alternative testing. Again, this is a very individual thing, and you must see your guidance counselor to get help with this.

SAT Writing Section

Writing is a skill basic to success in college as well as the workplace. The results of the Writing Section of the SAT will add an important dimension to your admissions profile. The most obvious change in the exam has been the addition of the essay. In fact, it is the very first thing on the test.

The Essay

The ability to write a short, timed essay is a fairly accurate way to anticipate how successfully a student might perform in college. The essay portion of the test reveals how well you think and write, especially under the pressure of time. Specifically, the essay can reveal the following information about you:

- How well you think. Your performance on the essay demonstrates your ability to process “the task of the prompt,” that is, how well you respond to the topic or question you are asked to write about.
- How well you organize ideas. Readers are looking for logical and sensible planning. You will demonstrate this best by devising a thesis or main idea and developing it quickly and insightfully.
- How well you express yourself. It's one thing to have lots of great ideas. It's another skill, however, to express these ideas adequately and concisely under the time restraints.
- How you have mastered the skills of standard written English. You must communicate with a minimum of errors in grammar and usage.

Before you become totally bonkers over all of this, just remember that you have already written many, many essays in your school career. Most of them probably have been painstakingly processed, including brainstorming, outlining and prewriting, drafting, editing and revising, rewriting, and proofreading. In some cases, these papers may have included research. Some of these essays may have taken days, and in the case of researched papers, possibly even weeks. You do not have to face that process with the SAT essay. You are given a prompt on some mildly arguable topic, and you are expected to read, respond, and write everything in a mere 25 minutes. It's hard to believe that so much is resting on such a short process, isn't it? To make things more challenging, you are going to be writing this by hand—that's right, with paper and pencil, no computer.

Take heart, however; this essay is only a part of the Writing Section of the exam, and the entire Writing Section is only a part of the overall score. Also, you must remember that everyone taking this exam is under precisely the same pressure to produce that you are.

Nobody knows the topic ahead of time. In this book you will find several SAT-like prompts. These are followed by a scoring guide, sample student responses, and commentary on the student responses. In addition, you will find reminders of successful essay writing and suggestions on how to do your best under testing circumstances. When you respond to the prompt, your essay should demonstrate good critical thinking (the more profound the better, but don't be concerned if you aren't feeling profound). In addition, your response should show colleges that you can organize your thoughts quickly and accurately, expressing them clearly and interestingly.

The prompt will ask you to demonstrate your skill in elaborating a point of view on an issue. Consider the issue critically. Even if you do not like the topic, or you could care less about the subject matter, embrace the issue for the next 25 minutes and develop your point of view with conviction. Support your ideas with appropriate details and evidence. You are not expected to possess any particular information or prior knowledge about the issue you are to write about.

The best thing you can do from now until the day you take your exam is to practice. Put your watch in front of you and be aware of the time. Your planning time is brief. You should be writing within 5 minutes. Also, you need to give yourself about 3 minutes at the end to quickly read over what you've written and correct the most egregious errors. You can train yourself through practice. As one student said, "Twenty-five minutes is just so short! All the ideas in my head get smooshed together to save time, and they don't always come out right when I write them down." With patience and practice, you can learn how to take these smooshed ideas and write a successful essay.

Multiple-choice Questions

In two separate sections of the SAT (25 minutes and 10 minutes), you are asked to answer a total of 49 multiple-choice questions. These questions mostly concern errors in grammar and usage. In addition, the questions cover diction (word choice), expression (redundancy and idioms), and syntax (sentence structure). These questions come in three forms and in varying numbers:

- Improving Sentences (25 questions)
- Identifying Sentence Errors (18 questions)
- Improving Paragraphs (6 questions)

In the first set of writing multiple-choice questions, you have 25 minutes to answer 11 Improving Sentence questions, 18 Identifying Sentence Errors questions, and 6 Improving Paragraphs questions. Then you have a break from writing—going on to Math and Critical Reading sections. Later, you have 10 more minutes of Improving Sentences, consisting of only 14 questions.

Generally speaking, the multiple-choice questions are arranged from easiest to hardest in each group. You cannot always bank on that, however, since each student finds some parts of grammar and usage more difficult than others.

In addition, some find the Improving Sentences questions harder than the Identifying Sentence Errors questions. Some, however, do not. What you must do to identify the correct answer in the Identifying Sentence Errors is to find the underlined part of the sentence that is inaccurate, or to decide that the entire sentence is fine and select, "No change," Choice E. That means that the mistake you identify is the right answer—crazy, huh?

The six Improving Paragraphs questions follow the progress of a passage. One or two of these questions is likely to resemble those found in the Improving Sentences and Identifying Sentence Errors sections of the exam. Some think this is the most comprehensive part of the test. Besides the basic information that the other two groups of multiple-choice questions might ask, the Improving Paragraphs questions focus on issues of good composition—style, organization, use of transitions, paragraph development, topic sentences, and so on. These are all aspects of writing you are familiar with since you are already an experienced essay writer.

All of this takes some getting used to. Chapters 2–4 take a much closer look at all three types of these multiple-choice questions. Your job is to read this book closely, study the discussions, explanations, and rule reviews and practice, practice, practice.

Although you may feel panicked about the time limits on the multiple-choice questions, remember that this limit has been well tested. The SAT has determined just how much time students need to do this. With practice, you will get more comfortable with the issue of time limits.

Finally, before you move on to the inside of the Writing Section of the SAT, here's a word on guessing. You will get as many suggestions for this as the number of people you ask. All SAT Writing and Critical Reading questions have five choices as possible answers. Often one of these is a repeat of the original. You will see by the formula for estimating your score that follows each of the practice tests, you count the number correct for each answer on the test minus .25 points for every wrong answer. In other words, SAT discourages haphazard, random guessing, and if you guess incorrectly enough times, your score will reflect that.

So, should you guess? If you have absolutely no clue of the right answer, and sitting and looking at the question for an hour would not help you figure out the correct response, then certainly you should leave it blank and move on to the next question. If you eliminate one of the choices, you are even (taking into consideration the $-.25$ points for a wrong answer)—1 in 4. That one is a toss up. If after eliminating one, you have no idea about the other four, then skip that one, too. If, however, you can eliminate one of the four—then go for it; make an educated guess.

The New SAT Writing Section— Diagnostic Test

Okay, so now you have the lowdown on the new SAT. The following is a Diagnostic Test, that is, a “practice exam,” that is an accurate representation of the new SAT. The actual test will have **25 Improving Sentences questions, 18 Identifying Sentence Errors questions, and 6 Improving Paragraphs questions.** After you write the essay and answer the multiple-choice questions, you will find the correct answers as well as a discussion of the essay question and possible responses.

Identifying Sentence Errors

These sentences will test your ability to recognize grammar and usage errors. Some are basic; a very few are obscure. Each sentence contains an error or no error at all (Choice **E**). Remember, your correct answer is actually identifying what is wrong with the sentence. If there is nothing wrong, then the answer will be **E**—No error.

Please note that on the actual test, you would fill your answers in with pencil on a “bubble” answer booklet provided with your test booklet.

1. For some people, the Chinese language is difficult to learn; it has a number of sounds that makes it unintelligible to anyone without extensive exposure, and unless one lives among the people; such exposure is rare, which greatly contributes to the challenge. No error.
A B C D E
2. When Mara’s grandmother practices her art and everybody listens. Wearing a brightly colored head covering and caftan, clunky bracelets and necklaces, the eighty-year-old woman seems to become each of the characters she talks about in her stories. No error.
A B C D E
3. When the movie was over and we poured into the lobby, we told our friend Carla we would wait on her in the lobby while she went into the restroom to take her medication. No error.
A B C D E
4. Sonia was very upset with the tactics; she was extremely angry at Samuel when he told her about the plans that had been set up for coercing the competing companies to underbid their company for this particular job. No error.
A B C D E
5. I think the main reason for going to town is for us to get some essential shopping done and not wasting time frivolously. No error.
A B C D E

Improving Sentences

The following sentences are questioning you about sentence correctness and the expression of information. Part, or all, of each sentence is underlined. Following the sentence, five versions of the underlined portion are presented. Choice **A** repeats the original; the other choices are different. If you think a better sentence is found in **B–E**, then choose one of those. If the sentence is correct as stated, your answer will be **A**.

6. Once a college that accepts only male mostly Caucasian students, the University of Notre Dame now boasts a student body that has not only males and females but representatives from countries and cultures from around the world.
- A. Once a college that accepts only male mostly Caucasian students,
 - B. Accepting mostly mail Caucasian students,
 - C. A college that once upon a time accepted mostly male Caucasian student,
 - D. Once a college that accepted mostly male Caucasian students,
 - E. Once a college that accepted only male mostly Caucasian students
7. The writer Jonathan Swift was known for his scathing satires and insightful criticisms, he wrote a number of literary works that have been universally accepted as fine literature.
- A. The writer Jonathan Swift was known for his scathing satires and insightful criticisms,
 - B. The writer Jonathan Swift, known for his scathing satires and insightful criticisms; he
 - C. Known for his scathing satires and insightful criticisms, the writer Jonathan Swift
 - D. The writer Jonathan Swift was known for his scathing satires and insightful criticisms, however he
 - E. Jonathan Swift, the writer, known for his scathing satires and insightful criticisms, and he
8. Proponents for the building of a new community hockey arena point out that people who make large donations to this cause expect to be rewarded with special favors from the mayor and gaining easy access to other government officials and information.
- A. And gaining easy access
 - B. and they gain easy access
 - C. and easy access
 - D. as well as gaining easy access
 - E. and to be rewarded with easy access
9. A letter written by Maria will be sent to the Mayor informing him of the need for repairing the potholes on Main Street.
- A. A letter written by Maria will be sent
 - B. Maria's letter will be written and sent
 - C. Maria will write a letter and send it
 - D. A letter will be sent that was written by Maria
 - E. Written by Maria, a letter will be sent

10. Dieters are beginning to take notice of carbohydrate counting because it seems to be a successful method of weight loss for many people finding it a less painful way of losing weight.
- A. finding it a less painful way of losing weight.
 - B. to find it less painful to lose weight.
 - C. finding losing weight a less painful process.
 - D. who find it a less painful way of losing weight.
 - E. who lose weight less painfully.
11. Some people believe that the custom of paying large salaries to baseball players and other athletes have gotten out of hand.
- A. of paying large salaries to baseball players and other athletes have gotten out of hand
 - B. of large salaries and other athletes have gotten out of hand
 - C. of baseball players and other athletes being paid large salaries have gotten out of hand
 - D. of baseball players and other athletes receiving large salaries that have gotten out of hand
 - E. of paying large salaries to baseball players and other athletes has gotten out of hand

Improving Paragraphs

The following is an early draft of a short essay. Some parts need to be revised. Read the passage, paragraph by paragraph, and choose the best answers for the questions that follow. In choosing answers, follow the rules of standard written English.

1) Living especially during the winter in the upper Midwest can be a challenge. 2) Often, however, the worst challenge is walking. 3) Snowfalls of 3–5 feet, icy roads, Alberta Clippers blowing down from Canada, and sub-zero temperatures are only part of the problem. 4) Fender benders are common daily occurrences. 5) Active salt trucks fly by cars on the highway, spitting out salt while damaging paint jobs and sometimes even cracking windshields.

6) Slipping on the ice while walking the dog can challenge even the most agile walker. 7) People have been known to break legs, sprain wrists, and even result in suffering concussions as a result of falls on the ice. 8) Urgent care clinics and hospital emergency rooms are flooded with such injuries, especially over weekends.

9) People in warmer parts of the country, such as Florida and southwest Texas, have no idea what they are missing. 10) In fact, such opportunities as undergoing an upper Midwest winter should be experienced by everyone.

12. In context, which is the best version of sentence one?

- A. As it is now.
- B. Especially living during the winter in the upper Midwest can be a challenge.
- C. Living in the upper Midwest, especially during the winter, can be a challenge.
- D. Living especially in the upper Midwest, can be a challenge during the winter.
- E. During the winter, a challenge can be had by living in the upper Midwest.

13. For clarity, the BEST arrangement of sentences in the first paragraph would be:

- A. as it is now.
- B. 1, 3, 4, 5, 2.
- C. 2, 3, 5, 4, 1.
- D. 5, 4, 3, 2, 1.
- E. 2, 3, 4, 1, 5.

14. To maintain the flow of the second paragraph, sentence 7 should read:

- A. as it is now.
- B. People have broken their legs, sprained wrists and even suffering concussions as a result of falls on the ice.
- C. As a result of falls on the ice, people have been known to break legs, spraining wrists and even suffering concussions.
- D. People, as a result of falls on the ice, have been breaking legs, spraining wrists and suffered concussions.
- E. People have been known to break legs, sprain wrists, and even suffer concussions as a result of falls on the ice.

Answers and Explanations

1. **E.** No error. You might be tempted to answer **B**, but *makes* is the correct verb to go with the subject, “a number.” Choice **A** is okay because “it” refers to the Chinese language. Choice **C** should not be considered as an option. Choice **D**, however, might be tempting until you remember that a semi-colon is the appropriate punctuation to use between independent clauses.
2. **A.** There is NO need for the word “and.” Choices **B** and **C** have no problems. Choice **D**, “clunky bracelets,” might be a temptation because of the comma before clunky, but it is a correct use of the comma.
3. **C.** Wait on her is incorrect because unless one is a member of a wait staff in a restaurant, we do not wait ON someone, we wait FOR someone. This is an idiomatic expression of American English having to do with prepositions.
4. **B.** Angry at is also an idiomatic expression of American English having to do with prepositions. We become angry WITH people not AT them. We become angry at situations. It is not unusual for the SAT to occasionally throw two or even three questions at you in close proximity that have to do with the same usage rule.
5. **D.** Wasting is a participle, not a verb. An *infinitive verb* is necessary to balance with the verb phrase “to get some.” The wording that is needed is “not to waste time frivolously.” There is nothing incorrect about Choices **A**, **B**, or **C**.
6. **D.** No change, Choice **A** offers the incorrect verb tense for the sequence; it needs the past tense, NOT the present tense. Choice **B** is incomplete and lacks the correct historical chronology. Choice **C** is too awkward, and “once upon a time” is too immature. Although Choice **E** might seem correct, notice the words only and mostly, which are awkwardly and incorrectly used.
7. **C.** You wouldn’t want to leave the sentence as it is (Choice **A**) because it uses passive, not active voice. Selection **B** is okay until the last pronoun “he,” which eliminates this choice. Choice **D** is incorrect because of the lack of appropriate punctuation around the word “however.” Lastly, Choice **E** seems okay until the last two words, “and he.”
8. **E.** And to be rewarded with easy access is the only choice to match the already existing, “expect to be rewarded with special favors.” This makes the syntax of the sentence parallel.
9. **C.** Maria will write a letter and send it is the active sentence structure that is preferred. No change, Choice **A**, is a passive sentence structure. Active voice is the preferred sentence construction.
10. **D.** Who find it a less painful way of losing weight is the easiest and most natural sentence construction.
11. **E.** Of paying large salaries to baseball players and other athletes has gotten out of hand is the most appropriate meaning for this sentence. Leaving it as is, Choice **A**, uses the wrong verb tense. Choices **B**, **C**, and **D** are just too awkward to be correct.
12. **C.** This question is asking you to choose the best sentence to be the first sentence of the short paragraph that will immediately focus on what is to follow. Choice **A** puts the word “especially” in an awkward position in the sentence. The same can be said for Choices **B** and **D**—the syntax of the sentences is just too awkward. Choice **E** might tempt you, but since you want the reader to focus on the topic, you want to state it first: As Choice **E** is structured, it delays the important information until too late in the sentence.
13. **B.** The *best* arrangement of the sentences in the first paragraph is 1, 3, 4, 5, 2.
 When asked a question like this, always look FIRST at the first sentence you are given. Note that two responses, Choices **A** and **B** list sentence one first. If you decide that is the BEST first sentence this paragraph has to offer (after glancing at your other choices), then eliminate all but Choices **A** and **B**. Next, look at the LAST sentence you are given. Does sentence 5 make a better last sentence than sentence 2? No, the entire paragraph is actually leading up to sentence 2—the difficulty of walking. Now you have the correct answer.
14. **E.** “People have been known to break legs, sprain wrists, and even suffer concussions as a result of falls on the ice.” This is just another Sentence Improvement question hidden in the Paragraph Improvement section of the test. This is not uncommon. The problem with the sentence, of course, is that it is not parallel. “Break legs, sprain wrists” both have a verb-object combination. “And even result in suffering concussions” loses that parallelism. The only sentence that offers all three injuries in parallel is Choice **E** with “suffer concussions.”

A large rectangular box containing 30 horizontal lines for writing.

Explanations and Scoring

Assessing your essay response is not as easy as scoring the multiple-choice questions. There are no right and wrong answers, just successful and not-so-successful responses. Your essay responses will be evaluated by two readers. Each reader will have been trained to use a 6-point Scoring Guide. Their scores will then be added together to give your response a grade from 1–12. You will learn more about this assessment and what the readers will be looking for in the Essay preparation section of this book in Chapter 1. For now, just take a look at the 6 point *Essay Scoring Guide* that follows.

Essay Scoring Guide

- 6** This score is reserved for *outstanding* essay responses. A student earning a 6 response has effectively and insightfully developed a point of view on the issue and demonstrates exceptional critical thinking, using appropriate examples and reasons within the response. These essays are well organized, clearly focused, and exceptionally coherent. This level of essay demonstrates skillful use of language, apt vocabulary, and a variety of sentence structure. Although not without flaws, a 6 response is relatively free of most errors of usage, mechanics, and grammar.
- 5** This score reflects an effective essay; it demonstrates *reasonable mastery* of composition skills. It may have occasional lapses in quality; overall it is a very successful response. A student earning a 5 response has effectively developed a point of view on the topic or issue, has demonstrated strong critical thinking skills, and generally has used appropriate examples to develop his or her point of view. The organization is focused, showing good coherence and progression of ideas. This essay will exhibit facility in the use of language and appropriate vocabulary for the task. A variety of sentence structure is present with a minimum of mechanical and grammatical errors.
- 4** This score reflects a *competent response*, which demonstrates adequate mastery, although it will have lapses, in contrast to the quality of the 5 and 6 responses. A student earning a 4 response has developed a point of view and demonstrates critical thinking on the issue. However, the examples and development of ideas are less strong or less consistent than 5 or 6 responses. General organization is evident, and progression and coherence is present, although not always consistent. Language and vocabulary skills may be more limited or less appropriate. Some sentence structure variety is used, although grammar, punctuation, and mechanical skills may be less evident.
- 3** This score reflects an *inadequate response* to the essay question. It does, however, demonstrate a developing mastery of composition skills. The point of view will be evident, along with critical thinking, but it may be inconsistent. Examples and support are often weak or inadequate to make the writer’s point. Organization, coherence, and focus are less well developed, and lapses may be found in sentence structure and/or flow of ideas. Vocabulary may be limited. Grammar, usage, and mechanical errors are present.
- 2** This score reflects a *seriously limited* essay response, which demonstrates little mastery. The point of view is present but limited due to vagueness, weak critical thinking, or inappropriate or insufficient examples, reasons, or other evidence to support the writer’s position. The essay is poorly organized; it has little coherence, and it displays little facility in the use of language. Sentence structure is not varied, and errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics are serious enough to obscure meaning.
- 1** This score reflects an essay that is *fundamentally lacking*. No mastery is evident as demonstrated by a lack of a viable point and/or little or no evidence to back a position. The essay is disorganized and/or unfocused, resulting in an incoherent response. Vocabulary is limited; sentence structure displays serious flaws; mechanical, grammatical, and usage errors are pervasive, seriously interfering with the meaning.

The following two essays are student responses to the previous SAT essay prompt. Following each essay is a short discussion about the student response—what is done well, what could be done better, and what kind of score readers would be likely to award it. After studying the Scoring Guide closely, compare your response to these responses. Try to be objective when you do this. What score do you think you would receive for what you've written? If possible, try to find an adult, preferably one of your teachers, to give you his/her opinion. However, even your friends can help you determine your score.

Suemee's Response

What is the "right" way? Many people learn this over their lifetime and are tested continuously in many challenging situations. Although people learn the correct and moral way, people can interpret it differently and use it in totally opposite ways.

One thing we can be sure of, however, is that the right way is definitely not always the cool and popular way. When a person or group of people stands for something, it is because they believe in it, not anyone else. Of course there are some people who choose to follow the views of friends because of fear of what would happen if they were to oppose, but most people will choose to stand for what they believe in if it means anything to them. Even though a person may stand alone on a moral topic, there are surely those who will follow that person's idea because they feel sympathy for the brave individual or because they just needed someone else to take the first step.

I strongly agree that standing for the right when it is unpopular is a true test of moral character because for a person to do that, he or she must have a lot of courage and stay strong on what he/she stands for. I think people like Martin Luther King Jr. and Rosa Parks are great examples of sustaining what they believed in morally because I, for one, do not believe that people should be separated by color or by race, and neither did they. King spent time in jail standing up for what he thought was right and fair. He showed strong leadership at a time that the United States needed such strong direction. And Rosa Parks, an everyday woman, not a political leader, not anyone in the limelight, decided one day to defy the system, and she took a seat at the front of the bus. What courage and conviction she demonstrated on the bus that day. Because of people like Martin Luther King Jr. and Rosa Parks, many people followed and others, who had been afraid to speak up before, began to voice their ideas and beliefs.

It is important for an individual not to be a moral coward. Standing up for what you believe is not always easy, but it can pay off as it did for Martin Luther King Jr. and Rosa Parks. We must be strong in our convictions, even when the majority disagrees with us. Who knows, some of them may just be afraid to speak up for themselves and only need for someone else like you or me to take the first step.

Commentary on Suemee’s Essay

This is an *effective essay* and would most likely garner at least a 5 from each reader. Look again at what constitutes the score of a 5. This response most effectively develops a point of view on the issue and moves forward reasonably and smoothly to support what she says. The essay is well organized and coherent. This student seems comfortable with the language; vocabulary is appropriate to the response. Sentence structure varies, and there are a minimum of minor errors.

The slight jumble of the second paragraph is what keeps this paper in the 5 range. Although we understand what this student is saying, she could be more clear. We should not have to read between the lines to pinpoint her focus. The third paragraph is the strongest, and if a reader were to award this response a 6, it would probably be because of this and the last paragraph. This essay gains strength as it goes along. Martin Luther King Jr. and Rosa Parks are good examples of moral bravery, and they aren’t just mentioned, but several sentences tie them into the whole. Finally, the last paragraph brings fine closure to the piece, and the brief mention of King and Parks once more is a nice touch. This student has done a first-rate job.

John’s Response

“The right way is not always the popular and easy way” I believe, is a very true statement. What is right to one person may not be what’s right for the next. Morals consist of what you believe is the right thing to do in different situations. If you do truly believe in your morals than it should not be that hard to make decisions on what’s right or wrong. Unfortunately it is not that easy for most people. Most people lack, what Margaret Chase referred to as, “moral courage.”

Take for example the topic of drugs and teenagers. Now days it seems as if all of the so-called “cool” or “popular” kids are into some sort of drug, and every day they influence the more “unpopular” kids into using drugs whether consciously or not. These kids are then put into a test of their moral courage. Do they, or do they not use drugs?

I know first had how hard it can be to stand up for what’s right. I believe it’s wrong to harm your body. Today at lunch, for instance, some of my so-called “friends” asked me if I wanted to get drunk this weekend. Morally for me that would be wrong, so I said “No.” At first I was afraid they would think I was totally weird, and maybe they did, but by sticking to what I believe, I felt good, and I do not regret my decision.

Slavery was practiced at one time in the US and it was a nearly a unanimously supported idea. But the few people who were against it were put out to a harsh test of morality. Abolitionists then knew that protesting slavery could get them into serious trouble, or could even get them killed. Yet because of their strong belief and moral courage, they opposed slavery because it was wrong.

In conclusion, standing up for the unpopular may not be what you want to do, but if you truly have faith in your convictions, you will always make the right decision.

Commentary on John’s Response

This essay demonstrates competence in writing. It would be assessed as a 4. The thinking is fine, and the examples are suitable albeit a bit trite. There is good organization and focus. The presentation of ideas is competent, but it could flow together better. Construction and presentation of this essay lacks the smoothness and flow that we see in Suemee’s essay. The introduction is well done, especially mentioning the author of the original quotation. The topic of drugs and teenagers, unfortunately, has been overdone. Although there is nothing wrong with this topic, it is rather stale. Perhaps something less tired would have produced a more dynamic response.

Each paragraph is okay on its own, but together they don’t flow well. Paragraphs 2 and 3 certainly fit together, although the student has implied the link rather than worked it into his writing. The fourth paragraph, on slavery, seems, at first misplaced. This paragraph needs a better topic sentence that will link the ideas of this historic paragraph to the preceding, more contemporary paragraphs. Although there are several mechanical errors, overall they do not detract from the essence of the response. The conclusion seems tacked on. Perhaps this was due to the time limitation. However, in contrast to Suemee’s response, you can see that it lacks the finesse of the earlier response. Nevertheless, this student has demonstrated proficiency in responding to Margaret Chase’s challenging quotation.

You Finished the Diagnostic—Now What?

This Diagnostic Test offers you several things:

- An overview of the Writing Section of the SAT Exam
- The “flavor” of the types of multiple-choice questions in the Writing Section of the SAT Exam
- Practice in answering these multiple-choice questions
- A sneak peak at the newest addition to the SAT Exam—the essay itself
- An idea of the type of essay you will be expected to write
- An early opportunity to write your own essay
- Familiarity with the Scoring Guide for the essay
- The opportunity to compare your response to others’ responses

You should now be able to determine better your strengths and weaknesses regarding the Writing Section of the SAT Exam. From here you need to take a closer look at the essay, the sentence correction questions, sentence improvement questions, and paragraph improvement questions. You will find all kinds of suggestions and discussions on writing successful essays and learning strategies, skills, and information that will enable you to conquer the multiple-choice questions. Let’s do it!

PART II

ESSAY AND VERBAL REVIEW

Tactics for Successful SAT Essay Writing

For years you have been writing compositions and school essays—in English classes as well as your other classes. The skills that you have learned over the years will facilitate your success in writing the SAT essay. Most of the skills you have developed will serve you well. However, in the following pages, you will find specific suggestions for the SAT essay as well as gain ideas for your school writings.

General Writing Skills

The following are general skill areas that add to *all* of your writing needs:

- Appropriate organization according to the needs of the essay requirement
- A thesis that is clearly conceived and well-supported
- Detail that demonstrates a balance between general ideas and specific points
- Diction that is precise and suitable to the task
- Syntax that is effective and appropriate
- A comfortable presentation of conventional American English grammar, spelling, and punctuation

You have been honing all of these skills for years. If you have successfully mastered them, they will serve you well when you write your SAT essay. This book will help you brush up on any composition skills you may have forgotten.

Specific Information about the SAT Essay

The SAT essay requires you to write under timed conditions. You probably are used to more of a processed approach to writing—brainstorming, prewriting, drafting, and so on—all the steps that you take to produce a final product. Now, however, you are being asked to write an essay, from beginning to end, within 25 minutes! Ouch! This is a different kind of challenge. Let’s make sure you are up to it.

One of the reasons that the SAT Exam has added the essay is to evaluate just how successfully students can organize their ideas, quickly focus their attention on the fundamentals of composition (central idea, adequate support, clear and coherent order), and consequently express them in words. In particular, students are expected to show their thinking and communication skills as they are presented under timed conditions.

One other difference you need to realize is that your writing on the SAT essay will be assessed differently than what you may be used to in your high school classes. This essay will be calculated holistically. That is, your essay as a whole is evaluated, not its individual parts. Readers read your essay, take *all* aspects of it into account, and then decide on a score. You saw the basic scoring guide in the evaluation of the essay in the diagnostic test. Later in this chapter is a more thorough breakdown of *all* that readers consider in a holistic evaluation. Readers are trained to evaluate essays on what the student has done well, not to deduct points for minor errors in composition. SAT essay readers are aware that these essays are unrevised, first drafts. They also acknowledge that students are writing these compositions under great pressure. Consequently, you need not worry about cross outs and marginal editing.

The length of your answer is no guarantee of quality. Readers are looking for evidence of your critical thinking as well as your ability to communicate your ideas successfully on paper.

Finally, strive for good penmanship. Many of you do your best “writing” on the computer. Well, for this exam, you have to express yourself in writing. If readers cannot read what you’ve written, they cannot score it. If your handwriting is bad, print. Also, your essays will be scanned into the computer so readers can access them from remote sites. Any faults in your handwriting do tend to look worse when your paper is scanned.

Mechanical difficulties reduce the score only if they hamper communication. However, something *very* badly written can only be scored as a lower half response, that is a response that earns a 3 or less.

The SAT Essay Prompt (Question)

The first thing to remember is that thousands of students will be taking the SAT Exam. Consequently, the question(s) you are asked to answer will be generic, open to a large cross-section of test takers. In other words, you can expect a very approachable topic, something on which most students will have an opinion. This is a plus for you. The one thing you can count on, however, is that the question (prompt) will require you to present some sort of opinion or require you to take a stand on some conflicting viewpoint.

Developing Your Essay

When you write under timed conditions, such as for the SAT essay, you need to focus your attention on the fundamentals of composition: a central idea, support backed by evidence, and a clear, coherent order. Now let's take a look at writing a successful SAT essay.

Introduction

Avoid long, extended introductions for this essay. You want to introduce the topic of your essay and then leave the introduction and move on to the body of your composition. Let's look back at the two successful essays used as example responses in the Diagnostic Test.

Suemee's Response

What is the "right" way? Many people learn this over their lifetimes and are tested continuously in many challenging situations. Although people learn the correct and moral way, people can interpret it differently and use it in totally opposite ways.

John's Response

"The right way is not always the popular and easy way," I believe, is a very true statement. What is right to one person may not be what's right for the next. Morals consist of what you believe is the right thing to do in different situations. If you do truly believe in your morals then it should not be that hard to make decisions on what's right or wrong. Unfortunately it is not that easy for most people. Most people lack, what Margaret Chase referred to as, "moral courage."

As you can see, neither of these introductions is long or protracted by words or time-consuming filler that take up space but say nothing. Both introductions get right to the point. Suemee's response may seem a bit vague, but it is focused enough to urge the reader to continue reading, and when you look at it with the rest of the essay, it works very well. John's response is a bit more focused. It specifically mentions concepts from the prompt as well as refers to the author of the original quotation by Margaret Chase. You cannot spend (nor waste) time on lengthy, purposeless introductions. Plan your essay quickly. Don't hesitate to jot down a few notes right on the test booklet. Then, state your intentions, make your point(s), and go on to the body paragraph(s) of your essay. If you feel like you are "stuck," or if you get that "blank" feeling, don't spend more than about 3–4 minutes thinking about what you are going to say. By the time four

minutes have passed, start writing—something. Worse-case scenario, use the prompt (the essay question) to get you started. You may have to leave some room at the beginning of your essay, write the body of your essay, and write the introduction at the end. Just do whatever works for you within the 25-minute time limit.

Body Paragraphs

You will want to spend most of your time on the body of the essay. If you take 4–5 minutes to plan your essay and another 3–4 minutes to write your introduction, you have no more than 12 minutes left to write the body of your essay. This leaves you with only a couple minutes for a conclusion and a minute or two to skim over your essay and tidy up the most obvious problems. Now you see how important it is for you to plan what you are going to say.

You might wonder just how long the body of this essay should be. You need to write *at least* one well-developed paragraph for the body of the essay. Two body paragraphs would be better. This will then produce a 3–4 paragraph response. You are probably used to writing longer essays than this, but remember, you only have 25 minutes total.

Be sure that each paragraph has a unifying topic sentence. Each paragraph needs a focus, and this focus should be in direct support of the intention of the essay as a whole, which you have stated in your introduction. Support your points with specific evidence—from your observations, experience, or your reading. The prompt of the SAT essay will be somewhat controversial in nature. You will be asked to take a position and support it, and that is precisely what you need to do.

Sometimes students say they cannot write about a topic for which they have little or no feeling or interest. The answer to that problem is simple: **Get over it!** Like it or not, that’s the topic you are “stuck” with, and for 25 minutes, it has to become the most interesting and important topic you’ve ever considered in your life. No kidding; suck up your dislike or your disinterest and attack the topic like you mean it.

You can support your points with examples and illustrations. Or, perhaps, you might choose to develop your ideas using narration or by providing an anecdote that supports your point of view. Other approaches you can take are using description or comparing and contrasting your ideas with other ideas. Whatever method(s) you choose, just make sure that your ideas are clearly linked. Your details, facts, and examples must all tie into the topic of your essay.

If you have more than one body paragraph (and you should try to have at least two), be sure these paragraphs are linked in some manner. Using appropriate transition words within and between paragraphs is very helpful in keeping your essay organized and coherent. Also, like the paragraphs that follow, the first uses a general approach, and the second echoes this with a more specific approach, using illustrations and examples to enhance the ideas.

Let’s look again at Suemee’s Diagnostic Test essay response, focusing on the body paragraphs.

Introduction → *What is the “right” way? Many people learn this over their lifetimes and are tested continuously in many challenging situations. Although people learn the correct and moral way, people can interpret it differently and use it in totally opposite ways.*

Body Paragraph One → *One thing we can be sure of, however, is that the right way is definitely not always the cool and popular way. When a person or group of people stands for something, it is because they believe in it, not anyone else. Of course there are some people who choose to follow the views of friends because of fear of what would happen if they were to oppose, but most people will choose to stand for what they believe in if it means anything to them. Even though a person may stand alone on a moral topic, there are surely those who will follow that person’s idea because they feel sympathy for the brave individual or because they just needed someone else to take the first step.*

**Body
Paragraph Two** →

I strongly agree that standing for the right when it is unpopular is a true test of moral character because for a person to do that, he or she must have a lot of courage and stay strong on what he/she stands for. I think people like Martin Luther King Jr. and Rosa Parks are great examples of sustaining what they believed in morally because I, for one, do not believe that people should be separated by color or by race, and neither did they. King spent time in jail standing up for what he thought was right and fair. He showed strong leadership at a time that the United States needed such strong direction. And Rosa Parks, an everyday woman, not a political leader, not anyone in the limelight, decided one day to defy the system, and she took a seat at the front of the bus. What courage and conviction she demonstrated on the bus that day. Because of people like Martin Luther King Jr. and Rosa Parks, many people followed, and others, who had been afraid to speak up before, began to voice their ideas and beliefs.

Quickly review the introduction. This student introduces the idea of learning the “right (moral) way” and living this way in one’s lifetime, no matter what one faces.

The first body paragraph then takes this idea to a personal level, saying that the right way is often not the cool or popular way. This is then developed, using generalized references to people who follow and those who lead. Although this is not a dynamic paragraph by itself, it is a good lead-in to the much fuller body paragraph that follows.

It is the second body paragraph that gives this composition its strength. It opens with an idea continued from the prior paragraph. Then she uses both Martin Luther King Jr. and Rosa Parks to further develop and support her main idea. These very specific examples illustrate her point, the idea of others following those who have moral courage. The last sentence specifically demonstrates this idea, “Because of people like Martin Luther King Jr. and Rosa Parks, many people followed, and others, who had been afraid to speak up before, began to voice their ideas and beliefs.” This strongly enhances what she stated in the earlier paragraph, “. . .there are surely those who will follow that person’s idea because they feel sympathy for the brave individual or because they just needed someone else to take the first step.”

Notice how these two body paragraphs complement each other. They are strongly linked with their ideas as well as their words. These paragraphs are well organized, and the ideas presented are coherent and well supported.

Conclusion

Because of the time restriction under which you must write the SAT essay, the conclusion should be brief and to the point. In fact, your last body paragraph should bring the essay to enough of a closure that if you were to run out of time and be unable to add a conclusion, you will have already stated the essence of what you intended to say.

Basically, your conclusion should echo the main idea, without dully repeating it. The best conclusions interestingly wrap up ideas that are introduced in the beginning of the essay and developed in the body of the essay.

Let’s look one last time at Suemee’s diagnostic test essay response, focusing on the conclusion. You have just reread the introduction and body paragraphs, so you can see how nicely the conclusion pulls everything together.

It is important for an individual not to be a moral coward. Standing up for what you believe is not always easy, but it can pay off as it did for Martin Luther King and Rosa Parks. We must be strong in our convictions, even when the majority disagrees with us. Who knows, some of them may just be afraid to speak up for themselves and only need for someone else like you or me to take the first step.

A large rectangular box containing 30 horizontal lines for writing.

Assessing Your Response

Do you remember the 6-point scoring guide that was used for assessing the diagnostic essays? Let's look at that again before we look at some sample responses.

Essay Scoring Guide

6 This score is reserved for *outstanding* essay responses. A student earning a 6 response has effectively and insightfully developed a point of view on the issue and demonstrates exceptional critical thinking, using appropriate examples and reasons within the response. These essays are well organized, clearly focused, and exceptionally coherent. This level of essay demonstrates skillful use of language, apt vocabulary, and a variety of sentence structure. Although not without flaws, a 6 response is relatively free of most errors of usage, mechanics, and grammar.

5 This score reflects an effective essay; it demonstrates *reasonable mastery* of composition skills. It may have occasional lapses in quality; overall it is a very successful response. A student earning a 5 response has effectively developed a point of view on the topic or issue, has demonstrated strong critical thinking skills, and generally has used appropriate examples to develop his or her point of view. The organization is focused, showing good coherence and progression of ideas. This essay will exhibit facility in the use of language and appropriate vocabulary for the task. A variety of sentence structure is present with a minimum of mechanical and grammatical errors.

4 This score reflects a *competent response*, which demonstrates adequate mastery, although it will have lapses, in contrast to the quality of the 5 and 6 responses. A student earning a 4 response has developed a point of view and demonstrates critical thinking on the issue. However, the examples and development of ideas are less strong or less consistent than 5 or 6 responses. General organization is evident, and progression and coherence is present, although not always consistent. Language and vocabulary skills may be more limited or less appropriate. Some sentence structure variety is used, although grammar, punctuation, and mechanical skills may be less evident.

3 This score reflects an *inadequate response* to the essay question. It does, however, demonstrate a developing mastery of composition skills. The point of view will be evident, along with critical thinking, but it may be inconsistent. Examples and support are often weak or inadequate to make the writer's point. Organization, coherence, and focus are less well developed, and lapses may be found in sentence structure and/or flow of ideas. Vocabulary may be limited. Grammar, usage, and mechanical errors are present.

2 This score reflects a *seriously limited* essay response, which demonstrates little mastery. The point of view is present but limited due to vagueness, weak critical thinking, or inappropriate or insufficient examples, reasons, or other evidence to support the writer's position. The essay is poorly organized; it has little coherence, and it displays little facility in the use of language. Sentence structure is not varied, and errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics are serious enough to obscure meaning.

1 This score reflects an essay that is *fundamentally lacking*. No mastery is evident as demonstrated by a lack of a viable point and/or little or no evidence to back a position. The essay is disorganized and/or unfocused, resulting in an incoherent response. Vocabulary is limited; sentence structure displays serious flaws; mechanical, grammatical, and usage errors are pervasive, seriously interfering with the meaning.

Rachel's Response

People want others to give them their honest opinions, but they also want that opinion to be good. When one person asks another's opinion on something, it is for one of two reasons: he wants the truth or he wants a compliment. There is always a line of importance that distinguishes the two, and it is this line that we must be careful about.

If someone asks for someone's opinion about how he looks, there are times when the response is expected to be positive. For example, if a woman asks her husband if she still looks as good as when he met her, she is not looking for the truth. She is asking for reassurance. She is asking her husband to say that he doesn't care about looks, and he still loves her just as much as when they met. There are also times when the response should be truthful. For example, if a model asks her manager how she looks before a fashion show, she is expecting an honest answer, so she knows what she needs to do to look better. The manager's opinion is important because her career (and maybe the manager's as well) depends on how she looks. Colin Powell was correct when he said that loyalty meant giving him the truth, because he was Secretary of State, and any opinion he needs has to fall on the positive side of the truth line.

Another reason that someone might want a truthful opinion is if he/she is trying to learn more about the person. Political candidates are constantly questioned about their opinions on certain topics, and their answers are expected to be truthful. Of course, whether they are truthful, is another discussion altogether.

In conclusion, people want to hear the truth under certain circumstances, and don't under other circumstances.

Rachel's Response is a very adequate essay that does a good job reacting to the quotation by Colin Powell. It is not, however, without its flaws. It falls somewhere in the high four or low five assessment range.

The introduction to this essay is good. She opens well and makes her point: There are two sides to the idea of people really wanting the truth.

The first (and main) body paragraph says it all. First she talks about the times when people don't really want the actual truth. In fact, they often have an entirely different agenda in mind when asking for the truth. The wife seeking her husband's reassurance is a good example of this. The next part of this body paragraph deals with times when the actual truth is needed and/or expected. This is also well illustrated with the situation of the model seeking her manager's opinion.

Actually this lengthy body paragraph could easily become two paragraphs—each one dealing with one side of the truth line. In fact, the response would be improved if this were done. Each paragraph might offer another example or more support for each side of the so-called truth line. Then, the third body paragraph, the one about politicians could, and probably should, be eliminated. As the paragraph stands now, it is too brief, and it just seems to be stuck in the essay without much success.

Finally, this essay's conclusion is most brief. However, what needed to be said had already been said. Its single sentence is more of a signal to the reader that the writer has said all that is going to be said at this time.

Kyle's Response

Most people in the world, if asked, will say that they want an honest opinion from their friends and coworkers. Is this really true? There are many things people do or say in their everyday lives that contradict this supposed desire for honesty.

The thing that most people are guilty of is asking a question and expecting a specific response. For example, if I wrote this paper and asked my teacher if it was any good, I might expect her to say yes. Not necessarily because it really is a good paper, but because I don't want to get my feelings hurt if she tells me no. Why, then, do people ask these questions? To receive some sort of encouragement, regardless of whether it is an honest response or not.

Perhaps another thing that gives this away is the asking of a question that cannot be answered correctly. One of the most popular examples of this is when a woman asks someone if she looks fat in whatever she is wearing. It may seem like a simple, harmless question, but there is, in fact, no right way to answer this question, especially if it is a significant other who must give the response. If the reply is yes, the woman will surely get angry and upset because now she thinks she's fat. However, if the reply is no, she will surely accuse the responder of lying. In situations like these, it may be best to just not answer at all. I know that's my father's philosophy when my mother poses such questions.

In these instances such as these, more people show that they, in fact do not want honest opinions, but to hear what they want to hear. However, this does not mean that they are not loyal friends or that they do not have loyal friends. A loyal friend will probably tell you the truth when you need to hear it. But what is perhaps more important to many people is that a loyal friend also knows just how and when to lie.

Kyle's Response is a very successful response to the quotation by Colin Powell. The use of the rhetorical question in the introduction is really the focus of the essay. Do people really seek such truth? Or is there a contradiction here?

The first body paragraph discusses the idea that when some people ask for the truth, they already have a preconceived response of choice. This paragraph goes on to describe the idea, not unlike the first student's response, that such questions sometimes have very little to do with attaining a true response and more to do with reassurance and encouragement.

The next body paragraph very successfully explores the question that can *not* be answered correctly. The example of the woman asking whether she is fat, though a somewhat trite illustration, is cleverly presented, and Kyle's personal touch in the last sentence of this paragraph is amusing.

The conclusion on this essay is very well done. It continues the discussion a bit further. Then the description of being and having a loyal friends and the best test of a loyal friend who knows just how and when to lie brings this essay to a clever end.

What a nicely written essay. Some might say this is a six; no one would argue that it deserves less than a five.

Your Response

The readers of this exam will be using a single, six-point scoring guide, similar to the one presented earlier. However, the following chart is an itemization of the many writing skills that the SAT essay readers are assessing—Overall

Impression; Language and Word Choice; Sentence Structure; Development of Viewpoint and Critical Thinking; Organization of Ideas; and Grammar, Usage, and Mechanics.

SAT Scoring Guide Itemization						
	<i>Overall Impression</i>	<i>Development of Viewpoint & Critical Thinking</i>	<i>Organization of Ideas</i>	<i>Language and Word Choice</i>	<i>Sentence Structure</i>	<i>Grammar, Usage, and Mechanics</i>
6	Outstanding and consistent, clear and competent. Very insightful; minimum mechanical/usage errors.	Fully developed, using clear and appropriate supporting evidence. Shows high level of critical thinking.	Extremely well-organized. Support evidence is presented in a logical and effective manner.	Effective and expert use of language. Accurate and appropriate use of vocabulary.	Sentence structure demonstrates clever and engaging thinking.	Nearly error free.
5	Reasonably consistent, clear and logical. Minimal errors or lapses in quality.	Generally adequate, using apt examples/reasons/evidence. Good support of main idea, shows critical thinking.	Overall well organized and reasonably focused. Generally coherent and sensibly presented.	Competence of language skills is clearly demonstrated. Appropriate vocabulary use.	Sufficiently varied sentence structure.	Some minor errors, but generally well written.
4	Adequately competent. Some errors, but still clear and providing fair evidence.	Partially develops main idea with mostly adequate examples and reasons. Shows some evidence of critical thinking.	Reasonably organized, showing some evidence of thoughtful development of ideas.	Adequate but inconsistent use of appropriate language. Vocabulary is acceptable, but not outstanding.	Some evidence of sentence variation.	Some minor errors and possibly one or two major errors.
3	Generally inadequate but demonstrates some potential; may contain inconsistencies.	Weak expansion of main idea with evidence that is hardly appropriate as solid support material.	Limited evidence of organization. Focus is not clear; some confusion in presentation of thoughts.	Some minor errors in expression. Vocabulary is weak and/or limited.	Minimal sentence variation, minor sentence errors.	Accumulation of major and minor errors.
2	Seriously limited due to weak quality or lack of clarity or coherence.	Lack of focus or development of main idea. Critical thinking is superficial with little or inappropriate evidence.	Vaguely recognizable organization; lacks coherence; serious problems with sequential thinking.	Frequent errors of language expression, limited vocabulary, inaccurate word choices.	Frequent sentence errors.	Frequent errors, mostly major, that often interfere with essay meaning.
1	Fundamentally incompetent; contains serious flaws, underdeveloped and/or confusing.	Fails to express a feasible point of view. Provides minimal or no evidence of understanding of the prompt.	No apparent organization, sequence of ideas incoherent and/or confusing.	Seriously deficient use of language; meaning somewhat obscured by inappropriate word choice.	Considerable errors in sentences; meaning is obscured due to faulty structure.	Errors are overwhelming; seriously interfere with the meaning.

A large rectangular box containing 30 horizontal lines for writing.

Eric's Response

I wholeheartedly agree with President Lincoln's statement, but I only partly agree with William Penn's. Being popular does press on a person's personal space and freedom. While popularity does have many snares, it does have some real benefit.

Whenever you go shopping or to the grocery store, almost always there will be a magazine news stand by the checkout lane. It's usually full of tabloids and pop magazines that feature the latest craze and what all the hit stars have been up to. A recent movie called "Paparazzi" (sp?) is about an action star who is constantly harassed by photographers who follow his every footstep. While the movie may not be entirely accurate, it does bring to light at least some of the power and freedom the press has. Stars are followed everywhere. Reporters know a star's favorite restaurant, favorite store and even their favorite color. Granted, none of these things seem very intrusive, but thousands possibly millions of people know them. The star has very little if any privacy. It is there that Lincoln's statement holds truth.

William Penn mentioned snares and no real benefit. Yes, there are many snares that come with popularity. Peer pressure is a major one. All across the country kids dress, talk, and act a certain way to try to be popular. Kids feel like they can't be accepted as they are. They have to change themselves to how magazines, movies, or their friends tell them they should look or act. Kids have turned into imperfect clones of their favorite movie star or singer instead of being accepted for who they are.

Another snare of popularity is coping with it and the attention it draws (to use the example of stars again). Many stars have died or been in rehab for drug or alcohol abuse. The popularity and the benefits it brings weren't brought on in a way as to learn how to cope. Mel Gibson, for instance, was a severe alcoholic for many years and then went to rehab. Elvis and many others have died of drug overdoses.

Despite its many snares and problems, popularity can bring benefits. Popularity can bring job opportunities that might be available otherwise. Michael Jordan switched from a pro-basketball player to a pro-baseball player. To be totally honest, he was pretty bad. That would not have been available to him had people not know him, had he not been popular. Likewise, many singers and/or comedians have transferred into acting careers, not all of them very successful.

Popularity does have many negative sides and effects to it. However, it does have some positives. I personally enjoy my obscurity, but that's a thing everyone needs to accept.

Eric's Response is an unusually long essay considering the short 25 minutes Eric had to write this response. The introduction makes reference to both of the quotations as well as their sources. The first body paragraph is mainly about Lincoln's point of view. The second body paragraph shifts smoothly to the William Penn quotation.

The next body paragraph has to do with the downside of popularity and how it has been the ruin of many people, mentioning specific people to emphasize the point. Ideas in this paragraph are then contrasted in the final body paragraph. The transition word “Despite” tells us that a differing point of view is about to be discussed. Body paragraphs three and four demonstrate how the writer has moved beyond the immediacy of the two quotations and can apply them to several specific situations.

The very brief conclusion, although not critical to the essay, mentions again the idea of positive and negative benefits of popularity. This coincides with the two angles on popularity that are discussed in the response. Finally, the essay closes on a personal note, revealing Eric’s voice.

This essay is smooth, well organized, and well developed. It flows gracefully from point to point, and the writer has used ample support for all the major points that he makes. The essay demonstrates good critical thinking and apt vocabulary. This SAT essay response falls at the top of the scoring guide. Few would argue that it deserves less than a score of six.

Lauren’s Response

Based on their testimony, it can be inferred that Lincoln and Penn do not think highly of the state of being that is “popularity.” Penn, however, states that the concept of popularity has no benefits, while Lincoln states that a lack of popularity brings about peace. I agree with both men on this stance against popularity because of the responsibility, lack of peace, and fickle friendship that come with the title.

When one becomes popular for whatever reason, one has the responsibility to maintain the quality that brought about his/her popularity. This can prove to be quite difficult as people often change with popularity into more mechanistic versions of themselves. Needless to say, this sudden change in temperament can bring about a quick and bruising fall from fame and may possibly leave the subject in a worse state than originally. It is human nature to have the desire to be in the state of relaxation from time to time. As Lincoln says, however, with popularity comes a lack of peace. When deprived of peace and quiet, it is not uncommon for people to become irritable and/or anxious, among other things. In this instance, as in the aforementioned instance, an unpleasant disposition can quickly bring about unpopularity and discontent.

Some may say that popularity brings about friendship and love. To the newly popular, a sudden increase in friends and admirers must surely be welcome. However, the majority of the time, these friends are vapid and merely drawn to the person du jour, like flies migrating to each day’s fresh roadkill. And as flies do to many a stripped carcass, they will eventually leave the formerly popular person behind. Surely, when William Penn spoke of the lack of benefits of popularity he had in mind the throngs of vapid “friends” who quickly become fickle, seeking the next person du jour.

Lauren’s Response is a strong response, probably a score of about a five. The introduction establishes the belief that neither Lincoln nor Penn thought highly of popularity, and this student agrees with both.

As Lauren explains the pessimism of the two men’s quotations, she, too, places a fairly negative spin on the idea of popularity. Her own critical thinking echoes the negative interpretation she has given to the quotations.

Each body paragraph deals with one of the quotations. The development of her ideas is particularly well done. Perhaps some readers may find the mention of road kill to be too graphic, but it aptly supports the idea of fickle friends in search of the person *du jour*. The juxtaposition of *du jour* having connotations of mealtime and the dead creatures in the road being meals to flies and other carrion is cleverly done.

Lauren’s essay has good organization, interesting support material, and vocabulary and syntax appropriate to upper scoring essays. The response does, however, lack a concluding paragraph. This is a good example of how what was meant to be said had already been said, and the missing conclusion is not crucial. Possibly lack of time prevented her from tying things together with a few succinct final sentences. Nevertheless, this essay works well.

How Did You Do?

Review your response against the Scoring Guide and the SAT Scoring Guide Itemization, attempting to find where your skills line up with the scores. Did you get a six, a one, or fall somewhere in between?

Enough practice for now. You can try your hand at essay writing later, when you take the Practice SAT Exams at the end of this book.

What to Write, What Not to Write, and How to Write It Better

Of course, most of you realize that writing does not just happen by itself. Sometimes it can be a painstaking process. Most professional writers will agree. A part of successful writing is instinctively knowing the little tricks that make writing seem easy. Of course proper grammar, usage, and mechanics skills are a must. In addition, you need to be aware of how transition words and phrases help to make your writing flow. Knowing the proper homonym and idiom and avoiding trite expressions and redundancies are important as well. The following pages cover all of these “little things” that make the chore of writing look and seem easy.

Transition Words and Phrases

If you look at the top scores on the Scoring Guide, you will find that characteristics of successful SAT essays include strong organization and good coherence. Appropriate use of transition words or phrases will help establish good organization in your writing. Transition words are great clues—from you, the writer, to the reader. In reading, we rely on transition words to verify sequence, direction, contradiction, and so on. For instance, we recognize the word “however” as a word of concession; “beyond that” helps us understand direction; “therefore” gives us a sense of cause and effect.

We need to stay alert to transitions for clues within our reading. It helps give substance to what we read on the printed page. In writing, transition words and phrases are invaluable. The more cues you can give your reader as to the sequence and/or attitude toward your topic, the better. There are literally hundreds of these terms. In the table that follows, you should be able to find a few “keepers” to help make your writing more clear. You also need a basic understanding of these transition words for a few of the multiple-choice questions later in the test.

<i>To indicate more information</i>	<i>To compare and contrast</i>
Besides	Although
Furthermore	However
Indeed	In contrast
Moreover	On the other hand
In fact	Similarly
Second, third, and so on	Whereas

To indicate an example	To indicate a particular time
For instance	After
In particular	Before
Particularly	During
Specifically	Eventually
To illustrate	Meanwhile
	Simultaneously

To indicate a cause or reason	To summarize
As	Briefly
Because	Overall
Due to	Summing up
For	To put it briefly
Since	To summarize

To indicate a result or an effect	To conclude
Accordingly	Given these facts
Finally	Hence
Consequently	In conclusion
Hence	So
So	Therefore
Therefore	Thus
Thus	To conclude

Now that you have this list of transition words, start using them in your writing. They will help you in organizing your SAT essay as well as in your English class(es). These transitions make your writing flow, aid in reasoning, and demonstrate that you are most capable of expressing yourself on paper.

The following is an example of a paragraph demonstrating the use of transitions:

Although many of us talk about being environmentally responsible and believing in saving our planet, the reality is, *however*, that most people are not as ecologically concerned as they ought to be. *For instance*, we say we recycle, and we might separate out newspapers and Coke cans from our regular garbage; *nevertheless*, how many so-called recyclers are aware that much of our recycling goes into the regular garbage landfill? *And*, if we are aware of this, do we do anything about it? *In addition*, do we bring used grocery bags to the store with us to put our groceries in, or is it just too much

trouble to do so? *Finally*, how many people really make an effort to carpool? *Granted* people's schedules vary, and we don't like to be kept waiting; *however*, a few minutes' wait for a couple colleagues could make a carpool instead of each driving home alone in his or her own gas-guzzling SUV.

As you can see, this very short paragraph has several transitional words. It starts out with an *although* countered with a *however*. These transition words set up the argument for the writer. *For instance* is a cue for an example to follow. *Nevertheless* indicates a mild contrast; it is a cue to pay attention to what is being said. *And* and *In addition* are indicators of more information. *Finally* lets the reader know that things are winding down. *Granted* and *however* set up the last contrasting idea.

Of course, when we read we do not analyze these transitions thoroughly, but as a writer, you need to use them as a tool to help your writing move along and to provide cues to the reader.

Trite Expressions

Trite expressions or clichés are *old as dirt*, *come a dime a dozen*, and are *easy as pie* to eliminate from your writing. They are old sayings that are used and heard so often that they do nothing for your writing. Readers' and listeners' brains just switch off when they read/hear them. It is best to avoid these in your writing; they will only detract from the power of your essay. Following are just a few examples:

Beat around the bush	Playing with fire	Good people
Hard data	Cutting edge	Pushing the envelope
More than happy	I wish to state	Bite the bullet
Scratch the surface	Goes without saying	Since the dawn of time
Contrary to popular opinion	Due to the fact that	Acid test
Easier said than done	Few and far between	Words cannot express
Better late than never	Last but not least	Rich and varied (experience)

Can you spot (or identify) the trite expressions in the following sentences? There are 12 in all.

1. From the beginning of time, man has been busy as a beaver perfecting exploration and technology for the good of our country.
2. Franco learned his lesson the hard way; the principal did not beat around the bush when he expelled him from school for three days.
3. That, in a nutshell, is the sad but true story of the late, great Ray Charles.
4. Her little brother, frisky as a puppy, was as destructive as a bull in a china shop.
5. Sadder but wiser, Ahmad realized that he had truly learned that experience is often a hard lesson to learn.

(Answers: **1.** From the beginning of time; busy as a beaver; for the good of our country. **2.** learned his lesson the hard way; beat around the bush. **3.** in a nutshell; sad but true; the late, great. **4.** frisky as a puppy; a bull in a china shop. **5.** Sadder but wiser; experience is often a hard lesson to learn.)

You get the idea. Not much imagination in these sentences is there? You can easily see why it is best to avoid trite expressions: They weaken your writing and make you sound boring.

You will want to avoid these trite expressions in your writing as well as be on the lookout for them in any of the multiple-choice questions.

Improving Sentences

In the Improving Sentences section of the SAT Writing Exam, your job is to read each sentence carefully and identify any errors. For each of these questions, part of the sentence or even an entire sentence is underlined. You will be presented with five versions of the underlined word or phrases. Choice **A** is always a repeat of the sentence as it is; if you select Choice **A**, you are indicating that “no change is needed to make the sentence correct.” Otherwise, you must choose one of the alternative structures that expresses the sentence most accurately. Under NO circumstances should you choose a response that changes the substantial meaning of the original sentence, despite the correctness of grammar and usage in that response.

In this section of the SAT Exam, you are expected to recognize whether there is a mistake in a sentence, even if you cannot identify specifically what the mistake is. In other words, the Improving Sentence questions measure your ability to recognize only conventional and/or unconventional uses of language. You are expected to distinguish errors in standard American English as well as problems in style and expression.

The following are some ways to approach these sentences:

- Read the entire sentence.
- Try to *hear* the sentence in your head.
- Focus on any awkward-sounding words and/or phrases in the underlined sections.
- If you recognize grammar or usage flaws, good for you. If not, sometimes the underlined section just sounds wrong. Go with your best, educated instinct. Be sure to review all of the choices for grammar and usage flaws.
- Remember that the first choice, (**A**) is just a replication of the original sentence. If the sentence has no mistakes, then Choice **A** is the appropriate answer.

Here’s an example:

In conclusion, all these facts are reasons for us to change the direction our company is going. Always keeping in mind that whatever we decide, we must look forward and not to the past.

- A.** we must look forward and not to the past.
- B.** we must look to the future and not to the past.
- C.** we must look to the future and not behind us.
- D.** we must look forward and not to what has already taken place.
- E.** we must not look backward but to the future.

Choice **B** is the correct answer.

Wow, no matter how you read it, this is one complicated sentence. However, your ear—inner and outer ear—should have picked up that there was something wrong with “we must look forward and not to the past.” This clause lacks parallel construction. Either it should state that we must look forward and not backward, which is *not* an option given here, or match the construction of “not *to the past*” by changing the phrase “must look forward” to “must look *to the future*.” All the other choices do get the basic idea across, but none states it as well as Choice **B**.

Errors to Anticipate

Like many items in the Writing Section of the SAT Exam, the variety of errors on the Improving Sentences and Improving Paragraph questions is rather narrow. The following are some of the most common errors for which to look:

Run-on Sentences

Usually the SAT Sentence Correction questions include run-on sentences, and they will appear a couple of times in the Improving Sentence questions. Generally these contain two independent clauses incorrectly connected. For example:

The decrease in new college graduates entering education can be attributed to more difficult job conditions and rather low pay, in fact, education graduates have decreased at least 20 percent in the last decade.

Each of these independent clauses could stand alone as a sentence. Remember you can use a couple of ways to join these two independent clauses.

- Two totally independent sentences (not really joined)
- A semi-colon between the two independent clauses
- A comma in front of one of the seven coordinate conjunctions—**but, or, yet, for, and, nor, so** (BOY FANS):

Gregor was a slow eater, everyone else had finished eating before he did.

These independent clauses need to be joined by a semi-colon, or one of the coordinating conjunctions (BOY FANS) preceded by a comma. In this sentence, a good fix could read *Gregor was a slow eater, so everyone else finished eating before he did.*

The section on punctuation at the end of this chapter will refresh your memory about run-on sentences.

Sentence Fragments

A fragment occurs when a group of words tries to pass itself off as a *bona fide* sentence:

The committee, discovering the size limitations of the conference center, deciding to look for an alternative site.

Although *discovering* and *deciding* are verb forms, in this case they are used as adjectives (officially called present participles) modifying committee. In other words, it is a discovering committee as well as a deciding committee.

Can you figure out how to fix this long, rambling fragment? Actually you have a couple options. You can leave it as it is until the word “deciding.” Make this the verb, not a participle. Then your sentence would read:

The committee, discovering the size limitations of the conference center, *decided* to look for an alternative site.

You can also decide that the committee did two separate things and, therefore, give the sentence two separate verbs:

The committee *discovered* the size limitations of the conference center and *decided* to look for another site.

This two-verb option corrects the sentence, but it is still a long breath of air to say it all. Perhaps you prefer to make two completely independent clauses connected by an appropriate comma and coordinate conjunction:

The committee *discovered* the size limitations of the conference center, *so it decided* to look for another site.

As you listen to the various versions of this sentence, you should notice how each option provides a slightly different emphasis on what is being said. This is something to become aware of as you structure sentences in your own writing.

Faulty Parallelism

Sentences can have faults in parallel structure in a couple ways.

Following are connective words that require parallel construction:

either	or
neither	nor
not only	but also

Not only did Paula receive a full-ride scholarship to Notre Dame, *but* she was *also* offered sizeable scholarships to Princeton and Northwestern.

Items in a series also need to be structured using a parallel format.

Even our Founding Fathers recognized the value of parallel structure when they wrote the Declaration of Independence. It states: “For taking away our Charters; for abolishing our laws, and altering our Forms of Government.” *For taking, for abolishing* and *(for) altering* create a resounding statement, don’t you think?

Many powerful speeches gain their strength through parallel statements. Mark Antony did not say, “Friends, Romans, and you people from the countryside, lend me your ears.” It loses something, don’t you think?

You can also create a faulty comparison when you present a series. Be sure each element in a series is similar in structure to make it correct. For instance:

Incorrect: Anya registered for the following courses in her freshman year at college: History 101, Composition 1-A, Econonmics 100, Biology 101, and a course in interpretive theater.

Correct: Anya registered for the following courses in her freshman year at collegeA: History 101, Compstion 1-A, Economics 100, Biology 101, and Theater 101.

Correct parallel structure also includes items in a series. In the previous example, all but the last course is a formal course name and a number. “interpretive theater” does not fit in this series as it is. The corrected sentence shows the proper sequence.

Lack of Conciseness

When writing, the saying that *more is always better* often does not apply. You need to write with conciseness and eliminate unnecessary or redundant words and phrases whenever possible. The following contains an example of redundancy:

The two twins both applied to the same college, but, to their disappointment, only one was accepted.

Since twins are a set of two, it is not necessary to use both words in the beginning of the sentence. It could be improved by writing the twins both applied, or both of the twins applied.

With a red pen, Martha made a circle around the dress she wanted in the catalog, so she would know where and be able to find it when she called to mail order it later that day.

Martha circled the dress in the catalog. That automatically implies that her pen made a mark around the picture. Later, she will know where to find it when she makes her call. Many of those words are not needed. Let’s look at the more concise version of the sentence:

With a red pen, Martha circled the dress she wanted in the catalog, so she could find it when she called to mail order it.

Notice how much better it sounds with fewer words.

Faulty Coordination and Subordination

Remember there are (only) seven coordinating conjunctions: but, or, yet, for, and, nor, so. If you are combining two clauses to present two pieces of information, you usually use *and*, “Mabel took the bus to the mall, and Martha drove her car.” However, if you want to show that Mabel is not as “privileged” as Martha, you would say, “Mabel took the bus to the mall, but Martha got to drive her car.” Your conjunction will need a comma before it and the one you select will be the one that makes the most sense for the idea you are trying to get across.

Sometimes coordination can be faulty, not because of incorrect use of punctuation or conjunctions but because they aren’t logical. It make little sense, at least to those in the Midwest, to say, “It’s January in Minnesota; *however* it’s very cold.” “However” indicates a contradiction. If it’s Minnesota and winter, then it’s cold—a simple case of cause and

effect. Therefore, it would be correct to say, “It’s January in Minnesota; *therefore* it’s very cold.” Now that makes more sense. For those of you in Florida and California, you just don’t know what you’re missing. Make sure that when you have two independent clauses, linked by a semi-colon and a transition word, such as *however* or *therefore*, that you present an idea that is logical.

I gazed out of the bus window while seeing a person getting mugged.

Subordination by its definition means that one idea is subordinate to another. The most important part of the sentence should be in the main clause. Any incidental information goes in the subordinate clause. Therefore, the sample sentence should read:

While gazing out of the bus window, I saw a person getting mugged.

Now the important part, “I saw a person getting mugged” is in the main clause, and your gazing is in the subordinate clause, providing the better emphasis. Here’s one more:

As Billy shattered the neighbor’s window with his line drive, he had to pay for it.

As is a word indicating time. Billy would hardly be paying for the window just as he was breaking it. The sentence does not indicate two simultaneous events. First he broke it; then he paid for it. Here’s the sentence improved:

Since Billy shattered the neighbor’s window with his line drive, he had to pay for it.

Using the appropriate subordinate conjunction “since” now gives the sentence the appropriate cause and effect feel that it needed.

Misplaced Modifier

Sometimes misplaced modifiers can be very amusing, but they can also cause embarrassment for the careless writer. A misplaced modifier is a word, phrase, or clause placed too far from the noun or pronoun it is supposed to be modifying. Following is an example of a misplaced modifier:

My dog chased a kid down the street on a bicycle.

Well, unless you are raising a circus dog, it is the kid who is on the bicycle, not the dog. To correct the error, “My dog chased a kid on a bicycle down the street.” Here’s another:

I could almost run all the way up the hill.

What you probably meant to say is I could run almost all the way up the hill. Once the modifier is put in the right place it’s easy to say—“Oh, now I know what was wrong with that sentence.”

Dangling Modifier

Dangling modifiers are similar to misplaced modifiers. However, the thing (noun or pronoun) being modified is not present at all, so the modifier simply dangles by itself:

Sailing into the harbor, the Statue of Liberty was seen.

You can rest assured, the Statue of Liberty has not been seen taking any moonlight cruises. What is wrong with this sentence is that the phrase, “sailing into the harbor” has nothing to modify. An easy way to fix this is to say, “As we sailed into the harbor, we saw the Statue of Liberty.”

Here’s a double one:

Smashed flat by a truck the retriever sniffed at the remains of the ice cream cone held by the little boy.

Now we hope it's only an ice cream cone that has been smashed. The way this sentence reads, however, the picture is unclear: all three—the dog, the ice cream cone, or the little boy could be the victim. See how easily modifiers, whose purpose is to exemplify and clarify can muddle a meaning if used carelessly? Let's look at a clearer, happier sentence:

The retriever sniffed at the remains of the ice cream cone that the little boy had dropped just before the truck smashed it flat.

Passive Voice

Another thing that you must remember to avoid in your writing and be on the look out for as an incorrect response in the multiple-choice questions, especially in the Improving Sentences questions, is passive voice.

Good writing expects the subject to do the action, not be acted upon.

So many mistakes were made by the student when he took the test that he received a failing grade.

A trip far north into Alaska was taken by my aunt last summer.

These are not very exciting sentences, are they? That is the problem with passive voice it is boring. Unfortunately, many textbooks are written in passive voice. Not surprising, is it? In the above two sentences, we need to make the subject do the action. Here's how they can be rewritten:

The student made so many mistakes on the test that he received a failing grade.

Last summer my aunt took a trip far north into Alaska.

Practice Questions

The following sentences are questioning you about sentence correctness and expression of information. Part, or all, of each sentence is underlined. Following the sentence, five versions of the underlined portion are presented. Choice **A** repeats the original; the other choices are different. If you think a better sentence can be found in Choices **B–E**, then choose one of them. If the sentence is correct as stated, your answer will be Choice **A**.

1. An elderly bank robber, wearing an innocuous fishing hat, forgot to ask for the money before robbing the bank.
 - A. before robbing the bank.
 - B. during robbing the bank.
 - C. after the bank was robbed.
 - D. when he robbed the bank.
 - E. while the bank was robbed by himself.
2. Children should avoid riding the bicycle before fully assembled.
 - A. before fully assembled.
 - B. while being assembled.
 - C. until they are assembled.
 - D. after it is fully assembled
 - E. until the bicycle is fully assembled.
3. The two company presidents were in conflict against each other over the terminology of their agreement.
 - A. The two company presidents were in conflict against each other
 - B. The two company presidents were in conflict
 - C. In conflict and against each other, the two company presidents were
 - D. Against two president's was the conflict over the terminology
 - E. Against and in conflict, the two company presidents were

4. Either the Prince of Darkness or the Princess of Light would rule this intricate and malevolent computer game.
- A. Either the Prince of Darkness or the Princess of Light would rule
 - B. Neither the Prince of Darkness or the Princess of Light would rule
 - C. Ruling would not take place by either the Prince of Darkness nor the Princess of Light
 - D. Ruling would be controlled by either the Prince of Darkness or the Princess of Light.
 - E. The Prince of darkness or the Princess of light would either be able to rule
5. The cafeteria was in a shambles; all the decorations were on the floor, tired and cross chaperones wandered around and the band kept playing.
- A. tired and cross chaperones wandered around and the band kept playing.
 - B. tired and cross, chaperones wandered around the band that was playing.
 - C. tired and cross chaperones wandered around, and the band kept playing.
 - D. the band kept playing around the tired and cross chaperones.
 - E. the chaperones, who were tired and cross, kept the band playing.

Answers and Explanations

1. This is a case of faulty subordination due to the incorrect use of the subordinate conjunction, “when.” The bank robber would not ask for money *before* he robbed the bank; it would be at the time of the robbery, making Choice **D** the correct response.
2. This question is an amusing example of misplaced modifier. It is not the child who needs to be assembled but the bicycle. Therefore, Choice **E** is the correct response. One does not want a child on the bike until it is assembled.
3. Two plus each other plus each other sounds like too much of the same thing. Therefore, this sentence contains a redundancy that needs to be adjusted. This makes Choice **B**, “two company presidents,” the cleanest choice for this question.
4. There is actually *nothing* amiss in this sentence. It contains the parallel construction of *either. . .or*, the correct, balanced combination. This makes Choice **A** the correct response.
5. This sentence contains a *run-on sentence error*. The comma before the last clause should be a semi-colon. Therefore, Choice **C** is the correct response. A comma is not forceful enough, and therefore, causes it to be a run-on.

Punctuation Patterns

Although we talked about grammar and usage before, and this section is about punctuation, you cannot have one without the other. When sentences include subordination and coordination, punctuation helps put everything together. In fact, if punctuation is incorrectly used in coordination and subordination, you might find yourself “guilty” of using run-ons, split infinitives, and other errors. So let’s do some review.

Coordination

An **independent clause** has a subject and a verb and presents a complete thought. These can be presented in three ways:

Two separate sentences—Sam was angry. Laura was late.

Two independent clauses connected with a semi-colon—Sam was angry; Laura was late.

Two independent clauses connected with a comma and a **coordinate conjunction**—Sam was angry, but Laura was late.

There are only seven coordinate conjunctions that can combine two independent clauses. *Without a comma before the coordinate conjunction, or without other proper punctuation such as using the semi-colon instead of the coordinate conjunction, the sentence becomes a run-on, and then it has faulty coordination.* Following are the seven coordinate conjunctions:

but	B
or	O
yet	Y
for	F
and	A
nor	N
so	S

You can remember these conjunctions by remembering the phrase **BOY FANS**, which is created by using the initial letter of each conjunction.

Let's look again at Sam and Laura:

- Sam was angry. Laura was late.
- Sam was angry; Laura was late.
- Sam was angry, but (yet, for, and, so) Laura was late.

Subordination

A **dependent clause** usually has a subject and a verb but does *not* present a complete thought. When they are used alone, dependent clauses are incomplete—that is, they are *sentence fragments*. Dependent clauses are introduced by subordinate conjunctions. *If the wrong subordinate conjunction is used or the sentence is improperly punctuated, then the sentence is guilty of faulty subordination.* The following is a list of many of the subordinate conjunctions:

after	if	unless	wherever
although	in order that	until	whether
as	once	what	, which
as if	provided that	whatever	while
as long as	since	when	who
before	so that	whenever	whom
during	that	where	whose
how	though	whereas	why

Not every one of these subordinate conjunctions makes sense with the Sam and Laura scenario. However, each of the subordinate conjunctions casts a slightly different tone to the sentence. Here are some examples:

Whenever Laura was late, Sam was angry. Apparently Sam is probably a very punctual person.

Before Laura was late, Sam was angry. In this case there is more to the story than what we know.

If Laura was late, Sam was angry. Here we have a condition. Sam only gets angry due to lateness.

If the dependent clause appears first in a sentence, it is followed by a comma. If the dependent clause appears last in a sentence, there is no need for a comma except when the subordinate conjunction is the word “which.”

- Because Laura was late, Sam was angry.
- Laura was late because Sam was angry.
- Laura was late, which was the reason Sam was angry. (Remember—“which” always needs a comma in front of it.)

Practice Exercises

The following are Improving Sentences questions that dwell on those errors you have just studied in this section of the book.

1. When you finally decide to go to the party surely heading straight for the shrimp, warm brie and caviar and chow down while you having a chance.
 - A. When you finally decide to go to the party surely heading straight for the shrimp, warm brie and caviar and chow down while you having a chance.
 - B. When finally deciding to go to the party surely heading straight for the shrimp, warm brie and caviar and chowing down while having a chance.
 - C. When you finally decide to go to the party, be sure to head straight for the shrimp, warm brie and caviar and chowing down while you have a chance.
 - D. When you finally decide to go to the party, be sure to head straight for the shrimp, warm brie and caviar and chow down while you have a chance.
 - E. When you finally decide to go to the party, be sure to head straight for the shrimp, warming brie and caviar and chowing down while you have a chance.

2. Most people who drink coffee don't know where it comes from it is actually the fruit of an evergreen tree.
 - A. from it is actually the fruit of an evergreen tree.
 - B. from; it is actually the fruit of an evergreen tree.
 - C. from; because it is actually the fruit of an evergreen tree.
 - D. from, it is actually the fruit of an evergreen tree.
 - E. from; so it is actually the fruit of an evergreen tree.

3. Either Henry nor Heidi was voted class president; everyone was anxious to hear the results.
 - A. Either Henry nor Heidi was voted class president;
 - B. Neither Henry or Heidi was voted class president,
 - C. Either Henry or Heidi was voted class president,
 - D. Either Henry or Heidi will be voted class president;
 - E. Either Henry or Heidi will be voting for class president,

4. In conclusion, all these facts are reasons for us to change the direction our company is going. Always keeping in mind that whatever we decide, we must look forward and not to the past.
 - A. we must look forward and not to the past.
 - B. we must look to the future and not to the past.
 - C. we must look to the future and not behind us.
 - D. we must look forward and not to what has already taken place.
 - E. we must not look backward but to the future.

5. Although Hernandez needed the information immediately, Claudia had to put him off while she searched for it among her resources.
- A. Although Hernandez needed the information immediately, Claudia had to put him off while she searched for it among her resources.
 - B. Because Hernandez needed the information immediately, Claudia had to put him off while she searched for it among her resources.
 - C. Although Hernandez needed the information immediately; Claudia had to put him off while she searched for it among her resources.
 - D. Hernandez, in need of the information immediately, Claudia had to put him off while she searched for it among her resources.
 - E. Although Hernandez needed the information immediately, Claudia needing to put him off while she searched for it among her resources.
6. Tanya barely took 15 minutes to finish her SAT essay, a fact that amazed her friends and worried her not at all.
- A. Tanya barely took 15 minutes to finish her SAT essay,
 - B. Only 15 minutes did it take Tanya to barely finish her SAT essay,
 - C. Tanya barely took 15 minutes to finish her SAT essay;
 - D. Tanya took barely 15 minutes to finish her SAT essay;
 - E. Tanya took barely 15 minutes to finish her SAT essay,
7. Unfamiliar with New York, Mohammed checked carefully the map before boarding the A train.
- A. Mohammed checked carefully the map before boarding
 - B. Mohammed checking carefully the map before boarding
 - C. Mohammed, before boarding, carefully checked
 - D. Mohammed carefully checked the map before boarding
 - E. Carefully before checking the map, Mohammed boarded
8. The soccer coach was young, inexperienced and inept, that is why Rubin decided not to go out for the team this year.
- A. that is why Rubin decided not to go out for the team this year.
 - B. that is why going out for the soccer team was not decided by Rubin.
 - C. which is why Rubin decided not to go out for the team this year.
 - D. which is reason for Rubin to decide not to go out for the team this year.
 - E. which is the reason for Rubin to decide not going out for the team was good.
9. The project finished by Raymond was such a masterpiece that he had several offers from hobby and craft magazines to buy his product.
- A. The project finished by Raymond was such a masterpiece that he had several offers from hobby and craft magazines to buy his product.
 - B. The project, which Raymond finished, was such a masterpiece, that he had several offers
 - C. Raymond's finished project was such a masterpiece that he had several offers
 - D. Raymond finishing the project was such a masterpiece that he had several offers
 - E. Raymond finished the project that being such a masterpiece that he had several offers
10. While Sonya's children were in school, she had a number of tasks to complete which included picking up the laundry, stopping at the post office, filling the SUV with gas and she went grocery shopping.
- A. picking up the laundry, stopping at the post office, filling the SUV with gas and she went grocery shopping.
 - B. picking up the laundry, a stop at the post office, filling the SUV with gas, and going grocery shopping.
 - C. picking up the laundry, stopping at the post office, filling the SUV with gas and going grocery shopping.
 - D. a trip to the laundry, stopping at the post office, filling the SUV with gas and going grocery shopping.
 - E. a trip to the laundry, a stop at the post office, filling the SUV with gas and a trip to the grocery.

Answers and Explanations

- D.** The original “sentence” is not a sentence at all. It is a series of strung together clauses and phrases, making it a *fragment*. Nowhere is there an independent clause with the requisite subject and verb. **C** actually has an independent clause but the rest of the sentence is a jumble. **D** is the only choice that makes sense.
- B.** This sentence is a *run on*. What we have is two independent clauses with no appropriate punctuation of conjunction between them. Remember that you can join independent clauses with a semi-colon or a comma followed by a coordinate conjunction (but, or, yet, for, and, nor, so). The only choice offering the correct method of connecting the clauses is **B**, the semi-colon.
- D.** either-or, neither-nor, not only-but also, all of these are forms of correct *parallelism*. Any other combination makes it *faulty comparison*. With Henry and Heidi, either one or the other was voted class president, so the correct, parallel presentation of this information would be Choice **D**.
- B.** This sure sounds like the end of a long winded, speech, doesn't it? The speaker is guilty of faulty parallelism as well as probably boring his audience. Expressing the past and the future needs to be done using similar structure. The only option that does that is **B**. All the others try to fix the original, but succeed in making it worse.
- A.** Careful with this one. Several of the choices sound like they might work. However, all but the original has some sort of *faulty subordination*. **C** says the same thing as the original, but notice the semi-colon, which is incorrect. **B** might be a possibility, but based on only what we know, it does not make as much sense as the original. Stick with the original.
- E.** Tanya has a *misplaced modifier*, and, perhaps a misplaced brain if she thinks 15 minutes is enough time to write her essay. “Barely” has to do with the amount of time—in other words, she might have been done in 14 minutes. The modifier “barely” goes with the time, not with the verb “took.” These are tricky, because when we speak, we are not always careful with our modifiers. Say the sentence aloud a few times and you will get a sense of the difference.
- D.** Here's another misplaced modifier, and probably a misplaced person if he didn't get on the right subway line. The correct sequence should be “carefully checked,” making **D** the only reasonable choice for this sentence.
- C.** *Coordination* and *subordination* within sentences is not easy. We use the structures easily in our speech, but when we write them or have to discern errors in others' writing, it is not so easy. This question presents a subordination/punctuation problem. When the dependent clause is at the end of the sentence, it does not take a comma before it. However, there is one exception to this rule and it is when the dependent clause starts with the subordinate conjunction which. “Which” always needs a comma in front of it. In the original sentence, the comma is not underlined, so the only word that can follow is “which.” **C**, **D**, and **E** all begin with which, but **C** is the only one that makes sense.
- C.** Wow, this one can be tricky. Choice **B** is actually correct grammatically. However, in this section of the book, we were just reviewing the need to avoid passive voice and how that can be done. Consequently, Choice **C** is the best response for this question. **B** is incorrect because “that” never takes a comma in front of it. Therefore “that Raymond finished” would be considered essential information (requiring no commas) if the conjunction “that” were used in the sentence.
- C.** Busy lady. Here again is a series of phrases that need to be presented using a parallel structure. Choice **C** is the only one that consistently uses the *-ing* form for all the chores: picking, stopping, filling, going.

Recognizing Sentence Errors

If you find this part of the New SAT Writing section daunting; you are not alone. The truth is that most public high schools today spend little time on grammar. Perhaps you learned the basics of standard grammar in late elementary and in middle school and have had very little instruction or even review since then. Well, that's another good reason for you to read this book. In the following pages, we review those basic skills that you will be expected to have if you are taking the SAT Exam. Luckily, a great many of the Identifying Sentence Errors questions relate to a limited number of grammatical issues.

Standard American English is what U.S. colleges will expect you to know and use. Often it is not always the way in which many of us speak, but, like most things in life, there is a time and place for everything. This is the time and place for putting your slang and jargon aside and tackling this section as an educated student.

Note that we're talking about standard **American** English. This is not a cultural bias or anything. The only reason why American English is mentioned is in contrast to British English (often referred to as *The King's English*). British English differs somewhat from the language we speak here in the colonies, and for the SAT Exam, you are expected to be knowledgeable about American English.

Find the Error

Basically, what the SAT folks expect you to do with these questions is to identify the error in the sentence. This is an unusual challenge since most of your school life you have taken multiple-choice tests that expect you to choose the correct piece of information for your answer. Now you must choose the incorrect information as your answer. If you've not had to answer this type of question before, this might take you some time to get use to the format. With practice, however, you will learn to spot the error quickly.

You are offered a sentence with four underlined words or phrases. This sentence is followed by the words, **No error**, also underlined. Each of these underlined parts is lettered, A–E, corresponding to the A–E ovals on your answer grid sheet. The following is an example:

<p><u>Although</u> the student body <u>continue</u> to get smaller, the superintendent <u>insists that</u> the high school <u>is thriving</u>.</p> <p><u>No error</u>.</p>

You are to decide what (if anything) is wrong with this sentence and fill in the “bubble” in your answer booklet accordingly. Here are a couple suggestions that will help you identify the error:

- Listen to the sound of the sentence as you read it. The first couple times, don't be afraid to read it aloud. Eventually, you will have to work on developing an inner ear so you can “hear” the sentences in your head.
- Repeat the underlined sections, still listening for something wrong.
- If the answer is not obvious to you, use the process of elimination to choose your response. Remember, Choice **E** is just as valid as any of the other responses.

Try this with the preceding example. Even if you have a pretty good idea of what's wrong in this sentence, go through the steps here because you can be sure that not all of the questions will be as obvious to you as this one may be.

1. Read the sentence to yourself, aloud if you can.
2. Go over the underlined parts a couple times.
3. Not sure yet? Take each underlined section, one at a time, listening and looking for an error.

Let's go through this step by step:

1. *Although* seems to be an appropriate transition word here since the sentence demonstrates contrasting points.
2. Is *continue* the best verb form for the subject? What is the subject? After you find the verb, ask yourself "Who or what continue?" The answer is *student body* (singular—one entire body as a whole). *Continue* doesn't sound right, does it? If you're still not sure, substitute the singular pronoun "it" for the words "student body." Then you have "**It continue** to get smaller." That doesn't sound right, does it? "It" (student body) is considered singular, so you need the singular form of the verb, *continues*. Fortunately, the SAT Exam never asks you to correct a sentence; it only asks you to identify what might be wrong with the sentence.
3. Just to be sure that **B** "continue" is the right answer, go ahead and double check Choices **C** and **D**. "Superintendent *insists that*" is correct, and "school *is thriving*" is also okay. This should reassure you that **B** is the correct response.

Don't always expect an error (the correct answer) to be present in each of these questions. It is very likely that No error (Choice **E**) is the correct response. For those of you who are looking for the odds, you can expect that No error (Choice **E**) will be the correct answer just as much as any of the other answers. In fact, the chances for Choice **E** being the answer are about 20 percent. No one choice will more likely be the correct response than any of the other choices.

Common Grammar and Usage Errors

Grammar and usage—these are words that can strike fear into the hearts of even the most stalwart English student. Relax. The following section of this book is an overview/refresher of the most pertinent parts of grammar and usage that you will need for the Writing Section of the SAT Exam.

Subject-verb Agreement

Agreement is just that—two or more items or people in accord. That is what subject and verb agreement is about. The **number** of the subject (singular or plural) and the **number** of the verb (singular or plural) must agree. You can be sure that several of the Identifying Sentence Errors as well as Improving Sentences questions will deal with the agreement of subject and verb.

The *best* way to check this out is to look at the following example and then take it one step at a time:

Tess ate my slipper.

1. Find the verb, **ate**.
2. Ask "who or what" ate?
Your answer is the *subject* of the sentence: Who or what ate? **Tess** ate. Therefore, **Tess** is the subject of the sentence.
3. If for some wild reason you want to know the direct object of all this action, ask Subject (Tess) + verb (ate) who or what? And the answer is **slipper**, the direct object.

So there you have it: **Tess** is the subject; **ate** is the verb; and **slipper** is the direct object. By the way, Tess is a dog.

Sounds simple doesn't it? Well, believe it or not, sometimes the SAT Identifying Sentence Errors questions are just that simple. The following are some additional examples of what you may encounter on the Identifying Sentence Errors questions portion of the SAT Exam:

- A singular subject takes a singular verb.
 - A *penny* saved *will* hardly *buy* you very much.
(penny = single subject will buy = singular verb)

- *Assault and battery is* a crime best avoided.
(Sometimes a single subject [ham and eggs, breaking and entering] may be made up of two parts.)
- *The Sound and the Fury is* a book by William Faulkner.
(Notice that the title seems plural, but it is the title of only one book, so it is a singular subject.)
- A plural subject takes a plural verb:
 - *Cobras are* not the best choice of pet for small children.
(cobras = plural subject are = plural verb)
 - *Sleepy and Grumpy were* unable to keep up with Snow White on her new jogging regimen.
(Sleepy and Grumpy = plural subject were = plural verb)
- Collective nouns such as jury and team may be singular or plural, whether they are intended to be taken as a whole group (singular) or as separate individuals (plural).
 - The *jury has made* its decision.
(The jury here is one singular body, so it takes the singular verb, *has made*.)
 - The *committee have been* unable to agree to any sort of consensus or compromise among themselves, so the item was tabled.
(In this case, each member of the committee is involved, so the subject is plural and takes the plural verb *have been*.)
- Indefinite pronouns (someone, everyone, nobody) are singular, and despite the many times you will hear them wrongly used, each takes a singular verb.
 - *Everyone* must put on *his* own shoulder pads before going to football practice.
(Think about it; each player will have his own pads, right?)
 - It's hard to believe that *nobody is* responsible for this broken window and the baseball lying amid broken glass on the living room floor.
(What this is saying is that no *single body* is responsible. Kind of hard to believe that story, isn't it?)
 - A very few indefinite pronouns can be *either* singular or plural. If you think about these, this exception will make sense: *all, any, more, most, none, some*. Don't let these bother you. If you are presented with any of them, the sense of the sentence will most likely indicate how they are to be used.
- The subject and verb are separated by an interruptive phrase or clause. This is a favorite on tests like this. Just remember to find the verb, ask who or what, and that will be your subject. Then, if there is a prepositional phrase, or any other phrase, between the two trying to confuse you, you won't fall for the trick.
 - The *box of apples is* on the table.
(*Is* is the verb; "who or what is?" *box is*, which makes box the subject.)
 - Too many cooks in the kitchen spoil the pizza.
(*Cooks* (plural) is the subject, so this sentence needs the plural verb *spoil*.)

Practice Questions

1. The strangely distorted_A colorful pictures by Picasso has received_B much attention not only_C from the critics, but also from_D the general public. No error._E
2. The Student Council came_A to verbal blows in disagreement_B over the choice of theme_C for the winter dance that_D would be held the next month. No error._E

3. Everyone who plans to attend the senior retreat need to pack appropriate camping supplies. No error.
A B C D E
4. A classic such as *Cinderella*, or other similar fairy tales, becomes distorted from its original, and sometimes less than positive, story when Disney rewrites the tale for public consumption. No error.
A B C D E

Answers and Explanations

- B.** The subject of the first sentence is *pictures*, which is plural, so the plural form of the verb should be **have received**.
- E.** Did you choose no change for this sentence? Good. In this case, the Student Council is not being thought of as one single whole, but a group of several individuals. Therefore, the plural form of the verb, *came*, is correct. In other words, *they came to verbal blows*.
- D.** At first this sentence might sound correct as it is. However, find the verb, *need*. Then ask yourself, who or what need? The answer is *Everyone need*. Everyone is one of those indefinite pronouns that must be taken as singular. *Every single one needs* is the combination you want.
- C.** Finally, *Cinderella* is one story. The interruptive phrase, *or other similar fairy tales*, might tempt you to choose the wrong answer. The subject is singular, the classic *Cinderella*, therefore, the verb must also be singular, *become*, not *becomes*. Choice C is the incorrect part of the sentence.

How did you do with subject-verb agreement? This is just one of several things that the Sentence Correction questions might present to you for correction. Let's look at other common grammar and usage errors with which you will be faced.

Verbs

Every verb has four principal forms: the present, present participle, past, and past participle.

Present	Present Participle	Past	Past Participle
walk	walking	walked	walked
eat	eating	ate	eaten

Use the present when you are talking about something in the present or future:

I walk. OR I will walk.

Use the present participle to form progressive tenses:

I am walking. OR I was walking.

Use the past when you are talking about what has happened in the simple past:

I walked.

Use the past participle to form the perfect tenses:

I have walked. (present) OR I had walked. (past) OR I will have walked. (future)

It's really not that important that you know all of these different tenses just to name them. Luckily, most of our verbs are regular verbs, such as walk (walk, walking, walked, walked). However, some are irregular, such as eat, and these verbs have different forms. You need to become familiar with these irregular verbs. Here are some of the most common irregular verbs and their parts:

<i>Present</i>	<i>Past Tense</i>	<i>Past Participle</i>
arise	arose	arisen
bear	bore	born or borne
bite	bit	bitten
bring	brought	brought
burst	burst	burst
catch	caught	caught
come	came	come
creep	crept	crept
dive	dive or dove	dived
do	did	done
draw	drew	drawn
fall	fell	fallen
fight	fought	fought
fly	flew	flown
forgive	forgave	forgiven
freeze	froze	frozen
give	gave	given
grow	grew	grown
hang	hung	hung
hang (execute)	hanged	hanged
hide	hid	hidden
know	knew	known
lay (put or place)	laid	laid
lie (horizontal)	lay	lain
lie (falsehood)	lied	lied
prove	proved	proved or proven
ring	rang	rung
rise	rose	risen
shake	shook	shaken
see	saw	seen
shake	shook	shaken
show	showed	showed or shown
shrink	shrank	shrunken

(continued)

Continued

Present	Past Tense	Past Participle
sink	sank	sunk
steal	stole	stolen
swim	swam	swum
take	took	taken
tear	tore	torn
wake	woke or waked	woken or waked
wear	wore	worn
write	wrote	written

Verb Tense Problems

It is not unusual in the Identifying Sentence Errors section of the SAT Writing Exam as well as the Improving Sentences section to find an error in the verb tense sequence. The following are examples that indicate appropriate verb sequences:

An unusual number of entertainers *turn* professional at an early age because of difficult childhoods *experienced* in their early years.

They *turn* professional now (generic present) due to unfortunate childhoods *experienced* in their pasts.

I *had talked* to Abraham before I *conferred* with Monica about the intended plans.

Again, this shows an appropriate sequence. *Had talked* precedes the sequence of *conferred*.

Whether or not Abdul *knows* the specific requirements of the scholarship, he will *be expected* to fill out the application form.

Knows indicates present tense, while the student will *be expected* to do something in the (near) future.

Now let's look at some **inappropriate** verb sequences. Can you see the problems?

Whenever we went out to eat, my mother always makes a fuss about whatever she orders.

In order to make the verb tenses the same, the sentence should read: "Whenever we *went* out to eat, my mother always *made* a fuss about whatever she *ordered*." Notice how the verbs have changed. All are now in the past tense.

Sarah attended Crockett School of Business, which was in San Antonio, Texas.

Unless the college has moved, it is most likely still in San Antonio, making a present tense verb more logical.. Therefore, the sentence should be corrected as

Sarah attended Crockett School of Business, which is in San Antonio, Texas.

Practice Questions

- Before I went to the Mall of America, I had laid_A down to take a nap, knowing that_B I would need a lot of_C energy to cover all the stores I wanted to, shopping for_D a prom dress. No error._E

2. When you are^A training a new puppy, one of the first commands that^B you want her to learn is to lay down^C when you give the command^D, “down!” No error^E.
3. It is questionable whether^A or not Shakespeare had wrote^B his own plays or not; many think^C that Francis Bacon may have been^D the writer. No error^E.

Answers and Explanations

1. **A.** The first sentence is checking to see whether you know the unusual past participle for lie (rest/recline). Although you won’t hear many people use the word (have/had) *lain*, that is the correct past participle form of this verb.
2. **C.** The second sentence is checking to see whether you have the lie/lay verbs straight in your mind. Since you want the dog to rest or recline, then he or she needs to *lie down*.
3. **B.** The third sentence, the correct form should be *had written*. The verb forms are *write*, *wrote*, (*have/had*) *written*.

Idiomatic Expressions: Choosing the Correct Preposition after Certain Verbs

Another type of error that the SAT Identifying Sentence Errors questions section might test your knowledge of is the recognition of particular prepositions that combine idiomatically with certain verbs. American English has many of these constructions. If you have taken a foreign language, you probably have run across idioms in those languages—phrases and word combinations that have a particular meaning, but don’t always translate very well into another language. For example,

Certain rap music is *frowned at* by many parents because of its objectionable lyrics.

The music is frowned upon, **not** frowned at. You can frown at a person.

The following is a list of many of these idiomatic verb-preposition combinations:

- **Accompanied by** a person; **accompanied with** something.
Cheryl was *accompanied by* Larry at the dance, and he gave her a corsage *accompanied with* a diamond ring.
- **Agree on** and **agree to** have to do with plans or ideas; **agree with** a person.
I *agreed on* the proposal I was offered and *agreed to* the terms. I shook hands with Mr. Ignatius and *agreed with* him that I should begin work as soon as possible.
- **Angry about** or **at** a thing; **angry with** a person.
I was *angry about* the long hours I was working and *angry at* all the social life I was missing. I should have been *angry with* my boss for expecting me to put in so many long hours.
- **Argue about** or **for** an issue; **argue with** a person.
The Student Council *argued with* the principal; they *argued about* the ban against open lunch.
- **Charged for** has to do with objects; **charged with** has to do with people.
To avoid being *charged \$1200 for* a laptop computer, the young man stole it; soon, however, he was *charged with* theft, put in jail, and made to pay restitution.
- **Concerned with** a problem; **concerned for** a person.
Concerned with the deteriorating situation of stray pets, Irma was *concerned for* the poor animals that were abused and abandoned.

- **Concur in** has to do with an idea or concept; **concur with** a person.
I *concur in* the decision to hire the new graduate to our firm. It was not difficult to *concur with* my fellow workers in this decision.
- **Escape from** means to get out of a bad situation. **Escape to** means to get out of one place and into another.
Salma was glad to *escape from* the class discussion when she was called to the attendance office.
When Hai Dam was little, he would *escape to* an imaginary world to avoid facing the real life around him.
- **Wait for** means standing around and being bored while a friend takes her time joining you. **Wait with** concerns one person's accompanying another. **Wait on** generally has to do with service.
We will *wait for* you in the lobby of the Orpheum Theatre before the play.
Sandi decided to *wait with* Eli while the results of his tests came back.
The clerk was tired of *waiting on* the recalcitrant customer.

The term **idiom** also refers to certain expressions and word combinations in a language. Sometimes these may vary somewhat among different regions of the country. Nevertheless, idiomatic expressions mean something to the immediate audience who hears them. Sometimes they can be very colloquial. These expression idioms are those such as “to lose one’s head,” “to give someone a hand,” “to high five someone,” “to make off with the loot,” “to be as hungry as a horse (or bear),” “to laugh until your sides split,” and so on. However, the idiomatic expression you will most likely encounter on the SAT Identifying Sentence Errors questions will be those that have to do with verb-preposition combinations.

Misused and Confused

Another challenge the SAT Identifying Sentence Errors questions might also include is those words that are often misused, abused, and confused by the best of us. In the haste of the moment, these misused words can easily be confused.

Here are some commonly confused or misused words. This is hardly a comprehensive list, but it does cover some of the main confusions students have in their writing. Be on the lookout for these in the multiple-choice questions of the *Writing Section* of the SAT Exam.

- **Accept/Except:** **Accept** is a verb meaning to agree to. **Except** is a preposition indicating exclusion.
The defendant had to *accept* the decision of the jury until an appeal could be made.
All the students were invited to the party *except* Carla and Sean.
- **Affect/Effect:** **Affect** is the verb; **effect** is the noun.
Paula’s misbehavior *affected* the behavior of the rest of the class.
Paula’s misbehavior had a big *effect* on the behavior of the other students.
- **Among/Between:** **Among** has to do with three or more, and **between** has to do with only two.
Among all the children, only Tricia had done her homework and knew the answer to the question.
Between you and me, the rest of this group is not worth hanging around with.
- **Amount of/Number of:** **Amount** has to do with a bulk quantity and cannot be counted. **Number** refers to things that can be counted.
We received a record-breaking *amount of* snow during the month of January.
The number of students who signed up for community service projects was impressive.
- **Because/That:** To say “*the reason is because. . .*” is considered redundant in standard English; use the word **that** instead. Instead of “The reason I did not get my homework done is because I had a game last night,” rewrite it as:
The reason I did not get my homework done *is that* I had a game last night.
I did not get my homework done *because* I had a game last night.

- **Disinterested/Uninterested:** The two words mean different things, and the distinction is valuable to know. To be **disinterested** is to be impartial. If you are disinterested, you are interested, but your emotions are not involved. If you take no interest, you are **uninterested**.

Salva was a *disinterested* witness; she had no connection with anything that happened.

On the other hand, Salma was *uninterested* and had no intention of becoming involved at all.

- **Fewer/Less:** Use **fewer** with things that can be counted; use **less** with things that cannot be counted.

There are *fewer* women attending veterinary school this year than there were last year.

This Web site provides far *less* information than what this book offers.

- **Irregardless:** Bottom line—there is NO such word in our language.
- **It's/Its:** This is a troubling twosome. **It's** is a contraction meaning *it is*. **Its** denotes the possessive pronoun.

It's (it is) time to give the dog *its (possessive)* dinner.

- **Passed/Past:** **Passed** is a verb. **Past** can be a noun meaning long ago, a preposition meaning by or beyond; or an adjective meaning *former*.

Matthew *passed* all his classes this semester.

Drew recalls an incident from his *past* (n) when he ran home and went *past* (preposition) the school that he had attended in his *past* (adj) life.

- **Principal/Principle:** **Principal** can be a *noun* as in a person who is in charge of a school or an *adjective* that means the main one. A **principle** is an ideal or standard.

Mister Schoen, the *principal* (n), laid down some *principles* (n) for the Student Council to follow. The *principal* (adj) guideline was that each member was to be an academic and social role model for other students.

- **Regardless/Irregardless:** Just remember one thing—there is NO such word as **irregardless**.

We plan to have the family reunion at the picnic site *regardless* of the weather that day.

- **Their/There/They're:** **Their** is a possessive pronoun showing ownership. **There** is an *adverb* that indicates place or location. **They're** is a *contraction* for two words, *they are*.

The students know *they're (they are)* supposed to put *their (possessive)* books over *there (location)* on the shelf before entering the testing room.

- **Who's/Whose:** **Who's** is a contraction for *who is*. **Whose** is a possessive pronoun showing ownership.

Who's (who is) planning on going to the mall with me?

Whose (ownership) book is this lying on the floor?

- **Your/You're:** **Your** is a *possessive pronoun* indicating ownership. **You're** is a contraction for *you are*.

You're (you are) entirely responsible for the consequences of *your (ownership)* actions.

Perplexing and Provoking Pronouns

Next to verbs, many of the Identifying Sentence Errors questions have to do with pronouns (words that take the place of nouns). No doubt that pronouns are bothersome parts of speech, but you need to refresh your memory on some of the rules that surround them.

Pronoun Shift

For many of you, this has happened often in your writing. You will be talking about this mythical his/her person, and suddenly you shift in your writing to the pronoun *you*. This is not uncommon, and if this is one of your guilty secrets, there is no need to chastise yourself too much. This is the way in which most people speak. However, on the SAT Writing test, be careful that you are not guilty of this error. For instance,

The *reader* needs to be aware of all the nuances of Nathaniel Hawthorne's symbolism in *The Scarlet Letter*. For instance, *you* will soon realize that the child Pearl is the physical representation of the symbolic letter "A" on Hester's chest.

The *reader* is third person singular, he or she. The next sentence shifts to “you,” which is a second person pronoun. Either *reader* must be changed to *you*, or the pronoun *you* in the second sentence should be changed to *he/she*. Pronouns must remain consistent.

These are things you need to remember when you write your essay, when you tackle Sentence Correction questions, as well as when you answer the Sentence Improvement questions.

	<i>Singular pronouns</i>	<i>Plural pronouns</i>
1st Person	I	WE
2nd Person	YOU	YOU
3rd Person	HE, SHE, IT	THEY

Regional idiosyncrasies sometimes ignore the rules of pronouns. For the SAT Exam, however, you must be aware of appropriate American English when you choose the answer.

Pronoun Number

Number refers to a pronoun as being singular or plural. Remember a pronoun is used in place of or to make reference to a noun. Therefore, if the noun is singular, the pronoun used to reference it must be singular. If the noun is plural, then the pronoun must be plural in number. For instance:

After the *child* (singular) fell off his bicycle, *he* (singular) cried because he skinned his knees and hands.

The *dogs* (plural) were so distracted by the squirrel *they* (plural) would not stop barking.

Compound Pronoun Structures

Be alert if you see a pronoun used as part of a compound (two or more parts) structure. Following are some examples:

- The other players and *I* (not *me*) were both glad and sad that our season was finally over.
- *She* (not *Her*) and her parents decided to take a trip to the Holy Land.
- *He* (not *him*) and Orlando stopped by Jiffy Burger after the basketball game. (He stopped and Orlando stopped, you wouldn't say Him stopped, would you?)

Adjectives and Adverbs

Adjectives are modifiers or describers. They give us details about the noun or pronoun to which they are attached. For instance they tell us:

- How many? *ten* days being grounded *several* hours of homework
- How much? *more* rain expected today *little* chance of sunshine
- What kind? *a purple* cow with a *gold nose* ring
- Which one? *my sixteenth* birthday *those* kittens are for sale

Adverbs modify **verbs** most of the time. They can also modify adjectives and other adverbs.

Modifying Verbs

She swam *swiftly* to the wall and *deftly* made her turn and started back.

Swiftly tells us how she swam; *deftly* tells us how well she turned. *Hint*: Most adverbs that modify verbs end in -ly.

Adverbs modifying verbs help to tell us **when** something happened (left early); **where** it might have happened (moved up); **how** it happened (danced divinely); or to **what** extent (almost finished).

Modifying Adjectives

For a skinny girl, Sally had an *unbelievably* large appetite.

Large is the adjective modifying appetite; *unbelievably* tells us how large.

Modifying Adverbs

The soprano sang *so* sweetly the audience was moved to tears.

Sweetly is the adverb, *so* is another adverb modifying sweetly. Although not incorrect, overuse of double adverbs is not advised.

Faulty Comparisons

Comparisons are either *regular*—big, better, and biggest—these regular comparisons are identifiable by the –er and –est endings—or *irregular*—worse, worse, and worst—the irregular comparisons do not have common, identifiable endings. They are formed by changing the words. For example

One thing is **good**. One thing compared to another (two items) is **better**. One out of two or more is **best**.

Double Negatives

Not all double negatives are as obvious as “I *don’t* have *no* money.” Several other words such as hardly, barely, and scarcely are also negatives. Be careful you don’t get fooled by these less obvious negatives. For example,

Among this year’s National Honor Society inductees, *barely no one* has been able to maintain the required 3.6 grade point average.

In order to make a correct negative statement, the sentence should just read “no one has been able. . .” *Barely* needs to be eliminated because it creates a double negative.

Punctuation Patterns

When you are writing, punctuation is somewhat intuitive. It is not a major part of the SAT Writing section, but you need to review some of the basics for the essay you write, for the Identifying Sentence Errors questions and for the Improving Sentence questions. The following is a review of the basics.

Coordination

An **independent clause** has a subject and a verb and presents a complete thought. These can be presented in three ways:

Two separate sentences—Sam was angry. Laura was late.

Two independent clauses connected with a semi-colon—Sam was angry; Laura was late.

Two independent clauses connected with a comma and a **coordinate conjunction**—Sam was angry, but Laura was late.

There are only seven coordinate conjunctions that can combine two independent clauses. Without a comma before the coordinate conjunction, or without other proper punctuation such as using the semi-colon instead of the coordinate

conjunction, the sentence becomes a run-on, and then it has faulty coordination. Following are the seven coordinate conjunctions:

but
or
yet
for
and
nor
so

You can remember these conjunctions by remembering the phrase **BOY FANS**, which is created by using the initial letter of each conjunction.

Let's look again at Sam and Laura:

- Sam was angry. Laura was late.
- Sam was angry; Laura was late.
- Sam was angry, but (yet, for, and, so) Laura was late.

Subordination

A **dependent clause** usually has a subject and a verb but does *not* present a complete thought. When they are used alone, dependent clauses are incomplete—that is, they are *sentence fragments*. Dependent clauses are introduced by subordinate conjunctions. *If the wrong subordinate conjunction is used or the sentence is improperly punctuated, then the sentence is guilty of faulty subordination.* The following is a list of many of the subordinate conjunctions:

after	if	unless	wherever
although	in order that	until	whether
as	once	what	, which
as if	provided that	whatever	while
as long as	since	when	who
before	so that	whenever	whom
during	that	where	whose
how	though	whereas	why

If the dependent clause appears first in a sentence, it is followed by a comma. If the dependent clause appears last in a sentence, there is no need for a comma except when the subordinate conjunction is the word “which.”

- Because Laura was late, Sam was angry
- Laura was late because Sam was angry.
- Laura was late, which was the reason Sam was angry.

Essential and Nonessential Information

Although this may seem like a minor aspect of punctuation, proper comma placement of essential and unessential information can be tricky. The mantra to remember is no commas (essential) or two commas (nonessential). If information is essential to the meaning of the sentence, it means that it lends clarity and understanding to the sentence. If information is nonessential, it can be removed, and you have not lost any crucial information in making the sentence clear.

If interrupting information is *essential*, then it **is not** set off by commas.

The teacher who really likes me is the one who gave me an A.

The clause, “who really likes me” is essential in that it clarifies a possible reason for the A being given.

If interrupting information is *nonessential*, then it **is** set off by commas.

The flowers, which I chose to plant in my garden, which my grandma used to like, were early summer peonies.

Although remembering grandma is a nice sentiment, it is not relative to the fact that this person has chosen an early summer peony to plant in the garden. The part about grandma, albeit interesting, is not essential. Therefore, it is set off by commas. Some folks who relate to visualization say that if a part of a sentence is nonessential, you can pick it up by the commas on each side of it and take it out. The important information of the sentence will remain.

The important thing to remember is that if you have interruptive information that is essential, do not use any commas. If the information just adds to the sentence, but is not absolutely necessary to getting the point of the sentence across, then it is nonessential and it takes a comma on each side of it.

Practice Questions

1. Franz, Lara’s long-lost brother, was wanting to be invited to the party, but he was, unfortunately, not invited.
No error.
2. Carlos did not want to go to the Frost Daze Dance, nevertheless, his friends convinced him to attend the once-in-a-lifetime event, and he also knew his grandmamma wanted him to socialize more. No error.
3. Although many children had swum often in the local swimming hole, the adults in the community was very concerned about the imminent dangers the location held for children who ignored the local warnings. No error.
4. Because of all the homework Yer had to do for her AP classes, as well as her extra-curricular activities, she couldn’t hardly find time to sleep. No error.
5. Whenever we went to the mall, my friends and I always visit The Gap, our favorite store. No error.
6. The Grapes of Wrath are one of my favorite books, but I preferred the original black-and-white movie when I saw it a couple years ago. No error.
7. I wrote my term paper on the legalization of growing marijuana because, after doing much research, I found that marijuana will have many benefits to society apart from its use as a drug. No error.
8. It’s impossible to know whose going on the fieldtrip to the Art Institute until the students actually bring in their money. No error.

Part II: Essay and Verbal Review

9. I realize that I must prepare for the SAT Exam, so I will be accepted by the college of my choice. No error.
A B C D E
10. Ashar is a student who recognizes that theres a time to buckle down and study, and there's time to have fun with her friends. No error.
A B C D E
11. Bravery, the trait mainly Harry shows, which plays a big role in his life, is the focus of most of his multitudinous adventures. No error.
A B C D E
12. Sam was so angry at his job situation that not one of his friends wanted to be near him; in addition, Laura, who hated conflict, decided not to go out with him that evening. No error.
A B C D E
13. Young readers associate to the character, Harry Potter, because they, whom this series actually targets, can relate to the hero in so many ways; he is basically kind, courageous, honest, and altruistic towards others. No error.
A B C D E
14. The principal of the high school, who was only in his second year, was dismayed by the number of students who had not past the basic standards exam because these results were giving the school its negative reputation. No error.
A B C D E
15. Walt Disney Studios have successfully been making movies for children and general audiences for many decades. No error.
A B C D E
16. Dr. Martini was accompanied with an intern who is specializing in orthopedic surgery at the university medical school, which was featured in the news recently. No error.
A B C D E
17. The master teacher was such a success in the classroom that he was always surrounded by admiring students from the university. No error.
A B C D E
18. Since there wasn't much chance of rain on the day planned for the picnic, Paula reserved the picnic shelter just in case. No error.
A B C D E
19. Yesterday was my friend's birthday, so I decided to surprise her with a bouquet of early spring flowers that I planted and had nurtured in my own garden. No error.
A B C D E
20. The junior league on the field wondered about the grown up's odd, noisy behavior during their critical, championship game. No error.
A B C D E

Answers and Explanations

1. A. The verb was wanting should have been wanted, making Choice A the correct response.
2. E. This sentence has no errors, making Choice E the correct response.
3. C. This sentence has a subject-verb agreement problem. The subject is adults, so was is the incorrect verb. It should be *were*.
4. D. This sentence has a double negative, “couldn’t hardly.” It should read *could* hardly.
5. A. This sentence has a verb agreement problem. Went is past tense, but the verb “visit” establishes the need for present tense.
6. A. This demonstrates subject-verb disagreement. *The Grapes of Wrath* is singular, although the word *Grapes* is plural; it is part of the title of a single book, so the verb are should be *is*.
7. C. The future tense will have should be the present tense *has*.
8. B. Whose is possessive. What this sentence needs is *who’s*, meaning who is (going on the fieldtrip. . .).
9. E. This sentence has no errors, making Choice E the correct response.
10. B. Do not expect many easy questions like this one. Hopefully you figured it out. Since theres and there’s are both underlined, it was a clue that one or the other of these has to be the correct response. You have a 50-50 chance on this one.
11. A. In this sentence, the adverb *mainly is in the wrong place*. *It is not mainly Harry but mainly shows, so it ought to be placed just before the verb shows*.
12. C. The first part of this sentence is really the cause of the second part of the sentence. Sam was angry and as a consequence, neither his friends nor Laura wanted to be with him. The phrase “in addition” should be replaced with the “consequently” or “as a result.”
13. A. Associate is one of those verbs that combined with various prepositions, has several idioms. The correct combination for this sentence would be the young readers *associate with* Harry Potter.
14. C. On a quick read you may miss this one if you are relying on just your ear. The word *past*, Choice C, is actually a preposition or adjective. In this sentence what should be there is the past tense verb, *passed*.
15. A. Walt Disney Studios, although it sounds plural, is a single conglomerate business, therefore this subject requires the singular form of the verb, *has*.
16. A. The idiom *accompanied with* is incorrect in this case. It should read *accompanied by*.
17. E. The idiom *surrounded by* is the correct one in this sentence; therefore, the sentence has no errors.
18. E. This sentence has no errors.
19. D. This sentence needs a compound verb. *Had nurtured* cannot follow *planted*, since one plants before one nurtures. Therefore, the sentence would be better if it said *I planted and nurtured*.
20. B. More than one grown up is acting childishly in this sentence. Therefore, the proper possessive would be *grown ups’ odd, noisy behavior*.

Improving Paragraphs

This part of the Writing Section of the SAT Exam calls on your skills in writing and revising. Rewriting and editing are a critical part of the process for any college papers you might have to write, so the SAT has included the Writing Section as a separate part of their revised test.

You are asked to read a very short, multi-paragraph essay. You are then asked questions that might deal with combining sentences and altering the paragraph in a number of ways. In other words, the questions ask you to understand how sentences and paragraphs work together to create a composition.

Here are some suggestions you can use when tackling the Improving Paragraph questions:

- Quickly read through the entire essay. Expect it to sound a bit rough; it's presented to you as a draft in need of help.
- Make sure that no matter what you are asked to consider, that you answer within the context of the overall meaning of the essay.
- Even if you are unsure of the correct response, eliminate any of the choices that you are sure are wrong.
- Avoid wordiness wherever possible; if a choice makes sense, do not disregard it because it is shorter or simpler than the other choices.
- Even if you think you have the correct response, don't sell yourself short: Consider *all* the answers before choosing. You might be surprised to find that another response is even better than the one you were going to choose.
- If you are asked to choose the best first sentence of a paragraph, chances are that is the topic sentence, so it must be broad enough to encompass the entire paragraph.
- Any concluding remark must cover the entire essay, not just one or two things mentioned within the essay.
- If you are asked to add material to an essay, remember it must fit within the context of the whole essay as well as the specific focus of the paragraph in which it appears.
- All the rules of grammar and punctuation apply—just as they have in the Identifying Sentence Errors as well as Improving Sentences sections.

As you can imagine, a myriad of errors can crop up in this section of the test. Just imagine you are reading an early draft of one of your papers, or better yet, someone else's paper. SAT has made things a bit easier by actually underlining the faulty bits. Nevertheless, it is your job to spiff up the essay, choosing from the options the test questions provide for you. Despite the fact that an essay can "go bad" in a number of ways, and that you might run across a wide variety of errors, the SAT Improving Paragraphs questions tend to be versions of the following:

- General organization of sentences
- Revising sentences
- Combining sentences
- Sentences in context
- Adding and/or subtracting sentences

General Organization of Sentences

Sometimes sentences in a paragraph will be out of order. They do not present a logical flow of information, and you might even find yourself scratching your head as you read one of these paragraphs, just trying to figure out why it is so jumbled. Your task, if faced with one of these questions, is to order the sentences correctly.

Revising Sentences

These questions are basically just like the Improving Sentence questions we just discussed. The question will identify a particular sentence within a paragraph and offer you choices to revise it. The question might say something like, “Considering the information in sentence 2, sentence 3 can best be revised. . . .” Another revision might be that the sentence contains a particular error, such as non-parallel information or incorrect pronoun or verb use. Just about any of the errors discussed under the Improving Sentences section could be present in these questions.

Combining Sentences

You’ve been doing sentence combining in your English classes probably since middle school, so these questions should be easy for you. The first thing, of course, is to select the option that makes the most sense, such as using appropriate transition words or conjunctions between sentences being combined. Then, of course, you must be sure that the choice you make also uses correct punctuation. Often these questions include the phrase “in context,” meaning you have to take the entire paragraph into consideration when you choose your answer.

Sentence in Context

Much like the Improving Sentences questions, these questions will focus upon a particular sentence. They might say something like “In context. . . .” which means you will have to pay attention to how this sentence relates to the rest of the paragraph. For instance, a pronoun may be used, and the question might ask you to identify the antecedent of the pronoun—that is, to what is the pronoun relating.

Adding or Subtracting Sentences

Usually, these questions do more adding than eliminating sentences. You might be asked which of the following might be the best to be inserted between two other sentences or following a particular sentence. Again, this means you have to look at the paragraph as a whole, not just that isolated sentences. Occasionally, a topic sentence is missing, and you might have to choose an appropriate topic sentence. Of course, you might also be asked to choose the most appropriate concluding sentence. Occasionally a paragraph might have an extraneous sentence that must be deleted. In view of the whole paragraph, you will be asked to eliminate the appropriate sentence.

Maybe right now all of this sounds a bit overwhelming—first you had to look at sentences that needed attention, then at words that were underlined, and *now* they want you to consider whole paragraphs! Do not panic. You will quickly discover that the Improving Paragraphs part of the Writing Section of the SAT Exam is no more difficult than any other section. Before you throw up your hands in frustration, take a deep breath, roll your head around a bit, and try the following Improving Paragraphs questions.

Practice Questions

The following are early drafts of short essays. Some parts need to be revised. Read the passages, paragraph by paragraph, and choose the best answers for the questions that follow. In choosing answers, follow the rules of standard written English.

Draft A:

- 1) One major reason why *The Catcher in the Rye* was banned was because of the vulgar language that is used which the book shows many times.
- 2) The reason why this objectionable vocabulary is used in this book is to make a point.
- 3) The significance is that the main character is concerned that innocent children will see or hear such bad words, and he is determined not to let such a thing happen.

4) Also banned is for its sexual content was *The Catcher in the Rye*. 5) The main character goes to a hotel, and on his way up to his room, a bellboy asks him if he wants a prostitute. 6) He says “Okay” and when she arrives he realizes that it is wrong for him to do this and does not feel amorous any more so after talking to her for awhile he politely pays her and asks her to leave.

7) Perceptive readers realize that this character is far from being worthy of condemnation. 8) The entire story must be read, and the author’s intentions have to be evaluated.

9) No book should be judged by only a few words or one or two specific scenes. 10) In fact, it is actually his integrity and sense of moral correctness that dominates the plot of the story. 11) Before people take parts of this or any other book out of context, they owe it to themselves and to the reading public to read the questionable piece in its entirety and to reserve their judgment until after this is accomplished.

1. The following is the BEST revision of the opening sentence of this passage:

- A. As it is.
- B. *The Catcher in the Rye* shows many times one main reason why it was banned because of its vulgar language.
- C. The major reason why *The Catcher in the Rye* was banned, showing up many times in the book, is its vulgar language.
- D. One major reason why *The Catcher in the Rye* was banned was because of the vulgar language, which appears many times in the book.
- E. Vulgar language, which shows up many times in *The Catcher in the Rye*, is one major reason why it was banned.

2. Sentence three should be stated:

- A. As it is.
- B. The main character’s concern over little children—their seeing or hearing such words—is what it’s all about.
- C. Such objectionable vocabulary is what the main character wants to keep away from the little children.
- D. Determined to not let such objectionable vocabulary happen, the main character is trying to protect the children.
- E. Such vocabulary is worrisome in case children should see or hear it, therefore it is the goal of the main character to make sure that such a thing does not happen.

3. The BEST choice for a concluding sentence for the first paragraph is:

- A. No book should have objectionable vocabulary, no matter what the purpose.
- B. Nobody can expect to rid the world of all its vulgar language.
- C. A little objectionable language is not important; we hear it everywhere anyhow.
- D. Who expects to rid the world of all the bad that is in it?
- E. It is this goal that has prompted the main character to be the *catcher in the rye*, to catch the children before they are exposed to such things as bad language.

4. The opening sentence of the second paragraph, sentence 4, is best stated as:
- A. As it is.
 - B. Also banned was the sexual content of *The Catcher in the Rye*.
 - C. Sexual content is another reason for any book to be banned.
 - D. *The Catcher in the Rye* was also banned for its sexual content.
 - E. Banned also for sexual content is *The Catcher in the Rye*.
5. Sentence 6 should be written as:
- A. As it is.
 - B. “Okay” he says when he arrives, but when she arrives he realizes that he does not want to talk or feel amorous. He pays her politely and asks her to leave.
 - C. He responds positively to the bellboy. When she arrives, however, he realizes how wrong the situation is. After talking to her for awhile and explaining he is no longer feeling amorous, he politely pays her and asks her to leave.
 - D. Although he has amorously said “yes” to the bellboy, he is recognizing how wrong it is to do this. He talks politely to her and asks her to leave.
 - E. He amorously says “yes” to the bellboy. However, she is only talked to and asked politely to leave because it is wrong.
6. Asked to provide a concluding sentence for the second paragraph, your BEST choice would be:
- A. It’s never a good policy to judge any book by just one scene.
 - B. Needless to say, any criticism about a sex scene in this book is erroneous.
 - C. People should not ban books they have not even read.
 - D. Who is to say what books ought to be banned?
 - E. No one has the right to tell anyone else what he or she can read.
7. The last paragraph needs its sentences rearranged in the following manner:
- A. 11, 10, 9, 8, 7
 - B. 9, 10, 7, 8 11, 9
 - C. 7, 9, 11, 10, 8
 - D. 11, 8, 7, 10, 9
 - E. 7, 10, 8, 9, 11

Draft B:

- 1) A recent movie, “The Aviator,” a story about the trouble billionaire Howard Hughes, raising much interest in Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD). 2) Although Hughes had billions of dollars, the debilitating mental illness, known as OCD, drove him into total seclusion for the last 20 years of his life. 3) Just what is this unusual malady?
- 4) OCD is a malfunction in the circuitry of the brain that causes intrusive, unwanted thoughts that a patient finds nearly impossible to stop. 5) Often compulsions lead these thoughts from a person’s life. 6) In Howard Hughes’ case, for instance, he was much more interested in germs than in his millions. 7) Unlike many other brain illnesses, OCD patients usually have insight into their behaviors. 8) Awareness of their unordinary behavior intensifies their discomfort and guilt.
- 9) This, in turn, exacerbates their problems.

10) Therefore, OCD rarely is life-threatening; it does, however, cause intense anxiety and immeasurable loss of enjoyment and involvement in life. 11) Basically, the brain becomes imprisoned by bizarre concerns and sometimes obsessive thoughts. 12) As sufferers seek escape from the disturbing thoughts prompted by the disease, they often turn to incessant behaviors such as cleaning, organizing, or to repeatedly lock doors and windows, and constant checking of ovens, electrical switches and outlets.

13) Hopefully, the depiction of Howard Hughes' life in "The Aviator" will encourage more people to learn about this tragic disease, and perhaps it will trigger a public outcry for further information and more research. 14) The most dangerous thing about OCD, as well as other mental illnesses, is public's ignorance.

8. The first sentence of this passage can BEST be stated as:

- A. As it is.
- B. The story about "The Aviator" the troubled billionaire Howard Hughes raises much interest in Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD).
- C. The Howard Hughes recent movie, "The Aviator" raises much interest in Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD).
- D. A recent movie, "The Aviator," a story about the troubled billionaire Howard Hughes, has raised much interest in Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD).
- E. "The Aviator" about the troubled billionaire Howard Hughes, is a movie that has raised much interest in Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD).

9. Sentence 5 can BEST be stated as:

- A. As it is.
- B. These thoughts often lead to compulsions that can overtake a person's life.
- C. Compulsions that can overtake a person's life often lead to thoughts.
- D. Often leading to compulsions, these thoughts can often overtake a person's life.
- E. Often leading to compulsions, a person's thoughts can often overtake a person's life.

10. The most logical transition word for paragraph three is:

- A. Therefore
- B. Nevertheless
- C. Also
- D. Although
- E. In contrast

11. The phrase "or to repeatedly lock doors" in sentence 12 should be stated:

- A. As it is.
- B. Or repeatingly locking doors
- C. Or to the repeated locking of doors
- D. Locking doors with repetition
- E. Repeatedly locking of doors

12. The word “it” in sentence 13 is a reference to:

- A. Howard Hughes
- B. The movie “The Aviator”
- C. Howard Hughes’ life
- D. The essay
- E. OCD

13. The most appropriate title for this essay might be:

- A. “Howard Hughes”
- B. “The Story behind OCD”
- C. “Introduction to an Unusual Mental Illness”
- D. “The Aviator”
- E. “The Danger of Public Ignorance”

Draft C:

1) I’ve had a great many embarrassing moments in my life. 2) Some of the most embarrassing occurred while I was attending high school. 3) One of these moments happened during my junior year. 4) I remember it well because it concerned an activity that I had deeply feared for a long time: dancing. 5) Not that I was poor dancer. 6) Nothing of the sort, it was just that I had to dance with girls. 7) Later in life, I found out that if I had to dance, doing it with girls had its advantages. 8) But that’s another story.

9) The scene was the high school gym. 10) The red-faced moment occurred during Sadie Hawkin’s Day school dance. 11) There was a particular girl attending my school who was very ugly. 12) She was so ugly, in fact, that we—my school buddies and I—used the word “ooglay” to refer to her: a word that connotes outright, without-a-doubt nastiness in the looks department. 13) Anyway lucky me old “parrot-beak” as we sometimes called her with a great deal of fanfare and flourish picked me as the lucky slob she wanted to dance with. 14) She plunked down good money to confirm her choice. 15) Embarrassed isn’t really the word I want here. 16) Mortified is more like it. 17) I was mortified, horrified, embarrassed, and downright shocked at the prospect of dancing with the “Beast of Babcock High.”

18) My embarrassment today, however, stems from the realization that never was I so cruel and heartless as I was at that Sadie Hawkins dance some thirty years ago. 19) Looking back at this event with an aged eye, an eye steeped in a broth of maturity and experience, I find that I am still embarrassed. 20) Often do I wonder how that girl must have felt as the jeers and catcalls of an undisciplined mob cascaded around her. 21) I fervently hope that I shall never meet this girl face to face in the present.

- 14.** In this essay, the author does all of the following EXCEPT:
- A. describe a particular occurrence.
 - B. feel chagrined at a particular memory.
 - C. analyze a time that he prefers to forget.
 - D. criticize his friends for their behavior.
 - E. explain the importance of a particular incident.
- 15.** Sentences 2 and 3 can best be combined as:
- A. One of the most embarrassing moments occurred in high school while I was being a junior.
 - B. My junior year was an embarrassing time during my high school years.
 - C. Some of the most embarrassing occurred while I was attending high school; one in particular happened in my junior year.
 - D. Some of moments in which I was embarrassed were in high school one being my junior year.
 - E. Attending high school was an embarrassment for me, especially during my junior year.
- 16.** If you had to shorten the second paragraph to fit into a column of the paper, what two sentences could you eliminate without changing the basic paragraph?
- A. None—all are essential
 - B. 9 and 11
 - C. 11 and 13
 - D. 16 and 17
 - E. 15 and 16
- 17.** The author is considering eliminating sentence 8. If he did this how would it affect the story?
- A. It would have no effect; go ahead and eliminate it.
 - B. It would lose a sense of mystery if eliminated.
 - C. It is confusing and should be eliminated.
 - D. It adds to the writer’s voice and his style; don’t eliminate it.
 - E. Don’t eliminate it; the paragraph will be too short.
- 18.** Sentence 19 should be placed:
- A. where it is now.
 - B. as the last sentence in the paragraph.
 - C. after sentence 20.
 - D. Eliminate sentence 19; it is not needed.
 - E. as the first sentence in the paragraph.
- 19.** The author wants to add one last sentence to this essay, which of the following would work best in view of the story?
- A. “That would truly be my most embarrassing moment.”
 - B. “Perhaps she’d surprise me by being stunningly beautiful.”
 - C. “What if she were still as ugly as we thought she was?”
 - D. “She’d probably want to get even with me for our cruelty.”
 - E. “I wouldn’t know what to say to her after all this time.”

20. Sentence 13 can best be corrected as:
- A. No correction needed.
 - B. Anyway, lucky me, old “parrot beak” (as we sometimes called her) with a great deal of fanfare and flourish, picked me as the lucky slob she wanted to dance with.
 - C. Anyway, lucky me, old “parrot beak,” as we sometimes called her, with a great deal of fanfare and flourish, picked me as the lucky slob she wanted to dance with.
 - D. Anyway, lucky me, old parrot beak as we sometimes called her with a great deal of fanfare and flourish, picked me as the lucky slob she wanted to dance with.
 - E. Anyway lucky me, old “parrot beak” as we sometimes called her with a great deal of fanfare, and flourish; picked me as the lucky slob she wanted to dance with.

Answers and Explanations

1. **E.** The opening sentence, as it stands now, is too wordy and awkward. It needs tweaking. Choices **B** and **D** are no better than the original. They are awkward and wordy. Choice **C** starts out okay, but then it, too, becomes cumbersome. Therefore, Choice **E** is the best and most succinct choice for opening this essay.
2. **A.** At first glance sentence three may seem okay to you, albeit a bit long. This is a compound sentence: it contains two separate independent clauses. Is it punctuated correctly? You must look to the punctuation guidelines for help on this one. Your choices with two independents are to separate them into two independent sentences, combine them with a semi-colon, or to choose an appropriate coordinate conjunction (BOY FANS) with a comma. Since the sentence has the coordinate conjunction *and*, preceded by a comma, the sentence actually is correct as it stands, making Choice **A** the correct response.
3. **E.** Remember, if you are being asked about a final sentence in a paragraph, usually it needs to reflect what has been already stated or anticipate more development. In this case, you have an extension and explanation of sentence 3 if you add a final sentence to this paragraph. Choice **A**, **B**, **C**, and **D** are, unfortunately, not uncommon reactions that students have to this particular topic. However no one of them is of much value to this paragraph. Choice **E**, is an explanatory extension of the third sentence, and it adds a bit of intrigue to the remainder of the essay. This is the correct response.
4. **D.** When you are asked about beginning sentences of paragraphs, especially body paragraphs, these are usually topic sentences. A topic sentence introduces the idea to be discussed in the paragraph. In this paragraph, the topic is a sexual scene as objectionable. The idea is introduced, but it is done so in passive voice, with little life and not much energy and awkward word arrangement. Choices **B** and **E** are not much better. Choice **C** is too general; it opens up an entirely different argument. The only option with any possibility is Choice **D**. Although this sentence is also passive (the book was banned, being acted upon), the word arrangement is more positive and at least provides a bit of spark to the introduction of the topic to be discussed in this paragraph.
5. **C.** This is one of those questions that requires a bit of time to answer. Each choice needs to be investigated. You cannot just leave the sentence as is, for it desperately needs some punctuation. Choice **B** is confusing with its vague pronouns and odd use of *amorous*. Choices **D** and **E** make you wonder about the main character’s *amorous* feelings, and their verb structures are odd. All but Choice **C** has some oddity to it, making it the best bet.
6. **B.** This is another final sentence question as in question 3. You are being asked to choose the BEST option. Not unlike question 3, some of the options are also classic knee jerk responses to the idea of censorship. However, a bit of thought about the paragraph itself, which explains how not sexy the so-called sex scene was, will lead you to the correct choice, **B**.
7. **E.** Occasionally, you will be presented with a paragraph whose parts need to be put in order. One of the best things to do with a question like this is to look at the first and last sentence options given by the responses. Remember the characteristics of a sentence that opens a paragraph and the one that closes a paragraph that were just discussed. You have two responses, **A** and **D**, with 11 as the first sentence, and a quick read of that sentence makes it an unlikely choice as an opening sentence. Sentence 7 sounds like a better opener, doesn’t it? Before you decide your response is either Choice **C** or **E**, you need to eliminate Choice **B**. In fact, sentence 9 as an opener followed by 10 might even work, but when you follow the sequence of all the sentences, response **B** doesn’t make

the cut. Go back to Choices **C** and **E**. Now look at the last sentence each of these responses offers. Choice **C** offers sentence 8 as its last sentence. Choice **E** offers sentence 11. Choice **E** looks better, and a quick check of the other sentences in the sequence verify that **E** is indeed the correct response.

This sentence sequencing may seem like a cumbersome operation, but it can go quickly. Look first at first sentences and then at last sentences. It's especially helpful when some are duplicated among the responses. Double-check the remainder of the sentence sequence, and *voilà*—you will find your answer.

8. **D.** As the opening sentence stands, it is not a sentence at all. It does not have a verb. Although Choice **B** offers us a verb, the sentence is a run on. If you read it aloud, you can hear that it all runs together. Choice **C** has changed the meaning, and Choice **E** resorts to passive voice. That leaves us with **D**, the best sentence to open this short essay.
9. **B.** Sentence 5 is a bit confusing, isn't it? Although we think we know what it means, it sure doesn't say it very well. If you look over your choices, Choices **C** and **D** aren't much of an improvement. Choice **E** seems to have possibility, but like question 8, it is in the passive voice. This leads us back to the correct response, Choice **B**.
10. **D.** This question will take you a bit more time to figure out. You actually have to read both paragraph 2 and paragraph 3 to figure out which transition word is the best. The point of paragraph 2 is that patients with OCD know they have unordinary behavior, which raises their anxiety and therefore intensifies their disease. Then paragraph 3 tells us OCD is not life threatening, but is severely mind threatening. Although gives us the best "contrast" transition word—*although* OCD does not do this; it does cause this.
11. **C.** This is a revising sentence type of question. In the essay, this sentence lacks parallel structure. When you use a series, all the parts must be presented in a similar format. In this case, we have a series of -ing words (officially known as gerunds, the ing form of a verb used as a noun) so it should be cleaning, organizing, and locking, making Choice **C** the best format; the other choices are just too jumbled.
12. **B.** This is one of the correcting sentences type of question. In order to figure out what noun the pronoun "it" refers to, we need to skim the entire paragraph. Just reading the sentence might not be enough. Although you might be tempted to answer Choice **C**, Howard Hughes' life, it really isn't his life that will stir the public, but their seeing the depiction of it—that is, the movie about him. Therefore, Choice **B**, the movie, is the most accurate response.
13. **C.** Actually, we didn't mention the need to add a title anywhere in the types of questions that might be asked. It is, however, sort of like adding a sentence. What you want a title to do is to encompass the idea presented without being too general nor too specific. At a first glance, you might think that any of those titles would work. However, the most accurate, based on these four paragraphs is Choice **C**—just an introduction. It is not really about Hughes *per se*, Choice **A**. It is too cursory to be Choice **B**, and it isn't really a movie review, Choice **D**. Although you might be tempted to choose the abstract response **E**, the essay doesn't really talk about the danger of public ignorance.
14. **D.** This is an overview question. It requires you to read the entire essay in order to answer it. It's more challenging than a main idea question since it is asking you to affirm that all but one of the statements is correct. As you read through the passage, and then the choices you may notice a couple things. Choice **B** requires you to know the meaning of the word chagrined, which is a combination of embarrassment and shame. He does describe an occurrence, Choice **A**, and he certainly wishes he could forget it, Choice **C**, but it is important to him as well, Choice **E**. You might be tempted to answer **D**, but notice that although his friends and their behavior is mentioned, and we may not think too highly of them, he does not criticize them directly. That makes Choice **D** the best choice.
15. **C.** Sentence combining is a good skill to master. When you write, you need to use a variety of syntax. Not all your sentences should be simple, nor should they necessarily be inordinately long. When asked to combine sentences on the SAT exam, be sure that you choose the answer that best keeps the integrity of the original meaning. With that in mind, Choice **C** does that most successfully.
16. **E.** Occasionally, you have to shorten a paragraph. Usually, it's because what you've written has little or no bearing upon the meaning or purpose of what you are writing. Occasionally, however, word count is important, especially if you have to fill a particular column in a newspaper. If that were the case, the only sentences that can be eliminated in this paragraph are sentences 15 and 16. They are effective within the paragraph. They add emphasis for a very bad moment in the narrator's life. However, since their sentiments are then repeated in sentence 17, they can be deleted without losing the essential meaning of the paragraph.

- 17. D.** You probably are wondering by now whether writers really agonize on every sentence the way the SAT test seems to. Well, most of the best ones do. Sometimes, every word is a painful decision. Just imagine if Edgar Allen Poe had written “Quoth the blue bird, ‘Nevermore.’” It loses something, doesn’t it? Style, voice, and tone are also important to writers. The sentence “But that’s another story.” reveals several things about the writer. It shows him to be a clever story writer, teasing his reader/listener with a chance to hear other stories at a later date. It also adds a bit of flippancy to the piece, a definite characteristic of this writer. It also keeps us focused on the “main event” that he is about to share with us. It would not be advisable for him to eliminate this sentence.
- 18. E.** This is an organizing sentences question. The key to this is the phrase “Looking back.” That is a phrase that announces that things are drawing to a close, but there are just a couple of final remarks. Choices **A–C** don’t make a lot of sense if you try each of them out. It’s too significant to eliminate altogether. That makes Choice **E** the best choice.
- 19. A.** Last sentences can be tricky. Sometimes they can be surprise zingers, and sometimes they can be let downs. This question, like the first one asked about this passage, really requires you to consider the passage as a whole. With that in mind, and the underlying sense of chagrin this writer is feeling not just his for his embarrassment, but more so for his wretched behavior towards the unattractive classmate, makes the first choice the best. This is a retrospective piece. He is looking back with a mature and more critical eye. He’s critical not of her, but of himself and his lack of maturity and sensitivity toward a fellow classmate.
- 20. B.** Sentence 13 is a long sentence. Misplaced punctuation could actually alter the information that is being given. Parentheses are used almost as an aside—something that adds meaning but the author wants to keep somewhat separate from the rest of the sequence of facts. The parenthetical (as we sometimes called her) is just an aside. The phrase “with a great deal of fanfare and flourish” describes the girls, not the unkind boys. That is the problem with Choices **C–D**—none of them are particularly clear. Choice **B** makes the most sense.

PART III

FOUR PRACTICE TESTS

Answer Sheet for Practice Test I

(Copy or Remove This Sheet and Use It to Mark Your Answers)

Multiple Choice Questions

Set 1

1	A	B	C	D	E
2	A	B	C	D	E
3	A	B	C	D	E
4	A	B	C	D	E
5	A	B	C	D	E
<hr/>					
6	A	B	C	D	E
7	A	B	C	D	E
8	A	B	C	D	E
9	A	B	C	D	E
10	A	B	C	D	E
<hr/>					
11	A	B	C	D	E
12	A	B	C	D	E
13	A	B	C	D	E
14	A	B	C	D	E
15	A	B	C	D	E
<hr/>					
16	A	B	C	D	E
17	A	B	C	D	E
18	A	B	C	D	E
19	A	B	C	D	E
20	A	B	C	D	E
<hr/>					
21	A	B	C	D	E
22	A	B	C	D	E
23	A	B	C	D	E
24	A	B	C	D	E
25	A	B	C	D	E
<hr/>					
26	A	B	C	D	E
27	A	B	C	D	E
28	A	B	C	D	E
29	A	B	C	D	E
30	A	B	C	D	E

31	A	B	C	D	E
32	A	B	C	D	E
33	A	B	C	D	E
34	A	B	C	D	E
35	A	B	C	D	E

Set 2

1	A	B	C	D	E
2	A	B	C	D	E
3	A	B	C	D	E
4	A	B	C	D	E
5	A	B	C	D	E
<hr/>					
6	A	B	C	D	E
7	A	B	C	D	E
8	A	B	C	D	E
9	A	B	C	D	E
10	A	B	C	D	E
<hr/>					
11	A	B	C	D	E
12	A	B	C	D	E
13	A	B	C	D	E
14	A	B	C	D	E

CUT HERE

----- CUT HERE -----

A large rectangular area containing 30 horizontal lines, intended for writing or taking notes.

Multiple-Choice Questions, Set 1

(Questions 1–35, 25 minutes)

Improving Sentences

The following sentences are questioning you about sentence correctness and expression of information. Part, or all, of each sentence is underlined. Following the sentence, five versions of the underlined portion are presented. Choice **A** repeats the original; the other choices are different. If you think a better sentence can be found in Choices **B–E**, then choose one of them. If the sentence is correct as stated, your answer will be **A**.

1. The food industry has introduced many low carbohydrate foods; although many believe this is just one more of many such type of diet fads.
 - A. ; although many believe this is just one more of many such type of diet fads.
 - B. , although many believe this is just one more of many diet fads.
 - C. ; although many diet fads are being tried by many people.
 - D. , many diet fads, however, are being explored by many people.
 - E. ; however, many believe this is just one more diet fad.
2. I thought I heard a soft footstep behind me walking my dog.
 - A. I thought I heard a soft footstep behind me walking my dog.
 - B. Walking my dog behind me I heard I soft footstep.
 - C. While walking my dog, I thought I heard a soft footstep behind me.
 - D. Hearing a soft footstep behind me, I thought I would walk my dog.
 - E. Thinking I would walk my dog, I heard a soft footstep behind me.
3. In the past, many women made their own clothing, a practice that is fast being lost.
 - A. a practice that is fast being lost.
 - B. in as much as this showed attention to individual detail, it is being lost.
 - C. this makes their own clothing being lost.
 - D. a practice that is fast being lost in making their own clothing.
 - E. homemade clothing is a practice that is fast being lost.
4. We were appalled by what we found when we opened the door. The room reeking with a foul odor, graffiti sprayed on the walls and the room vandalized beyond recognition.
 - A. The room reeking with a foul odor, graffiti sprayed on the walls and the room vandalized beyond recognition.
 - B. Reeking with a foul odor, walls sprayed with graffiti and vandalizing the room beyond recognition.
 - C. The room reeked with a foul odor; graffiti was sprayed on the walls, and the room was vandalized beyond recognition.
 - D. The room was vandalized beyond recognition, smelling badly, with graffiti spraying on the walls and vandalizing the room.
 - E. The room vandalized the foul odor, the walls graffiti covered and unrecognizable.

5. For sale: several vintage hats from great aunt who has passed on with feathers.
- A. several vintage hats from great aunt who has passed on with feathers.
 - B. great aunt who has passed on with several vintage hats having feathers.
 - C. several vintage hats with feathers from great aunt who has passed on.
 - D. several feathers from great aunt who has passed on with vintage hats.
 - E. hats with feathers from several great aunts who has passed on in vintage.
6. The university, once known for its outstanding football team, is now struggling to find just the right coach to bring it back into the limelight.
- A. The university, once known for its outstanding football team,
 - B. The university was once known for having an outstanding football team,
 - C. The university, that once was known for an outstanding football team,
 - D. The university, because it once had an outstanding football team,
 - E. The university had once an outstanding football team,
7. Many socially prominent citizens are reluctant to find themselves in the media limelight, less prominent citizens are more anxious to be recognized.
- A. , less prominent citizens are more anxious to be recognized.
 - B. ;but less prominent citizens are more anxious to be recognized.
 - C. ; prominent citizens are more or less anxious to be recognized.
 - D. ; however, less prominent citizens are more anxious to be recognized.
 - E. ; recognition is anxiously desired by less prominent citizens.
8. Henry Ford an innovative thinker who developed many things is better known as the originator of the assembly line.
- A. Ford an innovative thinker who developed many things is better known as
 - B. Ford, an innovative thinker, who developed many things, is better known as
 - C. Ford, is an innovative thinker who developed many things, is best known as
 - D. Ford as an innovative thinker who developed, many things, especially
 - E. Ford, an innovative thinker who developed many things, is best known as
9. James Joyce absorbed the sights and sounds of Dublin, his native city, and, despite his personal protestations to the contrary, these are impressions that are included in his best-known writing.
- A. these are impressions that are included
 - B. the inclusion of these impressions is
 - C. these impressions are included
 - D. his inclusion of these impressions
 - E. included these impressions
10. Not unlike the experience Nida had suffered in her homeland; the violence she viewed in the hallways of her high school was not as upsetting to her as it was to others.
- A. Not unlike the experience Nida had suffered in her homeland;
 - B. Unlike other experiences Nida had experienced earlier;
 - C. Other experiences not unlike this one Nida had suffered so
 - D. The homeland where Nida had suffered is like
 - E. Because Nida had witnessed daily violence in her homeland,

11. Running around madly, not knowing anything about team strategy, the pee-wee soccer team with hopes of winning their game.
- A. with hopes of winning their game.
 - B. winning their game being their hope.
 - C. their game was not as important as their hope of winning.
 - D. hoped to win their game.
 - E. hoped to, maybe, if there was a chance, to perhaps win their game

Identifying Sentence Errors

These sentences will test your ability to recognize grammar and usage errors. Some are basic; a very few are obscure. Each sentence contains an error or no error at all (Choice E). Remember, your correct answer is actually identifying what is wrong with the sentence. If there is nothing wrong, then the answer will be E, No error.

12. Bravery, the trait mainly Harry shows, which plays a big role in his life, is the focus of most of his multitudinous adventures. No error.
13. Sam was so angry at his job situation that not one of his friends wanted to be near him; in addition, Laura, who hated conflict, decided not to go out with him that evening. No error.
14. Young readers identify with the character, Harry Potter, because they, whom this series actually targets, can relate to the hero in so many ways; he is basically kind, courageous, honest, and altruistic towards others. No error.
15. The principal of the high school, who was only in his second year, was dismayed by the number of students who had not past the basic standards exam because these results were giving the school its negative reputation. No error.
16. Dr. Martini was accompanied with an intern who is specializing in orthopedic surgery at the university medical school, which was featured in the news recently. No error.
17. Carlos had always been afraid of heights, so when he flew for the first time from Los Angeles to Atlanta, he was both terrified and exhilarated simultaneously. No error.
18. So many Americans would not be overweight and a danger to themselves and to our health care system if they would only choose their lifestyles more wiser. No error.
19. Since there wasn't much chance of rain on the day planned for the picnic, Paula reserved the picnic shelter just in case. No error.

20. Yesterday was my friend's birthday, so I decided to surprise her with a bouquet of early spring flowers that I planted and had nurtured in my own garden. No error.
21. The junior league on the field wondered about the grown up's odd, noisy behavior during their critical, championship game. No error.
22. Even though Charles had to direct the moving of the entire office, his salary was no greater than a clerk. No error.
23. Queen Elizabeth a powerful monarch who ruled England in the late 16th and early 17th Centuries, wielding a powerful influence that spread throughout Europe. No error.
24. Having little concern for others, as well as a lack of true compassion, patience and understanding, the woman made an ineffectual nurse. No error.
25. A good research paper requires diligent research skills, good manuscript skills, and a valid reference base, irregardless of the number of sources or amount of time a student has taken. No error.
26. Sitting in the doctor's waiting room, reading a three year old magazine, Bertrand dozing while he waited to be called for his appointment with the arthritis specialist. No error.
27. Not only did the baby need a nap, he needed to be feeding and to be changed. No error.
28. Aldi became so angry at his brother that he had to leave the room because he was afraid he would punch him because he was being so stubborn. No error.
29. Everyone needs to bring their book to class tomorrow, so we can review for the upcoming exam. No error.

Improving Paragraphs

The following is an early draft of a short essay. Some parts need to be revised. Read the passage, paragraph by paragraph and choose the best answers for the questions that follow. In choosing answers, follow the rules of standard written English.

- 1) Though Magna had been interested in writing a novel, since she was in high school.
- 2) She was reluctant to take herself seriously. 3) Instead, she worked as an English teacher in the Charlotte-Mecklenburg School District. 4) She participated in many writing classes, and even spent the summer at the University of Iowa in the famous Iowa Writer's Workshop.

GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE

5) After 32 years of teaching, Magna retired. 6) Once she had more time on her hands, she took out all of the pieces of manuscript that she had written during her working years.

7) After months and hours dedicated to the computer, she finished a short novel for readers in their adolescent years

8) Magna was, however, very reluctant to send it to anyone. 9) Magna's close friends and family urged her to send her manuscript to several publishers. 10) Finally, she gave out and sent it. 11) Soon after, she took a lengthy trip. 12) Several National Parks were visited. 13) When she returned from her sojourn, she became busy with family matters. 14) One Tuesday, receiving letters from three different publishers. 15) She was amazed to discover, anticipating three rejections, that all three of them wanted to publish her book. 16) Never did she dream that her biggest problem would be determining which offer to accept!

30. Sentence 1 can best be stated:

- A. As it is now.
- B. Interested since high school Magna had wanted to write a novel.
- C. Since high school writing a novel was Magna's interest.
- D. Since high school, Magna had always wanted to write a novel.
- E. Wanting to write a novel since high school Magna always wished.

31. Sentence 7 can be most concisely stated:

- A. As it is now.
- B. After long months dedicated to adolescent readers, she completed a short novel.
- C. After long months dedicated to the computer, she completed a short novel for adolescent readers.
- D. After long dedicated months, she completed a novel of short length for adolescent readers.
- E. After months and hours dedicated to writing, she completed a short novel for adolescence.

32. Sentence 8 is best placed:

- A. where it is now.
- B. before sentence 10.
- C. after sentence 9.
- D. after sentence 10.
- E. after sentence 13.

33. Sentences 11 and 12 can BEST be combined:

- A. Soon after, Several National Parks were visited on her lengthy trip.
- B. Soon after, she took a lengthy trip visiting several National Parks.
- C. She soon after took a lengthy trip, visiting several National Parks.
- D. Several national parks were visited soon after on a lengthy trip.
- E. On a lengthy trip soon after, she visited several National Parks.

34. Sentence 15 can BEST be expressed:

- A. As it is now.
- B. She was amazed to discover all three of them wanted to publish her book, anticipating three rejections.
- C. All three of them wanted to publish her books, anticipating three rejections she was amazed to discover.
- D. Anticipating three rejections, she was amazed to discover all three of them wanted to publish her book.
- E. Anticipating three rejections, all three of them wanted amazingly to publish her book.

35. Sentence 16, the last sentence can BEST be stated:

- A. As it is now.
- B. Now she had an even bigger problem to deal with.
- C. Determining and dreaming of the best to choose is now her problem.
- D. No sooner did she get one problem solved than she had another to deal with.
- E. Determined to make the best decision, Magna debated on which publisher to choose.

GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE

Multiple Choice Questions, Set 2

(Questions 1–14, 10 minutes)

Improving Sentences

The following sentences are questioning you about sentence correctness and expression of information. Part, or all, of each sentence is underlined. Following the sentence, five versions of the underlined portion are presented. Choice **A** repeats the original; the other choices are different. If you think a better sentence can be found in Choices **B–E**, then choose one of them. If the sentence is correct as stated, your answer will be **A**.

1. While the sun disappeared and the wind gusting, I stepped into the frigid water, my teeth chattering, and my feet and legs growing numb.

 - A. While the sun disappeared and the wind gusting,
 - B. While the disappearing sun gusted the wind,
 - C. While wind gusted the disappearing sun,
 - D. Gusting wind and disappearing sun took place, and
 - E. While the sun disappeared and the wind gusted,
2. Bailey munched on the tidbits from dinner dropped to him by Bobby under the table.

 - A. Bailey munched on the tidbits from dinner dropped to him by Bobby under the table.
 - B. Munching tidbits from dinner Bobby dropped Bailey under the table.
 - C. Bobby dropped tidbits from dinner under the table for Bailey to munch.
 - D. Munching under the table on tidbits dropped by Bobby was Bailey.
 - E. Bailey, munching tidbits dropped by Bobby under the table.
3. The overwhelming desk clutter and towering piles of paper made it very difficult for Katya to find the contact lens that she dropped while rubbing her eyes when talking on the phone.

 - A. lens that she dropped while rubbing her eyes when talking
 - B. lens she dropped rubbing her eyes talking
 - C. lens dropped while talking rubbing her eyes
 - D. lens dropped by her while talking and rubbing her eyes
 - E. lens dropped when she rubbed her eyes when she had talked
4. In order to cultivate diverse and edifying experiences for her twins during this coming summer, Mrs. Prata took them to Europe, and when they return, they will attend enriched summer classes as well as begin riding lessons.

 - A. Mrs. Prata took them to Europe,
 - B. Mrs. Prata taking them to Europe,
 - C. Traveling to Europe with Mrs. Prata,
 - D. Mrs. Prata will take them to Europe,
 - E. Mrs. Prata had taken them to Europe,

5. Although the home decorating consultant touted continuity of color schemes and a similarity of furniture design among rooms, Michele preferred an eclectic look which include a great diversity of color from room to room as well as a variety of furniture styles throughout the house.
- A. look which include a great diversity of color
 - B. look that includes a great diversity of color
 - C. look which includes color of great diversity
 - D. look including great diverse colors
 - E. look that includes diverse and great color combinations
6. Sonia soon realized that her suburban view of the world was glazed with romantic naiveté, for when she left home to attend college in an urban university, she was made aware of the cynical nature of many of her peers.
- A. was glazed with romantic naiveté,
 - B. was romantically glazed with naiveté
 - C. was romantic and naïve in its glaze
 - D. was glazed with romance and naiveté
 - E. was glazed with romantic naiveté;
7. They not only spoke enthusiastically about the future of the new company but also praised the gentleman who bought it.
- A. They not only spoke enthusiastically about the future of the new company but also praised
 - B. They not only spoke enthusiastically about the future of the new company but also praising
 - C. They not only spoke enthusiastically about the future of the new company but also to praise
 - D. They spoke enthusiastically not only about the future of the new company but also praising
 - E. The spoke both enthusiastically and with praise about the future of the new company and
8. Megan and Faisa were among the runners chosen for the all-county track team, their performance in this having been exceptional.
- A. team, their performance in this having been exceptional
 - B. team: they have performed exceptionally in this.
 - C. team, for they have performed exceptionally in this
 - D. team; there performance has been exceptional
 - E. team, for their performance has been exceptional
9. If I agree to purchase the car today, I would have saved \$600.
- A. If I agree to purchase the car today,
 - B. Had I agreed to purchase the car today,
 - C. If I would of agreed to purchase the car today.
 - D. If the purchasing of the car was agreed today.
 - E. If today I will agree to purchase the car.
10. Shakespeare's play *Hamlet* is one that will be debated, discussed and talked about forever, and after reading it, the play will undoubtedly leave you with many unanswered questions.
- A. debated, discussed and talked about
 - B. discussed, debated and talked about
 - C. talked about while being debated and discussed
 - D. discussed and debated when being talked about
 - E. debated and talked about

GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE

11. Despite all the new technological innovations, including cell phone cameras, pagers, hand-held computers, and a multitude of others that are intended to streamline and ease our hectic lives, sometimes they cause us as many problems as they solve.
- A. including cell phone cameras, pagers, hand-held computers, and a multitude of others
 - B. including cell phones, cameras, pagers, hand held-computers, and a multitude of others
 - C. which are including cell phone cameras, pagers, hand-held computers, and a multitude of others
 - D. including cell phone cameras, pagers, computers you can hold in one hand, and a multitude of others
 - E. including a multitude of cell phone cameras, pagers, hand-held computers and other such items
12. After his research paper was turned in, Sean has been criticized for plagiarizing passages from the Internet.
- A. Sean has been criticized for plagiarizing
 - B. Sean was criticized for plagiarizing
 - C. Sean will be criticized for plagiarizing
 - D. Sean would have been criticized for plagiarizing
 - E. Sean, being criticized for plagiarizing
13. At five years old, my grandmother took me on a plane for the very first time.
- A. At five years old, my grandmother took me on a plane for the very first time.
 - B. At five years old, my grandma took me on my first plane ride.
 - C. My grandmother took me at five years old on a plane ride for my first time.
 - D. When I was five, my grandmother took me for my first plane ride.
 - E. At age five I was taken by my grandmother on my first plane ride, something I had never experienced before.
14. Still being purchased for their appearance and charm, teddy bears, named for President Teddy Roosevelt, rank among the most popular toys ever invented.
- A. Still being purchased for their appearance and charm,
 - B. Still charming in appearance, people purchase,
 - C. Purchasing appearance and charm,
 - D. Still being purchased for their appearance and charming appeal,
 - E. Being purchased still for their charming appearance,

IF YOU FINISH BEFORE TIME IS CALLED, CHECK YOUR WORK ON THIS SECTION ONLY. DO NOT WORK ON ANY OTHER SECTION IN THE TEST.



Answer Key

Set 1

Improving Sentences

1. E
2. C
3. A
4. C
5. C
6. A
7. D
8. E
9. C
10. E
11. D

Identifying Sentence Errors

12. A
13. C
14. E
15. D
16. A
17. D
18. D
19. E
20. D
21. A
22. D
23. A
24. D
25. B
26. C
27. D
28. B
29. B

Improving Paragraphs

30. D
31. C
32. C
33. B
34. D
35. A

Set 2

Improving Sentences

1. E
2. C
3. A
4. D
5. B
6. E
7. A
8. E
9. B
10. E
11. A
12. B
13. D
14. A

Answers and Explanations

The Essay

Your essays will be judged according to the scoring guide that is discussed in Chapter 1. Review it before looking at the sample student responses to the essay prompt.

Essay Scoring Guide

- 6** This score is reserved for *outstanding* essay responses. A student earning a 6 response has effectively and insightfully developed a point of view on the issue and demonstrates exceptional critical thinking, using appropriate examples and reasons within the response. These essays are well organized, clearly focused, and exceptionally coherent. This level of essay demonstrates skillful use of language, apt vocabulary, and a variety of sentence structure. Although not without flaws, a 6 response is relatively free of most errors of usage, mechanics, and grammar.
- 5** This score reflects an effective essay; it demonstrates *reasonable mastery* of composition skills. It may have occasional lapses in quality; overall it is a very successful response. A student earning a 5 response has effectively developed a point of view on the topic or issue, has demonstrated strong critical thinking skills, and generally has used appropriate examples to develop his or her point of view. The organization is focused, showing good coherence and progression of ideas. This essay will exhibit facility in the use of language and appropriate vocabulary for the task. A variety of sentence structure is present with a minimum of mechanical and grammatical errors.
- 4** This score reflects a *competent response*, which demonstrates adequate mastery, although it will have lapses, in contrast to the quality of the 5 and 6 responses. A student earning a 4 response has developed a point of view and demonstrates critical thinking on the issue. However, the examples and development of ideas are less strong or less consistent than 5 or 6 responses. General organization is evident, and progression and coherence is present, although not always consistent. Language and vocabulary skills may be more limited or less appropriate. Some sentence structure variety is used, although grammar, punctuation, and mechanical skills may be less evident.
- 3** This score reflects an *inadequate response* to the essay question. It does, however, demonstrate a developing mastery of composition skills. The point of view will be evident, along with critical thinking, but it may be inconsistent. Examples and support are often weak or inadequate to make the writer's point. Organization, coherence, and focus are less well developed, and lapses may be found in sentence structure and/or flow of ideas. Vocabulary may be limited. Grammar, usage, and mechanical errors are present.
- 2** This score reflects a *seriously limited* essay response, which demonstrates little mastery. The point of view is present but limited due to vagueness, weak critical thinking, or inappropriate or insufficient examples, reasons, or other evidence to support the writer's position. The essay is poorly organized; it has little coherence, and it displays little facility in the use of language. Sentence structure is not varied, and errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics are serious enough to obscure meaning.
- 1** This score reflects an essay that is *fundamentally lacking*. No mastery is evident as demonstrated by a lack of a viable point and/or little or no evidence to back a position. The essay is disorganized and/or unfocused, resulting in an incoherent response. Vocabulary is limited; sentence structure displays serious flaws; mechanical, grammatical, and usage errors are pervasive, seriously interfering with the meaning.

Essay Prompt

J.K. Rawlings maintains that “The most important things in friendship are tolerance and loyalty.”

Are tolerance and loyalty the most important things in a friendship? Plan and write an essay in which you develop your point of view on this issue. If you think other qualities are more important than tolerance and loyalty, be sure to explain. Support your position with reasoning and examples taken from your readings, experiences or observations.

Sheena’s Response

By saying that tolerance and loyalty are the most important things in friendship, J.K. Rawlings captures the key to every relationship. A friend is someone who is tolerant and loyal and someone who deserves the same qualities in return.

It is sometimes difficult, in this world, to find someone tolerable who can tolerate you in return. In my own experience, I was fortunate enough to find a person like this. She tolerated my annoying habits, and I tolerated hers. In time I grew to love her quirks and adore the little things that once drove me crazy. I believe that if one is able to tolerate something for a long enough period of time, she will grow to understand it, accept it and maybe even adore it.

Tolerance isn’t enough, however, to make a true friendship last. One must be loyal as well. In high school, particularly, people gossip and spread rumors. People will ditch a friend for a relationship. People often mistreat those who love them the most. When a friend is loyal, she understands, or at least attempts to understand, that friendship is more important than a relationship, and that secrets are meant to be secret. Although the friend I mentioned before and I have grown apart, in past times we shared our innermost thoughts and desires. Out of loyalty and respect for her (for what is loyalty if not a specific form of respect?) I will not share that which she told me in earnest, and I know that she will honor me in the same way.

Although J.K. Rawlings spoke only of loyalty and tolerance, I believe there is more to a friendship. True friends share love, sympathy, strength, compassion, laughter and tears. When two people are loyal and tolerant, I believe these other things will naturally follow.

All of these things pertain not just to friendships, but to all relationships in life. Partnerships, marriages, families and teammates must all be loyal to and tolerant of one another. Anyone who has contact with other human beings must exhibit these two traits if they wish to be successful.

In conclusion, I believe that J. K. Rawlings put it perfectly when she said that friendships depend on loyalty and tolerance. When you have that, everything else will follow.

Comments

With the exception of a few pronoun agreement errors, this is an outstanding essay. It would be likely to earn a six from the SAT essay readers. If you review the requirements of a six on the scoring guide, you will find that this response fulfills the requirements. Remember, each score on the Scoring Guide will have a range of responses that receive the same score. There is not just one type of six or one type of five essay, four essay, and so on, but many papers can all garner the same score.

This student stays focused on the prompt. She not only addresses both characteristics—tolerance and loyalty—but she also goes beyond these traits to add some others that she feels are crucial in a friendship. As she says, with loyalty and tolerance, the others will naturally follow.

The personal anecdote is most appropriate in a response to a prompt such as this one. Do not hesitate to use personal examples when applicable. Remember, even if in real life the anecdote doesn't quite fit the needs of the prompt, you can adjust it a bit so that it is more focused and more useful as support for your statements.

David's Response

Friendship is made up of many components. I would have to say that tolerance and loyalty certainly are important, but because there are so many parts to a good friendship, it is difficult to judge whether they are the most important qualities. Many other pieces of a friendship are vital, but some of them may grow from a basis of tolerance and/or loyalty.

Trust, for example, is something that is definitely important in any successful relationship. It is difficult to work with anyone you don't have faith in. They could be telling half-truths or they may be unreliable. Without trust people would be forced to do everything themselves and would become socially isolated. However, it is possible that loyalty is more important than trust, because a friend's loyalty may be a source of trust. If someone sees that a loyal friend has come through for him or her time and time again, trust will develop. And one must ask one's self if a disloyal friend could ever be trusted.

Though I agree that loyalty is certainly one of the most important factors in a friendship, I do not know if I agree that tolerance is as well. Tolerance, I'm sure, helps a friendship, but it may not be as necessary as many other parts. Friends are often the first to critique work and point out flaws. Often times a friend's lack of tolerance can help a person improve themselves. Competition is also very common between friends, and that is just not tolerating the fact that one will be beaten. Also, wouldn't it make sense that someone would be a friend that they find easier to tolerate than most other people? Non-tolerance seems to be a big part of friendship too.

I think that acceptance is more important than tolerance in a friendship. One must accept the flaws of a friend at times, but many of a friend's problems are solved because they are not tolerated. It is important to accept a friend for who they are, but not everything they do must be tolerated. No friendship is perfect, but that does not mean that attempting perfection is out of the question.

Comments

Whew, this young man really likes long sentences, doesn't he? For the most part, however, he handles them well. Only one or two become a bit convoluted and would probably have been better if broken up into smaller bits.

There is nothing wrong with long sentences, nor is there anything wrong with short ones. After all, both William Faulkner and Ernest Hemingway are authors worth reading. Nevertheless, variety is encouraged. Sometimes, as in David's response, a sentence may become so long that its focus becomes lost. However, let's remember that this is a 25-minute writing, and that leaves little time for any major reworking of your sentences.

This is a good response to the prompt. It disagrees a bit with Rawlings, and it adds some thoughts and ideas. That is commendable. You will not be graded up or down for agreeing or disagreeing with a prompt. This essay defines tolerance differently than the first response. This is a good response to this prompt, and would, no doubt, earn a five from an SAT Essay reader.

Comments on Both Essay Responses

Both of these responses demonstrate that the writers have successfully mastered good composition skills that will enable them to succeed in college. It is the quality evident in these essays that you want to strive to attain for yourself. The first response is more clean-cut and to the point; therefore, garnering a probable six. The second seems to waffle a bit due to its lengthy sentences, probably receiving a five. Nevertheless, writing such as these responses is just what colleges are looking for from their incoming students.

Multiple-Choice Questions, Set 1

Improving Sentences

- 1. E.** As the sentence is presented, it contains way too many useless words. “Although” is a good transition word to use in this situation. The sentence is actually composed of one independent clause and one dependent clause introduced by although. When dependent clauses are at the end of a sentence, they are rarely separated by even a comma, never a semi-colon. Choice **E** is the best choice. It offers the necessary *semi-colon*, as well as two independent clauses with a subject plus a verb plus a complete thought. The word although is gone, but the insertion of the word however gives the sentence its style.
- 2. C.** This is one of those misplaced modifier sentences that are often amusing. The footsteps are not walking the dog behind the narrator. The correct response, Choice **C**, makes the most sense. The narrator is walking the dog, and he/she hears footsteps. Most questions like these are not too difficult as long as you take about half a minute to think about what has been stated.
- 3. A.** This sentence is perfectly okay the way it is stated. The concept presented, “made their own clothes” is being commented upon—it is a “practice” that is fast being lost. This makes Choice **A** the best response. None of the other choices is appropriate.
- 4. C.** The second sentence of this question is actually just a composite of descriptives, not a sentence in and of itself. The second “sentence” lacks a subject-verb-complete thought combination. Therefore, Choice **C** is the only response that is acceptable because it offers the correct components of a sentence.
- 5. C.** If you giggled at this question, don’t be surprised. The statement is rather silly as it reads in its original format. This is a misplaced modifier. Poor auntie did not die with feathers. If she did indeed die, then she left some feathered, vintage hats. That makes letter Choice **C** the best response to this question.
- 6. A.** Although we are not sure about the fate of this university football team, the sentence, as it is presented, Choice **A**, is the best answer. The original statement presents the best sequence of events—once it was good; now it is looking to be good again. Most of the choices offer incorrect sequencing of words or ideas.
- 7. D.** Here we have a classic case of a run-on sentence—two independent clauses joined together incorrectly. In order to join two independent clauses, your options are to utilize the semi-colon. You can also revert to the BOY FANS (but, or, yet, for, and, no, so), the coordinate conjunctions, preceded by a comma. Only Choice **B** offers a conjunction. However, the coordinate conjunction lacks the required comma, so Choice **B** is not correct. Choice **A** has only a comma between the clauses, so that won’t work. Choice **C** is too wordy, and Choice **E** uses passive voice. That leaves Choice **D** as the correct response.
- 8. E.** This sentence has an interrupter that needs to be set off by commas. The phrase “an innovative thinker who developed many things” describes Henry Ford. It needs to be separated from the rest of the sentence by commas. Therefore, Choice **E** is the best choice for this sentence. Choice **B** throws in too many commas, and Choices **C** and **D** just don’t make much sense.
- 9. C.** Although you might be tempted to leave this sentence as it is stated, take a look at Choice **C**, the best response. Note how Choice **C** is a cleaner, less wordy version than Choice **A**. The other responses are too jumbled or do not suffice as an independent clause that is necessary following the semi-colon.
- 10. E.** This sentence sounds almost correct as it is, Choice **A**. However, the word “because” makes better sense in this sentence than “not unlike.” Choice **E** is therefore the best one for improving this sentence. The other choices only make the sentence worse.
- 11. D.** As this pee-wee sentence stands, it is not a sentence but a series of phrases. It needs a subject and a verb. The soccer team is the subject, and they hoped to win their game, Choice **D**. Choice **B** is just more phrases. Choice **C** might work, but it doesn’t make good sense, and Choice **E** has unnecessary words.

Identifying Sentence Errors

12. **A.** “Mainly” (as well as most ‘-ly’ words) is an adverb, and adverbs modify verbs, adjectives, or other adverbs. In this sentence, if “mainly” is intended to modify the verb “shows” then it needs to be placed after the name Harry. In this sentence, it is most likely that it should be the adjective form, *main*, which should precede the word *trait*. The correct response is Choice **A**. Adjectives modify nouns and pronouns.
13. **C.** “In addition,” Choice **C**, is an incorrect transition to use in this sentence. It indicates additional information. This sentence is cause and effect: because of Sam, Laura does (or does not) choose to do something. A better choice for this would be “consequently” or perhaps “subsequently” or even “as a result.” Such words express cause and effect.
14. **E.** You might wonder whether *identify with* is correct as an idiom, or whether *identify to* is the right combination. However, if you felt this sentence sounded okay, then you are hearing well as you “listen” to it inside your head. Choice **E**, No error, is the correct response.
15. **D.** “Past” is incorrect, therefore **D** is the correct response. When we speak, *past* and *passed* sound alike. You may not catch this one because if you read it quickly, it sounds all right. However, *past* is a noun meaning a time that has gone by. (For example, in the *past*, one could buy gasoline for less than a dollar a gallon). Past also is an adjective as in “many people are curious about others’ *past* lives,” or a preposition meaning moving beyond, “I drove *past* the driveway before I realized I had overshot the house. *Passed* is the past tense of the verb to pass; for example, I *passed* the AP U.S. History class with an 88 percent average.
16. **A.** This is another idiom. Sometimes the SAT will surprise you and will ask two or possibly three very similar questions. On the other hand, you might only see a particular “problem” once. Choice **A** should be “accompanied by.”
17. **D.** Poor Carlos—hopefully by now flying has become less terrifying and more enjoyable. Did you have trouble spotting the error in this one? Hopefully not. Notice how both terrified and exhilarated are both mentioned, so using the word simultaneously is redundant, making **D** the answer.
18. **D.** The correct phrase would be *more wisely*, not more wiser. When comparing adverbs like this the sequence is wisely, more wisely, and most wisely.
19. **E.** All the underlined parts of this sentence are accurate. In this case, then Choice **E**, No error, is the correct response.
20. **D.** This sentence provides us with two past tenses—two things happened in the past, one necessarily before the other. First was the planting, and then was the nurturing. The helper verbs, *have* or *had* indicate something that happened in the past before other things in the past. Therefore, Choice **D** is the correct response.
21. **A.** *Grown ups* needs to be possessive; it is their angry noisy behavior. Therefore, it should read *grown ups’*.
22. **D.** At a first read, you might not notice the problem with this sentence. What it says is that his salary was no greater than a clerk. You cannot compare salary to clerk. What it should say is “. . .his salary was no greater than the *salary* of a clerk.”
23. **A.** This sentence is really not a sentence. Therefore, **A** is the best choice as an answer, because it can easily be corrected to read, “Queen Elizabeth I *was* a powerful monarch.” With this slight change, the phrase now has a verb, and you have the makings of a *bona fide* sentence.
24. **D.** This question expects you to recognize something wrong with the verb in Choice **D**. This woman has little concern, lacks true compassion, and therefore *will make* an ineffectual nurse, or if she’s already a nurse, the present tense, “the woman *makes* an ineffectual nurse.”
25. **B.** Irregardless, Choice **B**, is not a word—not now; not ever.
26. **C.** You do not have a sentence. Dozing (a participle used as an adjective modifying the man) Choice **C**, needs to be changed to *dozed* (past tense of to doze) to make this a sensible sentence.
27. **D.** This sentence lacks parallel structure. The toddler needs a nap, a meal, and to be changed. Therefore Choice **D** is not aligned in the appropriate parallel structure.

- 28. B.** Once more the SAT is checking to see whether you know your idioms. In this case, Choice **B**, you cannot be angry *at* a person. You can only be angry *with* a person and at something.
- 29. B.** Here's a case of faulty pronoun agreement. "Everyone" is one of those pronouns that is actually singular; therefore, *their* **B** is incorrect and should be *his* or *her*.

Improving Paragraphs

- 30. D.** As it reads, this first sentence is not a sentence. What it needs is a strong subject and verb. That makes **A** incorrect. Choices **B**, **C**, and **E** actually do have verbs, but none of these choices makes much sense, so **D** is the correct response.
- 31. C.** Sentence 7 contains a lot of extra words. Choice **B** indicates a dedication to adolescents, not to the book; Choice **D** has too many redundant words, and Choice **E** uses the word adolescence, which is another word entirely. Therefore, Choice **C** is the correct response to this question.
- 32. C.** The third paragraph actually has a messed up collection of sentences. They are not in an order that makes the best sense. Therefore, sentence 8 would be better placed after sentence 9, making Choice **C** the correct response.
- 33. B.** Still focused on paragraph three, this question asks how best to combine two sentences. Response **B** makes the best combination.
- 34. D.** As you were reading this paragraph, hopefully you found sentence 15 a bit weird. It is jumbled. The best choice for this sentence is **D**, "Anticipating three rejections, she was amazed to discover all three of them wanted to publish her book."
- 35. A.** This sentence is okay as it stands, so Choice **A** is the correct response.

Multiple-Choice Questions, Set 2

Improving Sentences

- E.** The underlined clause needs parallel structure. *Sun disappeared* and *wind gusting* are not balanced. Either both verbs have to be past tense, *-ed*, or present participle, *-ing*. This brings you to Choices **D** and **E**. Choice **D** is just too convoluted, so Choice **E** is the correct response.
- C.** It's hard to tell just who is under the table and who is munching tidbits. The best thing for a sentence like this is to picture it in your mind: Bobby at the table dropping food (probably his vegetables) to the dog under the table. The clearest representation of this scenario is Choice **C**.
- A.** Again, can you picture the sequence of events here? Katya was talking on the phone; she rubbed her eyes and dislodged her contact lens, which fell somewhere in the clutter on her desk. Actually, the original presentation of facts, Choice **A**, presents the best version of the sentence.
- D.** The key to this sentence is the phrase "during this coming summer," an occasion yet to take place. Therefore, you need to look for the option that indicates a future event. Choice **D** is the only sentence using the future tense, *will take*.
- B.** This is one of those sentences that tempts you to go for the plural (*diversity* and *variety*). However, the subject is *look*, singular. You might become so caught up in figuring out whether the verb is correct or not in the original, that you overlook the fact that the conjunction, *which*, does not have its requisite comma in front of it. That is the error in the original sentence. Since that option is not offered, you have to go to the conjunction *that* because it does not require a comma. The correct response is Choice **B**.
- E.** This sentence sounds okay, doesn't it? As soon as you see the conjunction *for*, however, your antennae should go up. *For* is a coordinate conjunction, one of the BOY FANS; therefore, it requires a comma in front of it, making Choice **E** the correct response.
- A.** This sentence requires the *not only* . . . *but also* combination. It is best presented in its original format. No change is necessary. Choice **A** is the correct response.
- E.** This sentence has two independent clauses. These clauses need a semi-colon between them, or a coordinate conjunction (BOY FANS) preceded by a comma. You might get suckered in by Choice **B**. However, the word *exceptional* is an adjective, and in this case you need the adverb form, *exceptionally*. Choice **D** offers the wrong form of *their*. Choice **C** won't work because a comma cannot replace a semi-colon. Therefore, Choice **E** is the correct response.
- B.** The verb tenses of these two clauses do not go together. *Would have saved* needs a similar past tense in the underlined section. The best fix for this is Choice **B**. It sounds much better, doesn't it?
- E.** Sounds okay, doesn't it? Take a closer look. Here you have a redundancy. *Discussed* and *talked about* say the same thing. The least complicated and best response for this question is Choice **E**. SAT prefers sentences that are clear and concise.
- A.** This one is complicated, at least at first. Take it slowly. You will soon realize that Choices **B–E** just make the sentence harder to understand. The sentence is best presented just the way it is in its original format, Choice **A**.
- B.** These two clauses need to get together on their verb tenses. *After* the paper was turned in, implies something that has already taken place. Therefore, the best combination would be to choose Choice **B**, *was criticized*.
- D.** Who is five-years-old, and who is going on a plane ride for the first time? Use your imagination: probably the grandmother has already flown, and most likely the child of five has not. Choice **D** states this in the most concise and reasonable manner.
- A.** Don't rush this one, even though it is the last one of this section. If you consider all the choices, it should be clear to you that Choice **A**, the original sentence, is the best presentation of sentiments. Choice **B** indicates the people are charming; Choice **C** seems like the bears are making a purchase; Choice **D** is too wordy; and Choice **E** is just awkward.

Rating Your Performance

Essay

Remember your essay will be read by two readers. So when you figure your **total points**, they will be out of 12, not just out of 6. It is best if you can have two different readers evaluate your writing, or at least you and another person for better accuracy. Evaluate your response using the Scoring Guide provided within the answers and explanations.

Essay subscore: _____

Multiple Choice, Set 1

Improving Sentences Questions 1–11 Number correct _____

Identifying Sentence Errors Questions 12–29 Number correct _____

Improving Paragraphs Questions 30–35 Number correct _____

Multiple Choice, Set 2

Improving Sentences Questions 1–14 Number correct _____

Subtotal _____ (A)

Wrong Answers (Do Not Count Unanswered Questions)

Section 2 Number wrong _____

Section 3 Number wrong _____

Subtotal _____ (B)

Subtract $\frac{1}{4}$ (.25) from B for each wrong answer _____ (C)

minus (C) = _____ (D)

Round (D) to the nearest whole number for your multiple-choice **Raw Score** _____**Essay subscore** _____

Conversion Table

This table will give you an approximation of what your score would be if this practice test had been an actual SAT Writing Test. The essay counts for about 30 percent of the final score; the multiple-choice questions count for about 70 percent.

For example: If your multiple-choice **raw score** was 35 and your **essay subscore** was 6, the table indicates that your final score on the test would fall between 500 and 710, or about 600 (out of 800).

Multiple-Choice Raw Score	Essay Subscore 0	Essay Subscore 2	Essay Subscore 4	Essay Subscore 6	Essay Subscore 8	Essay Subscore 10	Essay Subscore 12
40–49	520–690	530–720	550–740	580–770	620–800	650–800	680–800
30–39	430–630	450–660	470–680	500–710	530–740	560–770	590–800
20–29	360–540	370–570	390–590	420–620	460–650	490–690	520–710
10–19	270–460	280–490	300–510	330–540	370–480	400–610	430–630
0–9	200–380	200–410	210–430	240–450	270–490	300–520	330–560
–12– –1	200–280	200–310	200–330	200–350	240–390	270–420	300–450

Answer Sheet for Practice Test II

(Copy or Remove This Sheet and Use It to Mark Your Answers)

Multiple Choice Questions

Set 1

1	A	B	C	D	E
2	A	B	C	D	E
3	A	B	C	D	E
4	A	B	C	D	E
5	A	B	C	D	E
<hr/>					
6	A	B	C	D	E
7	A	B	C	D	E
8	A	B	C	D	E
9	A	B	C	D	E
10	A	B	C	D	E
<hr/>					
11	A	B	C	D	E
12	A	B	C	D	E
13	A	B	C	D	E
14	A	B	C	D	E
15	A	B	C	D	E
<hr/>					
16	A	B	C	D	E
17	A	B	C	D	E
18	A	B	C	D	E
19	A	B	C	D	E
20	A	B	C	D	E
<hr/>					
21	A	B	C	D	E
22	A	B	C	D	E
23	A	B	C	D	E
24	A	B	C	D	E
25	A	B	C	D	E
<hr/>					
26	A	B	C	D	E
27	A	B	C	D	E
28	A	B	C	D	E
29	A	B	C	D	E
30	A	B	C	D	E

31	A	B	C	D	E
32	A	B	C	D	E
33	A	B	C	D	E
34	A	B	C	D	E
35	A	B	C	D	E

Set 2

1	A	B	C	D	E
2	A	B	C	D	E
3	A	B	C	D	E
4	A	B	C	D	E
5	A	B	C	D	E
<hr/>					
6	A	B	C	D	E
7	A	B	C	D	E
8	A	B	C	D	E
9	A	B	C	D	E
10	A	B	C	D	E
<hr/>					
11	A	B	C	D	E
12	A	B	C	D	E
13	A	B	C	D	E
14	A	B	C	D	E

CUT HERE

----- CUT HERE -----

A large rectangular box containing 30 horizontal lines for writing.

A large rectangular area containing 30 horizontal lines for writing.

GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE

Multiple-Choice Questions, Set 1

(Questions 1–35, 25 minutes)

Improving Sentences

The following sentences are questioning you about sentence correctness and expression of information. Part, or all, of each sentence is underlined. Following the sentence, five versions of the underlined portion are presented. Choice **A** repeats the original; the other choices are different. If you think a better sentence can be found in Choices **B–E**, then choose one of them. If the sentence is correct as stated, your answer will be **A**.

1. Behind most successful high schools stand a strong administration, a good staff and, of course, a outstanding student body that is proud of its school and willing to do what it takes to make it the best.
 - A. and, of course, a outstanding student body that is proud
 - B. and, of course, a proud student body that is outstanding
 - C. and, of course, an outstanding student body that is proud
 - D. and of course a outstanding and proud student body
 - E. and of course, an outstandingly proud student body
2. The book is filled with black and white photographs that offer vivid reminders both to the shrinking WWII veteran population, as well as historians and the general public, of the horrors of World War II.
 - A. photographs that offer vivid reminders both to the shrinking WWII veteran population, as well as historians
 - B. photographs, which offers vivid reminders to both the shrinking WWII veteran population, as well as historians
 - C. photographs, which offer both vivid reminder to shrinking veterans as well as historians
 - D. photographs; the pictures offer vivid reminders to both WWII veterans, whose numbers are shrinking, as well as to historians
 - E. photographs; this offering vivid reminders both to WWII veterans and to historians
3. In his efforts to make a realistic movie, the director studied the language of the Irish, and the dialogue was made to sound authentic.
 - A. Irish, and the dialogue was made to sound authentic.
 - B. Irish and making the dialogue sound authentic
 - C. Irish and made the dialogue sound authentic
 - D. Irish, with the result being that the dialogue is authentic-sounding
 - E. Irish in where the dialogue sounds authentic
4. The detective chose not to arrest the suspect at the pawnshop that morning, but instead he arrested him at the airport before he is boarding a flight to LA.
 - A. him at the airport before he is boarding a flight to LA.
 - B. him at the airport before he boarded a flight to LA.
 - C. him before boarding a flight to LA at the airport.
 - D. him before he was caught boarding a flight to LA.
 - E. him as he attempted boarding a flight to LA at the airport.

5. Although it appears cold and forbidding at first, the state of Alaska, which boasts the largest national park in the U.S., teems with adventure and promise.
- A. ,which boasts the largest national park in the U.S.,
 - B. ,that boasts the largest national park in the U.S.,
 - C. ,where the largest national park in the U.S. resides
 - D. whose national park is the largest in the U.S.,
 - E. ,who's national park is the largest in the U.S.,
6. Already more runners than usual are expected registering for the city-wide Susan Komen Breast Cancer Run for the Cure than for the local 10-K, which has not been as heavily advertised.
- A. are expected registering for the city-wide
 - B. will register for the city-wide
 - C. have registered for the
 - D. will have registered for the city-wide
 - E. are city-wide registered for the
7. After practicing for months, the auditions went much more smoothly for the young protégé.
- A. After practicing for months, the auditions went much more smoothly for the young protégé.
 - B. Auditions, after practicing for months, went much more smoothly for the young protégé.
 - C. The young protégé having practiced for auditions for months, the auditions went much more smoothly for her.
 - D. The young protégé presenting auditions after months of practice, they went much more smoothly.
 - E. The young protégé presented auditions much more smoothly after practicing for months.
8. To ensure that a movie will sell well, it must be in touch with popular tastes.
- A. it must be in touch with popular tastes.
 - B. a movie should be in touch with popular tastes.
 - C. a producer should be in touch with popular tastes.
 - D. popular tastes should be appealed to.
 - E. popular tastes should be appealing.
9. Hoping to receive a positive recommendation from his teacher, instead the teacher informed the college that the student would not be a good candidate for their college.
- A. instead the teacher informed the college that the student would not be a good candidate for their college.
 - B. the information having been received from the teacher, instead, informing the college about the student.
 - C. the student instead received information from the college that he was not recommended by the teacher.
 - D. the student, instead, not being a good candidate for the college, would not be recommended by the teacher.
 - E. recommendation for the student instead would not be forthcoming from the teacher.
10. Most students would probably receive better grades if reading were done by them.
- A. reading were done by them.
 - B. if they studied reading.
 - C. reading were being done by them.
 - D. they would read more.
 - E. they were to have read more.

11. Gymnastics for younger children helps to strengthen concentration, to tone muscles and to provide an opportunity for camaraderie.
- A. and to provide an opportunity for camaraderie.
 B. thereby providing an opportunity for camaraderie.
 C. and to provide camaraderie.
 D. and attempts to provide that which we refer to as camaraderie.
 E. so that a sense of camaraderie is provided.

Identifying Sentence Errors

These sentences will test your ability to recognize grammar and usage errors. Some are basic; a very few are obscure. Each sentence contains an error or no error at all (Choice E). Remember, your correct answer is actually identifying what is wrong with the sentence. If there is nothing wrong, then the answer will be E, No error.

12. While looking around the clinic waiting room, I observed many other patients which happened to be suffering from the same flu-like symptoms as I. No error.
- A B C D E
13. Thousands of lakes, untamed wilderness, exceptional weather are all cited as reasons of why Minnesota is selected as a prime summer vacation spot by folks from all over the country. No error.
- A B C D E
14. The other team members and him unanimously decided to go to the *Taste Cream* for the ice cream sundae specials that were being advertised that week. No error.
- A B C D E
15. Yer, a sophomore at Purdue, has a schedule in the fall that includes Advanced Calculus, Physics II, Engineering 101, and a class in creative writing. No error.
- A B C D E
16. The master teacher was such a success in the classroom that he was always seen accompanied with a student observer from the local university. No error.
- A B C D E
17. Forget Kinsey Milhone and Kay Scarpetta or VI Warshawski, for Miss Marple is considerable, by avid who-done-it fans, the prototype of quintessential female sleuths. No error.
- A B C D E
18. Plays such as Edward Albee's *Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf* which raise dramatic production to a psychologically compelling level and force the audience into retrospection. No error.
- A B C D E
19. The chairman of the three departments is overworked and is understandably stressed due to all his responsibilities at the University. No error.
- A B C D E

20. The new candidate's speech was filled with empty promises instead of worthwhile content, the incumbent's presentation, on the other hand, came across as crafted commentary; although she, too, was duplicitous and not to be trusted. No error.
21. Less people from the United States will be visiting Europe as the exchange rate on the Euro continues to decline and prices rise in several European countries. No error.
22. Despite the cities historical society's efforts at saving the old barn, the overwhelming majority of city council members voted to tear it down. No error.
23. The new County Courthouse building is beautiful, but fully 100 residents were forced to relocate from their apartment building that had to be tore down to make room for the new construction. No error.
24. There is no sense in continuing my research paper, now that I have dropped the course on which the paper was required as a part of the mandated curriculum. No error.
25. Disposable DVDs that disappear two days after being unwrapped are beginning to appear in the United States market. No error.
26. Before the governor spoke to the assembled crowd, he quietly called the sole bodyguards' attention to a man whom might have been carrying a weapon. No error.
27. Written by Aldous Huxley, the novel *Brave New World* tells what happens in a futuristic society when everyone is lulled into complacency in a futuristic world that relies upon the programming of human beings. No error.
28. In his early adolescent desire to augment his good looks, the eighth grader uses a copious supply of mousse on his hair each morning before school leaving an ominous residue of green goop in the bathroom sink. No error.
29. Reading is not about words, like raindrops running over your head; instead, its about absorbing the words and letting them make an impact on as you read. No error.

Improving Paragraphs

The following is an early draft of a short essay. Some parts need to be revised. Read the passage, paragraph by paragraph and choose the best answers for the questions that follow. In choosing answers, follow the rules of standard written English.

1) The last decade of the 20th Century will be known for many fads and unusual trends. 2) The collecting of Beanie Babies were just one of these crazes. 3) Ty Toy Company manufactured and sold millions of these small, bean-bag-like stuffed animals, mostly bears, and sold them worldwide.

4) Reasons for the popularity of Beanie Babies are numerous, and many people are still hoarding their stuffed menageries, waiting for enough time to pass for the collectors' fad to pay off. 5) There's always room for one more furry creature in the a collector's growing family 6) The average price for a Beanie Baby was about \$6.00, well within the price of many collectors. 7) Few realized, however, the 400 percent mark-they were shelling out. 8) Also, most Beanie Babies were small, and picking up one or two more for one's collection "wouldn't take up that much room." 9) Some collectors are anticipating that their fuzzy treasures will bring in \$25–\$50 a piece when they reach their vintage value.

10) In addition, we have to wonder just where all these creatures are hiding right now.

11) Are they forming Beanie battalions to take over the world, or are they simply languishing in retirement at the bottom of a closet? 12) Will grandkids take them out to play with some day, or will they just throw them away with so many other novelties that have come and gone in the United States?

30. Of the following, which is the best version of sentence 2: "The collecting of Beanie Babies were just one of these."

- A. As it is now.
- B. It is said that the collecting of Beanie Babies was one.
- C. One trend of collecting was Beanie Babies
- D. Collecting Beanie Babies were such a craze.
- E. Collecting Beanie Babies was one of these crazes.

31. The overall purpose of this passage is to:

- A. discuss the fads and trends of the 90s.
- B. explore a particular collecting craze.
- C. promote the Ty Toy Company.
- D. ridicule so-called collectors for wasting their money.
- E. suggest that collecting fads can sometimes turn out to be lucrative.

- 32.** Sentence 5 in the second paragraph is best placed:
- A. where it is now.
 - B. at the end, after sentence # 9
 - C. after sentence #6.
 - D. at beginning, before sentence #4.
 - E. after sentence #8.
- 33.** In the context of the passage, which revision is BEST for sentence 10?
- A. Moreover, we ask ourselves, “Just where are all these creatures hiding right now?”
 - B. Leave as it is.
 - C. However, we have to wonder, “Just where are all these creatures hiding right now?”
 - D. Finally, we have to wonder just where all these creatures are hiding right now.
 - E. Finally, in conclusion, we wonder where are all these creatures are.
- 34.** You want to add one more sentence to the last paragraph, and given the context of the entire passage, which of the following will work best?
- A. Only time will tell.
 - B. It’s amazing what dumb things people will collect.
 - C. So many people wasted a lot of money on a fad.
 - D. Only in the United States are people so stupid.
 - E. I never could see the attraction of Beanie Babies.
- 35.** You are being asked to put a title on this short essay that captures the essence and tone of the passage. The BEST choice would be:
- A. Not Another Furry Creature
 - B. Beanie Babies Then and Now
 - C. The Rise and Fall of a Toy
 - D. Another Example of American Silliness
 - E. Crazy Collectors and their Fuzzy Friends

Multiple Choice Questions, Set 2

(Questions 1–14, 10 minutes)

Improving Sentences

The following sentences are questioning you about sentence correctness and expression of information. Part, or all, of each sentence is underlined. Following the sentence, five versions of the underlined portion are presented. Choice **A** repeats the original; the other choices are different. If you think a better sentence can be found in Choices **B–E**, then choose one of them. If the sentence is correct as stated, your answer will be **A**.

1. Columbia is an undergraduate and graduate college whose principle commitment is to provide comprehensive educational opportunity in the arts, communications, and public information within a content of enlightened liberal education.
 - A. whose principle commitment is to provide comprehensive educational opportunity
 - B. whose principle commitment is providing comprehensive educational opportunity
 - C. who's principal commitment is to provide comprehensive educational opportunity
 - D. who principally is committed to provide comprehensive educational opportunity
 - E. whose principal commitment is to provide comprehensive educational opportunity
2. Eager to increase the reputation of her in-home quilting company, Lori distributing flyers and set up a website about her business.
 - A. Lori distributing flyers and set up a website about her business.
 - B. Lori distributing flyers and setting up a website about her business.
 - C. Lori distributed flyers and set up a web site about her business.
 - D. flyers were distributed and a website was set up by Lori about her business.
 - E. flyers and a website were what Lori did for her business.
3. In addition to basic enamel and metal preparation, students in our jewelry class are encouraged to experiment and explore their own ideas.
 - A. In addition to basic enamel and metal preparation, students
 - B. Additionally, basic enamel and metal preparation by students
 - C. Students in addition to basic enamel and metal preparation,
 - D. Additionally, basic enamel and metal preparation by students
 - E. Basic enamel and metal are prepared in addition to students
4. Located on the lower level of the home, the guest quarters were not only spacious but cozy; they were roomy but decorated in a manner that felt snug and comfortable at the same time.
 - A. the guest quarters were not only spacious but cozy;
 - B. the guest quarters were not only spacious but also cozy,
 - C. spacious and cozy guest quarters
 - D. the guest quarters were not only spacious but also cozy;
 - E. the quarters for guests were spacious but at the same time cozy;

5. Not two weeks following Juliana's retirement from teaching for thirty-three years but the doctors diagnosed her with cancer.
- A. but the doctors diagnosed her with cancer.
 - B. but the doctors had her diagnosed with cancer.
 - C. than she has been diagnosed by the doctors that she had cancer.
 - D. but cancer had been diagnosed in her by doctors.
 - E. than doctors diagnosed her cancer.
6. Kiosks that dispense DVD's are popular in Europe and are coming to the United States they're already in New York City, and soon they will start appearing in other major cities.
- A. are coming to the United States they're already in New York City,
 - B. are coming to the United States; they're already in New York City,
 - C. in New York City already, and will come to the United States soon,
 - D. are coming to the United States; they're already in New York City;
 - E. coming to New York City and in the United States already
7. The workshop will be providing knowledge on the various means of digital inputs and outputs available to the visual artist using Adobe Photoshop, the industry standard for digital still image manipulation.
- A. The workshop will be providing knowledge on the various means of digital inputs and outputs available
 - B. Digital inputs and outputs will be available to provide knowledge at the workshop
 - C. Various means of digital inputs and outputs will be available to provide knowledge at the workshop
 - D. The workshop will provide knowledge on the various means of digital inputs and outputs available
 - E. Providing knowledge, the workshop will have the various means of digital inputs and outputs available
8. Even after becoming paralyzed, the actor Christopher Reeve's wife and family helped him in his crusade for more research into paralysis.
- A. the actor Christopher Reeve's wife and family helped him in his crusade for more research into paralysis.
 - B. The actor Christopher Reeve's wife and family helping him, in his crusade for more research into paralysis.
 - C. The wife and family of Christopher Reeve helped him in his crusade for more research into paralysis.
 - D. The crusade for more research into paralysis was helped by Christopher Reeve's wife and family.
 - E. Christopher Reeve crusaded for more research into paralysis with the help of his wife and family.
9. Her ambition is not only to study but also master the craft of acting.
- A. not only to study but also master
 - B. not only studying but to try to master
 - C. not only to study but also to master
 - D. to study, and, as well, to master
 - E. only studying to master
10. Successful critical readers of any selection gets an edge on a passage by familiarizing themselves with the meanings and distinctions of the vocabulary of tone and mood.
- A. Successful critical readers of any selection gets an edge
 - B. Successful critical readers get an edge on any selection
 - C. Getting an edge on any selection by successful critical readers
 - D. Any selection can get an edge by critical readers
 - E. Successful critical readers of any selection get an edge

11. When we witness any deep emotion, our sympathy is so strongly excited that close observation is forgotten or rendered almost impossible.
- A. that close observation is forgotten or rendered almost impossible.
 - B. that observation that is close in nature is rendered almost impossible.
 - C. that observation is almost forgotten up close or rendered impossible.
 - D. that rendering close observation is almost impossibly forgotten.
 - E. that forgotten or impossible observation is closely rendered.
12. Recent events will be valuable as a criticism toward the administration of justice in our midst, or, rather, as showing what are the true resources of justice in any community.
- A. Recent events will be valuable as a criticism toward the administration of justice in our midst,
 - B. Events that happened recently will be a valuable criticism in the midst of the administration,
 - C. Recent events will be valuable as a criticism on the administration of justice in our midst,
 - D. Recent critical events in the administration of justice in our midst,
 - E. Recently events that happened will be valuable as criticism in the administration of justice in our midst,
13. Upon entering the airport security area, passenger's personal belongings such as purses, bags, shoes and packages are all surrendered to the scrutiny of X-ray.
- A. Upon entering the airport security area, passenger's personal belongings such as purses, bags, shoes and packages are all surrendered to the scrutiny of X-ray.
 - B. Upon entering the airport security area, passengers surrender their personal belongings such as purses, bags, shoes and packages to X-ray scrutiny.
 - C. Upon entering the area called security at the airport, passengers personal belongings such as purses, bags, shoes and packages are all surrendered to the scrutiny of X-ray.
 - D. The scrutiny of X-ray is what passengers surrender their personal belongings to such as purses, bags, shoes and packages in the airport security area.
 - E. Passenger's personal belongings such as purses, bags, shoes and packages, are surrendered to the scrutiny of X-ray at the airport security area.
14. One of the most prolific popular writers of the late twentieth century has been Stephen King, known not only for his tales of horror, but he also wrote an outstanding text on the art of writing.
- A. tales of horror, but he also wrote an outstanding text on the art of writing.
 - B. tales filled with horror but a text about writing was outstanding.
 - C. horror-filled tales but writing an outstanding text on the art of writing.
 - D. tales of horror; but he also wrote a text on the outstanding art of writing.
 - E. tales of horror, but he wrote an outstanding text on the art of writing.

IF YOU FINISH BEFORE TIME IS CALLED, CHECK YOUR WORK ON THIS SECTION ONLY. DO NOT WORK ON ANY OTHER SECTION IN THE TEST.



Answer Key

Set 1

Improving Sentences

1. C
2. D
3. C
4. B
5. A
6. C
7. A
8. A
9. C
10. D
11. C

Identifying Sentence Errors

12. B
13. B
14. A
15. D
16. D
17. B
18. B
19. E
20. A
21. A
22. B
23. C
24. C
25. E
26. B
27. C
28. D
29. C

Improving Paragraphs

30. E
31. B
32. E
33. D
34. C
35. C

Set 2

Improving Sentences

1. E
2. C
3. A
4. D
5. E
6. B
7. D
8. E
9. C
10. E
11. A
12. C
13. B
14. A

Answers and Explanations

The Essay

Your essays will be judged according to the scoring guide that is discussed in Chapter 1. Review it before looking at the sample student responses to the essay prompt.

Essay Scoring Guide

- 6** This score is reserved for *outstanding* essay responses. A student earning a 6 response has effectively and insightfully developed a point of view on the issue and demonstrates exceptional critical thinking, using appropriate examples and reasons within the response. These essays are well organized, clearly focused, and exceptionally coherent. This level of essay demonstrates skillful use of language, apt vocabulary, and a variety of sentence structure. Although not without flaws, a 6 response is relatively free of most errors of usage, mechanics, and grammar.
- 5** This score reflects an effective essay; it demonstrates *reasonable mastery* of composition skills. It may have occasional lapses in quality; overall it is a very successful response. A student earning a 5 response has effectively developed a point of view on the topic or issue, has demonstrated strong critical thinking skills, and generally has used appropriate examples to develop his or her point of view. The organization is focused, showing good coherence and progression of ideas. This essay will exhibit facility in the use of language and appropriate vocabulary for the task. A variety of sentence structure is present with a minimum of mechanical and grammatical errors.
- 4** This score reflects a *competent response*, which demonstrates adequate mastery, although it will have lapses, in contrast to the quality of the 5 and 6 responses. A student earning a 4 response has developed a point of view and demonstrates critical thinking on the issue. However, the examples and development of ideas are less strong or less consistent than 5 or 6 responses. General organization is evident, and progression and coherence is present, although not always consistent. Language and vocabulary skills may be more limited or less appropriate. Some sentence structure variety is used, although grammar, punctuation, and mechanical skills may be less evident.
- 3** This score reflects an *inadequate response* to the essay question. It does, however, demonstrate a developing mastery of composition skills. The point of view will be evident, along with critical thinking, but it may be inconsistent. Examples and support are often weak or inadequate to make the writer's point. Organization, coherence, and focus are less well developed, and lapses may be found in sentence structure and/or flow of ideas. Vocabulary may be limited. Grammar, usage, and mechanical errors are present.
- 2** This score reflects a *seriously limited* essay response, which demonstrates little mastery. The point of view is present but limited due to vagueness, weak critical thinking, or inappropriate or insufficient examples, reasons, or other evidence to support the writer's position. The essay is poorly organized; it has little coherence, and it displays little facility in the use of language. Sentence structure is not varied, and errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics are serious enough to obscure meaning.
- 1** This score reflects an essay that is *fundamentally lacking*. No mastery is evident as demonstrated by a lack of a viable point and/or little or no evidence to back a position. The essay is disorganized and/or unfocused, resulting in an incoherent response. Vocabulary is limited; sentence structure displays serious flaws; mechanical, grammatical, and usage errors are pervasive, seriously interfering with the meaning.

Essay Prompt

Gandhi labeled close friendships as dangerous because “friends react on one another” and “sometimes loyalty to a friend will lead us into wrongdoing.”

Do you agree or disagree that friends react on one another and can lead us into wrongdoing? Support your position with reasoning and examples taken from your readings, experiences or observations.

Suemee’s Response

Friends can almost always convince or persuade you into doing something that you think is wrong. You feel pressure on you because you feel if you don’t do what they say, you could lose them, which may be a large portion of your life. The deeper and longer a friendship has lasted, the more that person knows your weaknesses that could possibly be used against you in negative ways.

For some people, friends are the only thing in their life they can depend on, and these friends are like an outlet from their other personal problems. Because friends are such a big part of their lives, these dependent people will risk many things in order to continue their relationships. Some may steal, get into drugs, break communication with their own families and become unsuccessful in school. Others may follow their friends because they think that without those people they’d be empty and feel insecure about themselves.

Friends can also react on one another in positive ways. Being able to tell friends things you couldn’t tell family and helping each other with school work are two positive impacts friends can make in an individual’s life. There are probably more positive effects friends have on one another than negative effects, or else friendships would not exist, and everyone would live for and by themselves.

I think keeping a few close friendships could be a definite benefit for you, but keeping too many could hurt and even damage you in the end. You lose track of what you have told this person and what another person knows about you. Also, some people may just be using the friendship as a stepping stone to get elsewhere, leaving you behind in the dust. Overall, however, keeping a few friendships that are close are pluses because these people are reliable and cause you to be in more control of your life.

Overall, I agree that close friendships can be dangerous, but if no one had friends, we would lose a lot of human interaction and trust. It would be hard to live in a world if we had no friendships or just slight, shallow acquaintances. Failing friendships where someone has felt betrayed make a person stronger and smarter by knowing how to better choose one’s next friend.

Comments

Suemee did an okay job on a subject that could very quickly garner a lot of trite responses. Within the very narrow time limit of 25 minutes, she puts forth her ideas and supports them well. There is nothing terribly clever about the response; it just does a good job. It flows well, and the writer does not just parrot Gandhi's ideas or anyone else's. In fact she makes it clear that yes, friendships might be problematic, but overall a few good friends are good for us, and without them we would be lonely indeed.

Paragraph structure and development are good. Grammar and usage are, for the most part okay. The infamous voice of "YOU" is overused. Once in awhile she seems to realize what she is doing, and she will revert to "a person" or "one," but like so many of us, "you" comes creeping back into the essay.

Overall, this is a good response, and is likely to receive a five from the SAT readers.

Sartu's Response

I think some time close friendships can be dangerous because friends know you better than others. Sometimes they react to your instability. They can make a big deal out of some things; they pressure you to do something for them that you don't want to do.

Sometimes they encourage you to do something. For example, your friends want you to join the basketball team or other sport or club, and that is good. Sometimes, however, they ask you to break rules just for them. If you do something bad, they might turn around and say "my goodness, I can not believe you did (or said) that." Then they start to freak out and you become scared. But you won't be expecting this reaction from them because they are the ones who suggested it in the first place.

It is not okay that we sometimes commit sins for the sake of loyalty to others. Would you commit sin for the sake of loyalty to others? Sometimes, our friends want us to do extreme things. For instance, some people would tease others by saying they like someone else better. Sometimes it happens accidentally that we commit sins for the sake of our loyalty to others. We have to be alert, however, and keep ourselves from being sucked into something we don't want. Often when we do something that goes against our own beliefs, we later feel guilty and we wonder just how we ended up in such a situation.

Probably the best defense we have is to choose our friends wisely. We don't have to have a lot of friends, but a few loyal and trustworthy ones are what we need to find.

Comments

This response needs a bit of work. It is not a terrible response. In fact, it quite adequately fulfills the needs of the assignment. Nothing is expressed with much depth. Good statements are made, but they lack specifics to back up the ideas expressed. Nevertheless, this is an acceptable response. No doubt SAT readers would give this essay a four.

The essay demonstrates critical thinking on the issue of friendship. The last lines are particularly perceptive. However, the examples are few and not very strong, therefore limiting the development of the essay. The response is organized, and it demonstrates coherence. This is one of those essays that you now would grow stronger if the student had the leisure to step away from it and return to it with a strong revision and bolstering of ideas.

Multiple-Choice Questions, Set 1

Improving Sentences

1. **C.** Generally, the multiple-choice questions on the SAT start with easier questions, and they become progressively harder. This is certainly the case here. Did you catch the problem on the first reading? The word *outstanding* must have *an* in front of it, not *a*, therefore Choice **C** is the correct answer.
2. **D.** When a singular subject is followed by a prepositional phrase with a plural object of the preposition, sometimes we are “tricked” into thinking that the subject of the sentence is plural. In this case, *book* is the word we need to look at, not *photographs*. However, we also know that the pictures are the specific reminders, not the book, *per se*. Therefore, Choice **D** is the least confusing and the best response. In the second clause, *it* is the appropriate subject of the sentence, referring back to book, making Choice **D** the correct answer. The other choices either incorrectly use photographs as the subject or the wording is awkward. Also, the pronoun “both” needs to follow rather than precede the proposition *to*.
3. **C.** At first you might think number 3 is okay as it is. However, the second clause shifts to passive voice, not a good choice. Choice **C** is a better way of presenting the information—the director studied and made—this is the best presentation of the sentence.
4. **B.** The detective *chose* and *arrested*, so the suspect *boarded* is the best choice to put all the action in the past tense. Choice **B** is the answer.
5. **A.** The subordinate conjunction *which* always takes a comma before it. In this sentence, the underlined portion is an *interrupter* that needs commas on both sides of it. Therefore, Choice **A**, the sentence as it stands, is correct. If you thought that Choice **D** might work, it would have if there had been a comma before *whose*.
6. **C.** The key to the answer to this question is the word “already.” This indicates things that have taken place before now. The best choice indicating past is Choice **C**, the correct answer.
7. **A.** Jumbled or not? Actually, Choice **A**, is the only choice that doesn’t twist your tongue or your mind when you read it.
8. **A.** Although the other choices are not as jumbled as 7, Choice **A** is also correct for this response. What makes Choice **A** better than Choice **B** is that there is no need to repeat the word *movie*. The pronoun *it* works just fine.
9. **C.** Wow—we just don’t know who is doing the hoping in this sentence, do we? We understand that it is the student, but that is not stated. Therefore, either Choice **D** or **C** has to be correct since they include the word student. Choice **D** is too disorderly, making **C** correct.
10. **D.** How many times have you heard this sentiment? The most straightforward delivery of this sentence can be found in Choice **D**.
11. **C.** Parallel structure is critical in your writing. Here we have three infinitives (verbs) with their objects: to strengthen concentration, to tone muscles, and to provide camaraderie. Hear the balance? The only choice then is **C** because it establishes the rhythm and balance the sentence was lacking because of faulty parallelism.

Identifying Sentence Errors

12. **B.** Did you select Choice **D** for this one? Oops. What you have in this sentence is an incomplete comparison. The entire comparison would read “suffering from the same flu-like symptoms *as I am suffering.*” The correct response is Choice **B**. Most of the time people (and therefore patients) are referred to as *who* or *whom*, occasionally *that*. However, I don’t care to be referred to as a “that” do you? “Which happened” should read “who happened.”
13. **B.** Just don’t visit in the winter, at least not without your long underwear. This question should not have been too tricky for you. The expression is *reason / reasons why*, not *reasons of why*, making Choice **B** the correct answer.

- 14. A.** The answer to this question is Choice **A**. If you look just at the underlined section “members and *him*,” it sounds okay, doesn’t it? But you have to look at the entire sentence. What we have is a compound (two parts) subject. To make sure that you use the correct subject pronoun, take each part of the subject and put it with the verb. Both parts must sound right. *Members decided* sounds fine, but we rarely have a problem when a noun is the subject. However, when you take *him* and put it with the verb, *him decided*, you suddenly sound like a prehistoric cave dweller or something. So the correct pronoun would be *he*.
- 15. D.** Here comes parallel structure again. She will be taking Calculus, Physics II, Engineering 101, and *Creative Writing*, making Choice **D** the correct response. Items in a series need to be kept as parallel as possible when you list them.
- 16. D.** Idioms using prepositions are a pain. Most languages have idiomatic sayings and structures, it’s not just English. Would you believe the British even have some of their own, and they don’t always agree with ours? Nevertheless, a teacher was accompanied *by* an observer, not *with*; therefore, Choice **D** is the correct answer.
- 17. B.** Did this one catch you napping? Choice **B**, *is considerable*, is the incorrect wording. It should read *is considered*.
- 18. B.** This sentence is not a sentence. All you have to do is eliminate the subordinate conjunction *which* and change the verb to *raises* to make things correct. This makes Choice **B** the correct response.
- 19. E.** This sentence contains no errors, making Choice **E** your best bet. Choice **B** is okay because the *and* in this case is not being used as a coordinate conjunction; instead it is just combining two predicate adjectives—overworked and stressed. *Due to* is a correct expression of cause and effect.
- 20. A.** This sentence looks more difficult than it is. The correct response is **A** because content is the last word of an independent clause, and the next independent clause is not connected by a coordinate conjunction (BOY FANS), so the comma is incorrect. You need a semi-colon. The rest of the sentence is what draws your eyes, nevertheless, everything else is correct.
- 21. A.** Maybe you didn’t realize that Choice **A** was the problem here? If so, remember that *fewer* can be counted; *less* is a lump amount or a mass. Even though you will see food packages that say less calories, the packaging is wrong. Choice **B** is correct since *as* indicates something that is happening simultaneously with something else.
- 22. B.** Be careful with plurals and possessives. They can catch you napping. It’s the *city’s* historical society, and it’s the *society’s* efforts, so both need to be *apostrophe-s* (*’s*), possessive; this makes Choice **B** the answer. *Despite*, Choice **A**, is a good introductory word when you want to present a contradictory idea. Choice **D** is okay as well.
- 23. C.** This one is a bit tricky. You probably did not like Choice **A**, fully; it does sound odd, doesn’t it? Sorry, though, it’s used correctly, just not very often. Everything else in the sentence is fine except the verb, *had to be tore down*. Choice **C**. Although such an expression is considered acceptable colloquially in some parts of the country, it is incorrect English and should be *had to be trn down*.
- 24. C.** Research paper or not, Choice **C** is a faulty idiom in this sentence, making it the correct response. A better statement would be *for which*, but *in which* would probably also work.
- 25. E.** Perhaps you thought Choice **A** was not correct and should read DVD’s. You will see it spelled that way a lot. However, the apostrophe is not necessary, so Choice **A** is okay. In fact, there are no errors in this sentence, making Choice **E** your answer.
- 26. B.** The key to this sentence is the word “sole.” Hopefully, you recognized that this means that only one bodyguard was present. Therefore, **B** is the correct answer, because it is showing a plural possessive (apostrophe after the s), but it should be *’s* instead.
- 27. C.** This is another toughie—SAT usually makes the last few questions of a multiple-choice section more difficult. At a first glance, this sentence might seem to have no problems. However, you cannot have a *society when*, it has to be a *society where*. *When* indicates time; *where* indicates place or location. Choice **C** is correct.
- 28. D.** Eighth-grade boys—what else can you expect? Choice **D** is the correct response here. The sentence needs a break (a comma) between school and leaving. Otherwise, if you were to read it quickly, you might even think that school and leaving go together, but then that doesn’t make sense either. Choice **D** is the answer.

29. C. Oh boy, this one has three pieces of punctuation underlined—alert! Let’s check them out: Choice A is correct, like raindrops needs to be separated. Choice B is a semi-colon, but don’t panic, you need them between two independent clauses when there’s no conjunction, and that’s exactly what the case is here, so the semi-colon is fine where it is. How about Choice C? This one has a comma, and since it comes after “Instead,” a transition word, that seems right, too. Choice D is good. Are you ready for Choice E then? Be careful. Yes, the comma is correct in Choice C, but look at *its*. Wrong word. It should be *it’s*. Hopefully, you weren’t so anxious about the punctuation that you missed something as basic as *its/it’s*. If you still aren’t sure, just remember that *it’s* means *it is*. The word *its* means *ownership*, like the dog ate *its* dinner.

Improving Paragraphs

30. E. Sentence 2 is wordy and has the wrong verb form. The *collecting of* can be made simpler by just saying “collecting.” Although Beanie Babies is plural, it is used as the object of the preposition, not the subject. The subject is collecting, and that must be treated as a singular subject, *collecting was*. Therefore, Choice E is the best response.
31. B. Although it is not too often that SAT asks such a question, whether you are reading a passage or writing a passage, it is imperative that you understand the passage’s purpose. In this case, it is Choice B, exploring a particular collecting craze.
32. E. Paragraph two is a rather difficult to follow since its sentences are not in the best order. Sentence 5 does not go where it is originally, in the middle of a discussion of costs and money. Instead, it fits best following sentence 8, Choice E.
33. D. In the context of the passage, the best revision for sentence 10 is Choice D. This sentence does not require the markings of a direct quote. Instead, it is more of an internal musing, not really a direct question. Choice D is the correct response.
34. C. One more sentence at the end that maintains the “feel” of the passage is not difficult to determine given the other choices. The passage is not to be taken too seriously, yet many of these options are far too serious and critical for the tone of the actual passage. Choice C is the best choice for a final sentence.
35. C. Don’t you hate titles? Usually essays do not require them, but for this SAT question, you’ll have to think of something. Some ideas are presented to you. Recall the light tone of the piece and the somewhat optimistic note that these Beanie Babies might still pay off for their owners. With that in mind, Choice C is the best of these offerings.

Multiple-Choice Questions, Set 2

Improving Sentences

- E.** Actually, the sentence is fine as it reads except the word *principle* should be *principal*, making Choice **E** the correct response.
- C.** As it is now, this is not a sentence. The verb form distributing needs to be changed to distributed, Choice **C**. When used alone the word distributing is used as an adjective. By adding “is” you have a *bona fide* sentence. However, since *set up* a Web site indicates past, you need the past form of the verb, distributed.
- A.** This one requires you to read all the selections, but no one of the responses is better than the original, so you need to stick to Choice **A**, the repetition of the original.
- D.** This sentence lacks the right comparison combination of “not only. . .but also.” Therefore, Choice **D** gives us the correct combination to make the sentence work.
- E.** This sentence is awkward, even when it is correct, which is Choice **E**. This is an awkward but correct construction. If you take a close look and listen at the other choices, you will see/hear that none of them sounds any better. This is a situation where process of elimination should get you to the best response, given your choices.
- B.** Hmm, DVDs from a kiosk—what will they think of next? Anyhow, if you thought the sentence sounded fine as it was, you were right. However, after checking it out with your ear, then you need to check it out with your eyes. Here we have two independent clauses. They cannot be joined by anything but a comma with a coordinate conjunction (BOY FANS) or a semi-colon. Choice **B** is the only option here.
- D.** Sounds like an interesting workshop. The verb is the problem in the original sentence; “will be providing” is cumbersome and not correct. Choice **D** gives us a much better (and smoother sounding) sentence.
- E.** Chris Reeve’s passing was sad; let’s hope the research continues. The problem with this sentence is that even though we know that it was Christopher and not his wife and family who became paralyzed and that they were always there helping him, we have to inspect the options we are given carefully. The best and clearest of these is Choice **E**.
- C.** Among the many things you should be learning from this SAT Writing text, is the combination “not only. . .but also.” It has shown up numerous times in many forms. Here it is again. The original uses it correctly, but notice it says “not only *to study*,” therefore, the second should state “but also *to master*,” Choice **C**.
- E.** You know that subject-verb agreement is essential. Even if the subject is followed by a prepositional phrase whose object is different (singular versus plural) than the subject, you have to consider the subject itself. That’s the case in sentence 10: the verb “gets” should go with “readers,” which is plural, not “selection,” which is singular. The correct response, then is Choice **E**, *readers get*.
- A.** This is one of those rather obscure SAT sentences, and we rarely understand what they are talking about in the first place. Expect a few of these. In looking over the original and the Choices **B–E**, you should find that the original, Choice **A** seems to make as much, if not more, sense than the others. You are correct.
- C.** This is a difficult question. We are dealing with an idiom again, this one having to do with the word *criticism* plus a preposition. In the original, criticism toward just doesn’t sound right, and it is not. Usually we think of *criticism of* something or someone. However, you can also have a *criticism on* a process, in this case the administration of justice, making Choice **C** the correct response.
- B.** Airport security—don’t you love it? Better safe than sorry, however. Now the sentence. In its original format, it isn’t too bad, but it is stated in passive voice. Choice **B** is your best bet. It has the clearest presentation of ideas and uses the active voice.
- A.** Not only but also once again—see how it is used correctly. Here we have two independent clauses joined by “but,” which is properly preceded by a comma, making Choice **A** the best bet. Before you just jot down the first thing you see, however, be sure you eyeball and “listen” to your other choices. SAT might just have a better treasure hidden among the other options. That is not the case here, and Choice **A** is definitely a winner.

Rating Your Performance

Essay

Remember your essay will be read by two readers. So when you figure your **total points**, they will be out of 12, not just out of 6. It is best if you can have two different readers evaluate your writing, or at least you and another person for better accuracy. Evaluate your response using the Scoring Guide provided within the answers and explanations.

Essay subscore: _____

Multiple Choice, Set 1

Improving Sentences Questions 1–11 Number correct _____

Identifying Sentence Errors Questions 12–29 Number correct _____

Improving Paragraphs Questions 30–35 Number correct _____

Multiple Choice, Set 2

Improving Sentences Questions 1–14 Number correct _____

Subtotal _____ (A)

Wrong Answers (Do Not Count Unanswered Questions)

Section 2 Number wrong _____

Section 3 Number wrong _____

Subtotal _____ (B)

Subtract $\frac{1}{4}$ (.25) from B for each wrong answer _____ (C)

minus (C) = _____ (D)

Round (D) to the nearest whole number for your multiple-choice

Raw Score _____

Essay subscore _____

Conversion Table

This table will give you an approximation of what your score would be if this practice test had been an actual SAT Writing Test. The essay counts for about 30 percent of the final score; the multiple-choice questions count for about 70 percent.

For example: If your multiple-choice **raw score** was 35 and your **essay subscore** was 6, the table indicates that your final score on the test would fall between 500 and 710, or about 600 (out of 800).

Multiple-Choice Raw Score	Essay Subscore 0	Essay Subscore 2	Essay Subscore 4	Essay Subscore 6	Essay Subscore 8	Essay Subscore 10	Essay Subscore 12
40–49	520–690	530–720	550–740	580–770	620–800	650–800	680–800
30–39	430–630	450–660	470–680	500–710	530–740	560–770	590–800
20–29	360–540	370–570	390–590	420–620	460–650	490–690	520–710
10–19	270–460	280–490	300–510	330–540	370–580	400–610	430–630
0–9	200–380	200–410	210–430	240–450	270–490	300–520	330–560
–12– –1	200–280	200–310	200–330	200–350	240–390	270–420	300–450

Answer Sheet for Practice Test III

(Copy or Remove This Sheet and Use It to Mark Your Answers)

Multiple Choice Questions

Set 1

1	A	B	C	D	E
2	A	B	C	D	E
3	A	B	C	D	E
4	A	B	C	D	E
5	A	B	C	D	E
<hr/>					
6	A	B	C	D	E
7	A	B	C	D	E
8	A	B	C	D	E
9	A	B	C	D	E
10	A	B	C	D	E
<hr/>					
11	A	B	C	D	E
12	A	B	C	D	E
13	A	B	C	D	E
14	A	B	C	D	E
15	A	B	C	D	E
<hr/>					
16	A	B	C	D	E
17	A	B	C	D	E
18	A	B	C	D	E
19	A	B	C	D	E
20	A	B	C	D	E
<hr/>					
21	A	B	C	D	E
22	A	B	C	D	E
23	A	B	C	D	E
24	A	B	C	D	E
25	A	B	C	D	E
<hr/>					
26	A	B	C	D	E
27	A	B	C	D	E
28	A	B	C	D	E
29	A	B	C	D	E
30	A	B	C	D	E

31	A	B	C	D	E
32	A	B	C	D	E
33	A	B	C	D	E
34	A	B	C	D	E
35	A	B	C	D	E

Set 2

1	A	B	C	D	E
2	A	B	C	D	E
3	A	B	C	D	E
4	A	B	C	D	E
5	A	B	C	D	E
<hr/>					
6	A	B	C	D	E
7	A	B	C	D	E
8	A	B	C	D	E
9	A	B	C	D	E
10	A	B	C	D	E
<hr/>					
11	A	B	C	D	E
12	A	B	C	D	E
13	A	B	C	D	E
14	A	B	C	D	E

CUT HERE

----- CUT HERE -----

A large rectangular area containing 30 horizontal lines for writing.

Multiple-Choice Questions, Set 1

(Questions 1–35, 25 minutes)

Improving Sentences

The following sentences are questioning you about sentence correctness and expression of information. Part, or all, of each sentence is underlined. Following the sentence, five versions of the underlined portion are presented. Choice **A** repeats the original; the other choices are different. If you think a better sentence can be found in Choices **B–E**, then choose one of them. If the sentence is correct as stated, your answer will be **A**.

1. In their haste to complete the school in time for the new school year, contractors disregarded some safety codes, thereby they endangered the lives of all the students, faculty and staff in the building.
 - A. codes, thereby they endangered the lives of all the students, faculty and staff in the building.
 - B. codes they have endangered the lives of all the students, faculty and staff in the building.
 - C. codes and so endangered the lives of all the students, faculty and staff in the building.
 - D. codes, thus the lives of all the students, faculty and staff in the building were endangered.
 - E. codes, thereby endangering the lives of all the students, faculty and staff in the building.
2. However, I myself believe that playing sports enhances students' academic performance.
 - A. However, I myself believe that playing sports enhances
 - B. Playing sports, however, I believe enhances
 - C. However I personally believe that playing sports enhances
 - D. I believe, however, that playing sports enhances
 - E. However, it is my opinion that to play sports is to enhance
3. I really enjoyed ballet, just no one thought I had any talent at all.
 - A. I really enjoyed ballet, just no one thought I had any talent at all.
 - B. Even though I really enjoyed ballet, just no one thought I had any talent at all.
 - C. Although I really enjoyed ballet, no one thought I had any talent at all.
 - D. I really enjoyed ballet, and therefore no one thought I had any talent at all.
 - E. Ballet was enjoyable to me, however no one thought I had any talent at all.
4. Older TV shows such as *Laugh-In* and *Mork and Mindy* took months or even years to build a large viewing audience; most shows today, however, never have that opportunity.
 - A. Older TV shows such as *Laugh-In* and *Mork and Mindy* took
 - B. Although older TV shows such as *Laugh-In* and *Mork and Mindy* took
 - C. With older TV shows such as *Laugh-In* and *Mork and Mindy* taking
 - D. Such older TV shows as *Laugh-In* and *Mork and Mindy* took
 - E. When older TV shows such as *Laugh-In* and *Mork and Mindy* took

5. In the stained glass studio, the cat perched on the counter staring at four artisans quietly clanking, cutting and soldering pieces of coloring glass into just the right place of a puzzle that was slowly becoming one fabulous custom-made window.
- A. four artisans quietly clanking, cutting and soldering pieces of coloring glass
 - B. four clanking, cutting artisans quietly soldering pieces of coloring glass
 - C. four artisans quietly clanking, cutting and soldering pieces of colored glass
 - D. four quietly clanking and cutting artisans who were soldering pieces of colored glass
 - E. colored glass being soldered by four quietly clanking and cutting artisans
6. In the decorating world, handmade door designs ranging from intricate, curvy Victorian to Arts and Crafts to modern or styles reminiscent of Frank Lloyd Wright.
- A. In the decorating world, handmade door designs ranging from intricate,
 - B. In the decorating world, handmade door designs can range from intricate,
 - C. Handmade door designs, in the decorating world, can range from intricate,
 - D. Door designs of the handmade variety in the decorating world can range from intricate,
 - E. In the decorating world, doors that are made by hand can range from intricate,
7. To celebrate the grand opening of the new park project in town and demonstrating her company's commitment to urban renewal, the president and CEO of the biggest company in town is making a large donation to the Nature Center and the local public schools' nature programs.
- A. To celebrate the grand opening of the new park project in town and demonstrating her company's commitment to urban renewal,
 - B. Celebrating the company's commitment to urban renewal the grand opening of the new park project in town demonstrates her company's urban renewal commitment
 - C. To celebrate the new park project's grand opening that demonstrates commitment to urban renewal by her company,
 - D. To celebrate the grand opening of the new park project in town and to demonstrate her company's commitment to urban renewal,
 - E. Celebrating by demonstrating her company's commitment to urban renewal, the new park project was opened, and
8. In the original concept, the fountain not only would celebrate the running water of the summer, but it would also celebrate ice by using misting devices that will have sprayed water, which would fall into the basin of the fountain, freezing and forming lovely ice patterns.
- A. that will have sprayed water, which would fall into the basin of the fountain
 - B. that would have sprayed water, which would fall into the basin of the fountain
 - C. that when it sprayed water that would fall into the base of the fountain
 - D. that would have sprayed water, which would then be falling into the basin of the fountain
 - E. that will be spraying water, which will then fall into the fountain's basin
9. When hockey withdrawal hit Georgia Pergakis hard, she didn't sulk; instead she hopped a plane to Sweden and became an unlikely Scandinavian media darling.
- A. When hockey withdrawal hit Georgia Pergakis hard, she didn't sulk;
 - B. Georgia Pergakis, didn't sulk when hockey withdrawal hit her,
 - C. Hockey withdrawal didn't make Georgia Pergakis, who was hit hard, sulk,
 - D. Not one for sulking, Georgia Pergakis didn't allow hockey withdrawal hit her hard,
 - E. Hardly hit by hockey withdrawal, Georgia Pergakis didn't sulk,

10. Historians do not know for sure what his family name was or even what century.
- A. Historians do not know for sure what his family name was or even what century.
 - B. Historians do not know for sure what his family name was or in what century he lived.
 - C. Historians do not know for sure what his family name was or even the century his life was in.
 - D. Historians do not know for sure what his family name was or even when was his century.
 - E. Historians do not know for sure what his family name was or even what century he was living.
11. Neither the boys' tennis team nor the girls' basketball team are going be invited to participate in the State Championship this season.
- A. Neither the boys' tennis team nor the girls' basketball team are going to be invited
 - B. Neither the boy's tennis team nor the girl's basketball team are going to be invited
 - C. Neither the boys' tennis team nor the girl's basketball team have been inviting
 - D. Neither the boys' tennis team nor the girls' basketball team is going to be invited
 - E. No invitation has come for the boys tennis team nor the girls basketball team

Identifying Sentence Errors

These sentences will test your ability to recognize grammar and usage errors. Some are basic; a very few are obscure. Each sentence contains an error or no error at all (Choice E). Remember, your correct answer is actually identifying what is wrong with the sentence. If there is nothing wrong, then the answer will be E, No error.

12. According to the restaurant manager, the most important wait staff were those which had contributed to the positive reputation of the restaurant rather than those who collected the most impressive tips. No error.
- A B C D E
13. Today a physician must often make a choice among private practice or engaging in a number of research projects. No error.
- A B C D E
14. Drawn by the large crowd gathering in the park, the curious jogger standing listening to the heated argument between the two men. No error.
- A B C D E
15. Public transportation is for everybody, so please be considerate towards your fellow passengers by avoiding strong-smelling food and loud music, even on personal players, because others may not appreciate it as much as you. No error.
- A B C D E
16. Like a flour sifter that allows fine grains of flour to pass through but keeps debris out of the sifted flour, the kidneys filter small waste products into the urine but keep large, good particles like proteins in the blood. No error.
- A B C D E

17. At a City Council zoning meeting earlier this month, the decision was quietly made to give out on a project that has caused nothing but headaches and expenses, despite its seeming to have been a good idea at an earlier time. No error.
18. Either Ashar or Ahmed is going to receive a Community Scholarship for academic achievement, service to the community, and outstanding character. No error.
19. Fixing or moving the monument would be more expensive than its original cost, so the Advisory Board has decided to cut its losses and take the monument down. No error.
20. Whether you are to be considering Mount Everest as a climber, or simply admiring it as one of the seven wonders of the world, it will take your breath away. No error.
21. Mr. Lavine asked Joshua and I if we were going to try out for the Knowledge Bowl team, which last year won the state championship. No error.
22. Attaining incredibly high speeds when they run, it is astonishing how fast and amazingly graceful the gangly giraffes are looking when they get going. No error.
23. It was fortunate that the inexperienced pediatrician was able to examine the fretful child calm and with confidence and a soothing bedside manner. No error.
24. What was noteworthy about Otis's invention was that it was possible not only to move freight but to transport people up and down within a tall building. No error.
25. Before the advent of the elevator, hotel guests were reluctant to climb up many flights of stairs several times daily, so rooms on the lower floors were considered premium therefore costing more. No error.
26. It was an amazing accident that elementary school children on a science outing to collect frogs found many of them to have grave deformities, which has led to much speculation between scientists nationally as to possible causes of such malformations. No error.
27. To celebrate they're colleague's graduation, coworkers in the office agreed to contribute equally to a catered lunch and a few silly presents. No error.

GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE

28. At Maple Creek High School, some members of the chess club are also on the swim team; unfortunately their competitions occasionally overlap and those whom are members of both teams have a difficult conflict to resolve.
- No error.
29. The two selfless sisters dedicated their lives to their professional job; their exemplary lives and altruistic attitudes made them two of Miss Nightingale's favorites. No error.

Improving Paragraphs

The following is an early draft of a short essay. Some parts need to be revised. Read the passage, paragraph by paragraph and choose the best answers for the questions that follow. In choosing answers, follow the rules of standard written English.

- 1) The London Underground, or “the Tube,” as it is known to Londoners, is normally the quickest and easiest way of getting around London. 2) In addition, London is served by twelve Tube lines, and underground trains on all lines run every few minutes during most hours of every day. 3) It has 275 stations conveniently dotted across the metro area. 4) Sixty-three of these stations are in central London. 5) One is never far from the convenience of the Tube.
- 6) Americans who visit London for the first time are usually very impressed by London’s Underground. 7) Even people from New York, Washington D.C. and Chicago, as well as other U.S. cities boasting successful mass transit systems.
- 8) London’s Tube enables people to travel short distances or to access the outlying suburbs as well. 9) Because many of the outlying tube stations are adjacent to train stations whose trains travel well into the surrounding countryside.
- 10) Large, crowded American cities which need mass transit systems such as Seattle and Detroit, should study the London Underground. 11) Granted, the system has been in place a long time, over 100 years in fact and it takes an incredible amount of money, time and coordination to keep it running. 12) Nevertheless, such a system is so worthwhile: it lessens traffic on the roads, and is far kinder to the environment. 13) In fact, many Londoners don’t even own cars nor need them. 14) They can get anywhere by just hopping on the Tube.

- 30.** Sentence 2 is best placed:
- A. where it is now.
 - B. at the end of paragraph one.
 - C. following sentence 3.
 - D. at the beginning of the paragraph.
 - E. following sentence 4.
- 31.** In the spirit of the first paragraph, sentences 3 and 4 can best be combined as:
- A. It has 275 stations conveniently dotted across the metro area, where 63 of them are centralized.
 - B. It has 275 stations conveniently dotted across the metro area, and 63 of these are in central London.
 - C. Having 275 stations conveniently dotted across the metro area, 63 are in central London.
 - D. Sixty three stations are in central London out of 275 stations that are dotted across the metro area.
 - E. It has 275 stations conveniently dotted across the metro area but only 63 in central London.
- 32.** Sentence 7 can best be expressed:
- A. as it is now.
 - B. New York, Washington D.C. and Chicago visitors as well as other U.S. cities boasting successful mass transit systems.
 - C. People from New York, Washington D.C. and even Chicago, as well as other U.S. cities boasting successful mass transit systems.
 - D. Even people from New York, Washington D.C. and Chicago, as well as other U.S. cities boasting successful mass transit systems are impressed.
 - E. People are even impressed from New York, Washington D.C., as well as other U.S. cities, and Chicago who boast successful mass transit systems.
- 33.** Sentence 8 can best be stated:
- A. as it is now.
 - B. London's Tube enables people to travel short distances, or to access the outlying suburbs as well.
 - C. Short distances or outlying suburbs are accessible by London's Tube.
 - D. London's Tube accesses outlying suburbs as well as people who travel short distances.
 - E. Traveling short distances or accessing suburbs is possible by people on London's Tube.
- 34.** Sentence 9 can best be stated:
- A. as it is now.
 - B. This is because many of the outlying Tube stations are adjacent to train stations whose trains travel well into the surrounding countryside.
 - C. Many train stations that travel well into the surrounding countryside are adjacent to the outlying Tube stations.
 - D. Outlying Tube stations that are adjacent to train stations allow people to travel well into the surrounding countryside.
 - E. The surrounding countryside can be traveled because many of the outlying Tube stations are adjacent to train stations whose trains travel there.

35. Sentence 10 can be correctly stated:

- A. as it is now.
- B. Large, crowded American cities needing mass transit systems, such as Los Angeles and Detroit, should study the London Underground.
- C. Large, crowded American cities that need mass transit systems, such as in Los Angeles and Detroit, should study the London Underground.
- D. The London Underground should be studied by large, crowded American cities that need mass transit systems such as Los Angeles and Detroit, should study the London Underground.
- E. Large American crowded cities needing mass transit systems should study the London Underground; Los Angeles and Detroit, for example.

Multiple-Choice Questions, Set 2

(Questions 1–14, 10 minutes)

Improving Sentences

The following sentences are questioning you about sentence correctness and expression of information. Part, or all, of each sentence is underlined. Following the sentence, five versions of the underlined portion are presented. Choice **A** repeats the original; the other choices are different. If you think a better sentence can be found in Choices **B–E**, then choose one of them. If the sentence is correct as stated, your answer will be **A**.

1. The idea behind the old high school system was that they could train an adequate workforce by sending only a small fraction of students to college, and that the other kids either couldn't do college work nor didn't need to.
 - A. and that the other kids either couldn't do college work nor didn't need to.
 - B. and college work could be done by those other kids or they didn't need it.
 - C. and those that didn't need to or couldn't do college work wouldn't go.
 - D. and that the other kids either couldn't do college work or didn't need to.
 - E. and that the other kids either didn't need to do college work or couldn't do it anyway.
2. Today, millions of U.S. teens attend high schools with more than 2,000 students; many fall between the cracks because of the sheer size of the institutions nevertheless the schools are so large they don't allow some students to get to know (or be known by) their instructors, administrators or fellow students.
 - A. nevertheless, the schools are so large they don't allow some students to get to know
 - B. however, the schools are so large they don't allow some students to get to know
 - C. the schools are so large, therefore, that they don't allow some students to get to know
 - D. the schools, however, are so large they don't allow some students to get to know
 - E. subsequently, the schools are so large they don't allow some students to get to know
3. President Dwight Eisenhower, a Republican, created what was then called the Arctic National Wildlife Range, in 1960, as one of his last acts in office.
 - A. President Dwight Eisenhower, a Republican, created what was then called the Arctic National Wildlife Range, in 1960, as one of his last acts in office.
 - B. As one of his last acts in office, the Arctic National Wildlife Range was created by President Dwight Eisenhower, a Republican, in 1960.
 - C. Created by President Dwight Eisenhower, a Republican, as one of his last acts in office, the Arctic National Wildlife Range was created in 1960.
 - D. In 1960, a Republican: President, Dwight Eisenhower, created the Arctic National Wildlife Range as one of his last acts in office.
 - E. The Arctic National Wildlife Range was created by Republican President Dwight Eisenhower as one of his last acts in office in 1960.

GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE

4. Airline companies across the US are hoping to save up to \$375,000 by eliminating pillows from their domestic flights; however, passengers are unhappy about this situation, but it is doubtful that they will be caring enough to actually boycott flying.
- A. but it is doubtful that they will be caring enough to actually boycott flying.
 - B. boycotting flying is actually doubtful due to passengers who don't care that much.
 - C. doubtfully, passengers will not care enough to actually boycott flying altogether.
 - D. passengers, however, do not care enough and will actually not boycott flying.
 - E. but it is doubtful that they will actually care enough to boycott flying.
5. A wilderness designation is being overturned, setting a precedent that could make it easier to overturn other wilderness areas and wildlife refuge designations and open them up to extractive industries.
- A. A wilderness designation is being overturned, setting a precedent that could make it easier to overturn other wilderness areas
 - B. Setting a precedent that could make it easier to overturn other wilderness areas, a wilderness designation is being overturned
 - C. A wilderness designation is being overturned, setting a precedent that could make it easier to overturn other wilderness areas
 - D. Precedents that could make it easier to overturn other wilderness areas is being overturned
 - E. Making it easier to overturn other wilderness areas is a precedent that is being made
6. Regardless of the semantics, the trust fund we call Social Security has functioned exactly as planned, and will continue to do so if they can be protected from the likes of think-tank radicals who need to have a reality adjustment.
- A. if they can be protected from the likes of think-tank radicals
 - B. if it can be protected from the likes of think-tank radicals
 - C. if think-tank radicals can protect it
 - D. if think-tank radicals can protect the Social Security
 - E. if Social Security can be protected by think-tank radicals
7. It takes more than being smart and a good person to rightfully earn a position of great power and responsibility, it takes a successful track record.
- A. It takes more than being smart and a good person to rightfully earn a position of great power and responsibility, it takes a successful track record.
 - B. To rightfully earn a position of great power and responsibility a successful track record must be earned as well as being smart and a good person.
 - C. A successful track record plus being smart and a good person will give you a rightful position of power.
 - D. It takes more than being smart and a good person rightfully to earn a position of great power and responsibility; it takes a successful track record.
 - E. Being smart and a good person are no longer enough for a position of power because of needing a good track record.
8. Schools must have the flexibility of being able to offer smaller programs for those who need more attention, accelerated learning for students who can enter college earlier and paths to technical or vocational training for others.
- A. Schools must have the flexibility of being able to offer
 - B. Schools must be able to offer in their flexibility
 - C. Schools must have the flexibility to offer
 - D. Offering the following must be worked into the flexibility of the school
 - E. Schools must be able to offer due to their flexibility

9. In my Principals of Engineering class, we are building a sophisticated, accurate ping-pong-ball ballistics device, using computer modeling while learning higher-level math and physics as we proceed.
- A. In my Principals of Engineering class, we are building a sophisticated, accurate ping-pong-ball ballistics device,
 - B. A sophisticated, accurate ping-pong-ball ballistics device is being built in my Principals of Engineering class
 - C. In my Principles of Engineering class, we are building a sophisticated, accurate ping-pong-ball ballistics device,
 - D. In my Principles of Engineering class, we are building a sophisticated ping-pong-ball ballistics device that is also accurate.
 - E. Sophisticated and accurate ping-pong-ball ballistics device, in my Principles of Engineering class, is being built,
10. Scientists at Massachusetts General Hospital have developed a pill, made from the extract of a Central American fern, that may help prevent sunburn.
- A. Central American fern, that may help prevent sunburn.
 - B. fern from Central America that may help prevent sunburn.
 - C. Central American fern that is thought to, perhaps prevent sunburn.
 - D. Central American fern that may help prevent sunburn.
 - E. Central American fern which may help prevent sunburn.
11. Heart disease now kills more women than men, so women need to be their own advocates, knowing their risk factors and to ask their doctors about tests and treatments.
- A. knowing their risk factors and to ask their doctors about tests and treatments.
 - B. to know their risk factors and to ask about tests and treatments.
 - C. to know their risk factors and asking about tests and treatments.
 - D. knowing their risk factors and tests and treatment being asked about.
 - E. risk factors known and tests and treatments being pursued.
12. Every time a building is erected, the grass that was once beneath it is often replaced by a tar roof or swath of asphalt, but the roof of each newly-built building can be replaced by a garden.
- A. but the roof of each newly-built building can be replaced by a garden.
 - B. but a garden can replace the roof of each newly replaced building.
 - C. but the roof can be a garden on top of each newly built building.
 - D. but gardens of newly-built building's roofs can be grown.
 - E. but the newly-built roof can be a garden on top of each building.
13. Unlike the human eye, the fly's eye has 350 facets, including some that see behind them, enabling the fly to detect movement much faster than we can and allow them to zoom at insane speeds without crashing.
- A. including some that see behind them,
 - B. seeing behind is included,
 - C. including backwards viewing,
 - D. including some that see behind it,
 - E. it includes that which is behind,

14. In some areas of Sri Lanka, the tsunami was especially cruel in its choice of victims; nevertheless, the poor suffered more than the rich, the weak more than the strong, and women and children, who despite having lived all their lives by the water had never learned to swim.
- A. nevertheless, the poor suffered more than the rich, the weak more than the strong,
 - B. however, the poor suffered more than the rich, the weak more than the strong,
 - C. consequently, the poor suffered more than the rich, the weak more than the strong,
 - D. suffering more than the rich were the poor and suffering more than the strong were the weak,
 - E. the poor and the weak suffering much more than the rich and the strong,

IF YOU FINISH BEFORE TIME IS CALLED, CHECK YOUR WORK ON THIS SECTION ONLY. DO NOT WORK ON ANY OTHER SECTION IN THE TEST.



Answer Key

Set 1

Improving Sentences

1. E
2. D
3. C
4. A
5. C
6. B
7. D
8. B
9. A
10. B
11. D

Identifying Sentence Errors

12. A
13. B
14. C
15. D
16. E
17. B
18. E
19. E
20. B
21. A
22. D
23. D
24. C
25. B
26. C
27. A
28. C
29. B

Improving Paragraphs

30. E
31. B
32. D
33. A
34. B
35. B

Set 2

Improving Sentences

1. D
2. E
3. A
4. E
5. C
6. B
7. D
8. C
9. C
10. D
11. B
12. A
13. D
14. C

Answers and Explanations

The Essay

Your essays will be judged according to the scoring guide that is discussed in Chapter 1. Review it before looking at the sample student responses to the essay prompt.

Essay Scoring Guide

6 This score is reserved for *outstanding* essay responses. A student earning a 6 response has effectively and insightfully developed a point of view on the issue and demonstrates exceptional critical thinking, using appropriate examples and reasons within the response. These essays are well organized, clearly focused, and exceptionally coherent. This level of essay demonstrates skillful use of language, apt vocabulary, and a variety of sentence structure. Although not without flaws, a 6 response is relatively free of most errors of usage, mechanics, and grammar.

5 This score reflects an effective essay; it demonstrates *reasonable mastery* of composition skills. It may have occasional lapses in quality; overall it is a very successful response. A student earning a 5 response has effectively developed a point of view on the topic or issue, has demonstrated strong critical thinking skills, and generally has used appropriate examples to develop his or her point of view. The organization is focused, showing good coherence and progression of ideas. This essay will exhibit facility in the use of language and appropriate vocabulary for the task. A variety of sentence structure is present with a minimum of mechanical and grammatical errors.

4 This score reflects a *competent response*, which demonstrates adequate mastery, although it will have lapses, in contrast to the quality of the 5 and 6 responses. A student earning a 4 response has developed a point of view and demonstrates critical thinking on the issue. However, the examples and development of ideas are less strong or less consistent than 5 or 6 responses. General organization is evident, and progression and coherence is present, although not always consistent. Language and vocabulary skills may be more limited or less appropriate. Some sentence structure variety is used, although grammar, punctuation, and mechanical skills may be less evident.

3 This score reflects an *inadequate response* to the essay question. It does, however, demonstrate a developing mastery of composition skills. The point of view will be evident, along with critical thinking, but it may be inconsistent. Examples and support are often weak or inadequate to make the writer's point. Organization, coherence, and focus are less well developed, and lapses may be found in sentence structure and/or flow of ideas. Vocabulary may be limited. Grammar, usage, and mechanical errors are present.

2 This score reflects a *seriously limited* essay response, which demonstrates little mastery. The point of view is present but limited due to vagueness, weak critical thinking, or inappropriate or insufficient examples, reasons, or other evidence to support the writer's position. The essay is poorly organized; it has little coherence, and it displays little facility in the use of language. Sentence structure is not varied, and errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics are serious enough to obscure meaning.

1 This score reflects an essay that is *fundamentally lacking*. No mastery is evident as demonstrated by a lack of a viable point and/or little or no evidence to back a position. The essay is disorganized and/or unfocused, resulting in an incoherent response. Vocabulary is limited; sentence structure displays serious flaws; mechanical, grammatical, and usage errors are pervasive, seriously interfering with the meaning.

Essay Prompt

William Penn said, “Avoid popularity; it has many snares, and no real benefit.”

A century later, Abraham Lincoln said, “Avoid popularity if you would have peace.”

Do you agree or disagree that popularity is best not pursued since it has no benefits nor gives a person peace? Support your position with reasoning and examples taken from your reading, experiences or observations.

Eric’s Response

I wholeheartedly agree with President Lincoln’s statement, but I only partly agree with William Penn’s. Being popular does press on a person’s personal space and freedom. While popularity does have many snares it does have some real benefits.

Whenever you go shopping or to the grocery store, almost always there will be a magazine news stand by the checkout lane. It’s usually full of tabloids and pop magazines that feature the latest craze and what all the hit stars have been up to. A recent movie called “Paparazzi” is about an action star who is constantly harassed by photographers who follow his every footstep. While the movie may not be entirely accurate, it does bring to light at least some of the power and freedom the press has. Stars are followed everywhere. Reporters know a star’s favorite restaurant, favorite store and even their favorite color sometimes. Granted none of these things seem very intrusive, but thousands possibly millions of people know them. The star has very little if any privacy. It is there that Lincoln’s statement holds truth.

William Penn mentioned snares and no real benefit. Yes there are many snares that come with popularity. Peer pressure is a major one. All across the country kids dress, talk and act a certain way to try to be popular. Kids feel like they can’t be accepted as they are. They have to change themselves to how magazines, movies, or their friends tell them they should look or act. Kids have turned into imperfect clones of their favorite movies star or singer instead of being accepted for who they are.

Another snare of popularity is coping with it and the attention it draws (to use the example of stars again) many stars have died or have been in rehab for drug or alcohol abuse. The popularity and benefits it brings weren’t brought on in a way as to learn how to cope. Mel Gibson, for instance, was a severe alcoholic for many years and then went to rehab. Elvis and many others have died of drug overdose.

Despite its many snares and problems, popularity can bring benefits. Popularity can bring job opportunities that might not be available otherwise. Michael Jordan switched from a pro-basketball player to a pro-baseball player. To be totally honest, he was pretty

bad. That would not have been possible to him had people not known him, had he not been popular. Likewise, many singers have started out as singers then transformed over to being actors or actresses for the same reasons.

Popularity does have many negative sides and effects to it. However, it does have some positives. I personally enjoy my obscurity, but that's a thing everyone needs to accept.

Comments

This is a nice response, isn't it? Eric has addressed both prompts individually as well as commented on the overall concept of popularity. His discussion is effective and insightful. He does not skimp with details and support; in fact, he has done a lot of development within his 25-minute time limit.

This clearly focused essay is well organized and easy to follow. Sentences are clear and varied. His support examples are also varied—from typical teenage example having to deal with clothing and behavior clones to broader, more speculative and almost psychological analysis of popularity and the power of the media.

The final paragraph especially allows the reader to hear Eric's voice as he brings this outstanding response to a close. This is what SAT readers are hoping to see—a response worthy of a 6.

Megan's Response

I agree that popularity is not something worth pursuing. The benefits are minimal and all have notable drawbacks. Plus, popularity increases drama in life for both the popular and the unpopular.

There are really no real benefits that popular people get. They don't automatically get good grades just because they are well liked by their peers. Because they are considered popular in the first place, people are often scrutinizing the little details such as the popular one's reaction to a comment, from another person. To be dissected and watched like an animal in a zoo certainly does not seem like a benefit. Also, what "popular" people say is heard by all. One wrong slip of the tongue can send rumors spiraling out of control and destroy friendships, and cause much unneeded drama.

I don't believe "popularity" can give someone a sense of peace. There is a quote that says something like, "I would rather have a few close friend than a thousand acquaintances." A popular person may, on the outside, seem to have all the friends in the world. On the inside, however, he or she may be screaming for one true and loyal friend to talk to.

It seems almost as if "popular" people have a certain "authority" over others. The popular kid always seems to have his/her "close friends" who are nothing more than attention-starved followers. Popularity can not be determined by how many friends one may have or who the coolest dressed person is. Abraham Lincoln's quote about avoiding popularity in order to gain peace is quite true today. A self-peace is there for the taking and can be reached without the title of being "popular."

Comments

Megan's response, although not as rich as Eric's is still quite adequate. Most SAT readers would respond to this essay with a 4 and possibly a 5. Remember that each essay has at least two readers. Both scores are added to make a final score out of 12. Megan would probably fall into the 8–9 range.

She does not make direct mention of the quotes or their authors. However, she opens the second paragraph with the comment about popularity affording a sense of "peace," which is a reference to the quotation by Lincoln.

Although Megan does not explore the quotes themselves as directly as Eric did, she does some insightful speculation. She mentions the pitfalls of popularity and what damage a careless slip of the tongue can bring. In addition, the third paragraph does some psychological analysis of the popular person's real emotions.

She completes her better-than-average analysis by mentioning the need for self peace and how attaining that is far more valuable than possessing the label of being popular.

Multiple-Choice Questions, Set 1

Improving Sentences

- E.** Initially you might think that the sentence is okay as it is, and it is—almost. However, Choice **A**, no change, has two independent clauses, no semi-colon and no coordinate conjunction to go with the comma. Choice **B** is no better; Choice **C** is almost okay but awkward, and Choice **D** uses passive voice; therefore, Choice **E** is the correct response.
- D.** You do not usually need to use a reflexive pronoun such as myself, himself, and so on, when the personal pronoun is already present. And if you believe something, then you personally (Choice **C**) believe it, and it is obviously in your opinion (Choice **E**). Choice **D** is the correct response to this question. Also, the transition word “however” is always more effective when it is placed within a sentence (set off by commas) rather than at the beginning or tagged onto the end of a sentence.
- C.** Short as these two independent clauses are, they still need to be punctuated correctly. Choices **A** and **E** do not have the proper punctuation. Choice **B** is awkward, and Choice **D** indicates a cause and effect set up that is not present. Therefore, Choice **C** is the correct answer.
- A.** Maybe your problem with this one is that you got so distracted by television shows you’ve never heard of, you didn’t recognize that the sentence is just fine as it is, making Choice **A** the correct response.
- C.** This one is tricky. At first glance it seems that the original sentence, Choice **A**, is fine. The problem is the word “coloring.” It should read colored. This makes Choice **C** the best alternative and the correct response.
- B.** The original sentence is not a sentence. Something has to be done with *ranging*, a participle used as an adjective and not a verb. Choice **B** is the correct choice. Choice **C** won’t work because it’s a bit awkward and passive voice. Choices **D** and **E** are just too jumbled and cumbersome.
- D.** The introductory phrase in this sentence lacks parallel structure—to celebrate and demonstrating don’t match. Either both have to be *-ing* forms or *-ed* forms. That leads us to select Choice **D**. Listen to this one: It sounds good; none of the other choices gives us that balanced sound.
- B.** This sentence also needs some parallel alignment. The helper verb “would;” is what the underlined portion of the sentence requires. That eliminates Choices **A** and **E**. Although both Choices **C** and **D** use “would” with their verbs; the structures are awkward. That leaves you with Choice **B**, the correct response.
- A.** Boy, some people really like their sports, don’t they? This sentence is best left alone, Choice **A**.
- B.** More lack of balance. Like questions 7 and 8, you have to hear this one inside your head. Historians don’t know two things: his family name and the century when he lived. Choice **B** makes this the most clear “what the name was” and “what century he lived” gives us the best response.
- D.** This question demands you pay attention to a couple things—apostrophe use with singular and plurals as well as remembering that “neither” is one of those words that is singular, so neither team IS. Since more than one person is on these teams, the possessive should be plural, with the apostrophe following the S. Therefore, Choice **D** treats *neither* as a singular and the *boys’* and *girls’* teams would be correct.

Identifying Sentence Errors

- A.** A couple things make Choice **A** incorrect, therefore the right choice. First, remember that *which* always needs a comma before it, indicating that the clause is an interrupter and will need a comma at its other end as well. Also people (and, therefore, the wait staff) are usually referred to as *who*. Using *that* instead of *which* wouldn’t be absolutely wrong, but *who* is better.
- B.** When you have two things to choose from, the term is *between*. When more than two are involved, then use *among*. Therefore, Choice **B** is the answer.

14. C. Here you have a sentence that is not a sentence. Because of the *-ing* format of standing, it cannot act as the verb for this sentence. It should read “the curious jogger *stood* listening,” making Choice C the correct answer.
15. D. Food and loud music are plural, more than one, so Choice D is the answer you’re looking for; it should be *they*.
16. E. Kidneys and flour sifters—this sentence has no errors, Choice E, despite the rather strange analogy.
17. B. This sentence contains an incorrect idiom—give out should be give up. You can give out free advice and free samples, but when ending the pursuit of something, you *give up*, not *out*.
18. E. *Either* is one of those pronouns that is actually singular—either *one* of them or the *other one* will get the scholarship. Therefore, Choice A is correct when it says *is going*. In fact, this sentence has no errors, Choice E.
19. E. This sentence is also correct, Choice E. Choice C has the necessary comma before the conjunction “so,” and Choice D is the correct form to indicate possession.
20. B. The verb in the first clause is the wrong form. It should just read *are considering*, without the words “to be.” Choice B is the correct response.
21. A. Mr. Lavine asked Joshua and Mr. Lavine asked me (not I), Choice A. When you have two parts to a direct object like this one, and one is a pronoun, you can choose the correct one by considering each part separately.
22. D. Again you have a sentence with an incorrect verb form. This one, Choice D, should read *giraffes look*. Much simpler and easier on the ears, don’t you agree?
23. D. Most adverbs end in *-ly*. Adverbs modify verbs most of the time, and sometimes adjectives and other adverbs. In this sentence, Choice D should be *calmly* since it tells how the doctor examined the child.
24. C. Here’s another case of a pair of words that must go together. If you say *not only*, somewhere later you have to say *but also*. Since Choice C is missing the also, it is the answer you should have chosen.
25. B. A redundancy is when you more or less say the same thing twice. Choice B has that problem. Climb inherently means to go up, so there is no need for both words. Granted, some folks refer to climbing down, but really that is an *oxymoron*, a contradiction of terms.
26. C. If you have scientists nationally discussing something, chances are pretty good that you will have more than just two. *Between*, Choice C, refers to two. More than two requires the preposition *among*.
27. A. Are you on your toes for this one? If you were napping, however, you might not have noticed *they’re* in Choice A, which really should be *their*, the possessive form.
28. C. Who and whom—many people just give up on these. Hopefully you didn’t give up but wisely made the right choice, C. Remember that *who* can be a subject; *whom* an object. In this case you need the subject for this clause, “who are members of both teams.”
29. B. Once more you have a redundancy to discover. In this case it is Choice B, *professional job*. Either word will suffice. Perhaps you did not care for the alliterative “selfless sisters” or “altruistic attitudes,” but they are correct.

Improving Paragraphs

30. E. This first question will take some close scrutiny on your part. The key to sentence two is the phrase, “In addition.” Since it’s only the second sentence in the paragraph, and the first sentence is the topic sentence, it’s soon to have “additional” material. Sentences 3 and 4 give you some specific information, therefore, Choice E is the answer; sentence 2 is best placed after sentence 4. This is more obvious after you have completed question 31.
31. B. Sentences 3 and 4 are two pieces of information of seemingly equal value. Combining them with the simple coordinate conjunction and (preceded by a comma) makes the most sense, Choice B.
32. D. Sentence 7 as it is now, Choice A, is not a sentence. It needs a verb. Choices B and C don’t have one either. Choice E is a jumbled disaster, so Choice D is the correct response.

- 33. A.** Looking at the alternatives in Choices **B–E**, Choice **A**, the sentence as it stands, is your best choice.
- 34. B.** Sentence 9 is not a sentence. Also, it's the trains that travel around, not the stations. Therefore, the answer for this question is Choice **B**. The other choices are either awkwardly constructed or ludicrous.
- 35. B.** At a first glance, it seems that Choice **A** is correct. However, watch out for the word *which*, again. It cannot operate without a comma in front of it. Choice **D** relies upon passive voice, and Choice **E** is a mess. Choice **C** is a bit ambiguous as to whether Los Angeles or Detroit have systems already or are in need of them. Choice **B** is the best and, therefore, the correct response.

Multiple-Choice Questions, Set 2

Improving Sentences

1. **D.** Wow, this one takes a good eye. At first the sentence seems just fine. However, Choice **A** should not have the word “nor “ in it. The combination is “either. . .or” or “neither. . .nor.” They should not be interchanged. Since none of the other choices sounds even close to correct, due to awkward wording, Choice **D** is the answer.
2. **E.** What is needed in this question is a clear cause and effect. “nevertheless” and “however” (Choices **A**, **B** and **D**) are not cause and effect indicators. *Therefore* is a cause and effect word, but it is placed incorrectly in Choice **C**. Therefore, Choice **E** is the answer, and *subsequently* is definitely a cause and effect word; it means consequently.
3. **A.** Did you figure it out that this sentence is just fine as it is? Sometimes we have a tendency to want to fix what isn’t broken. Choice **E** is just as valid a response as any of the other responses, and it occurs as the answer approximately 20 percent of the time.
4. **E.** No pillows—that’s a bummer. The clause as it is has an incorrect verb form; *will care* works just fine. In addition, *to actually boycott* is a split infinitive. That means that the infinitive (verb plus to in front of it, *to boycott*), has a word between the *to* and the *verb*. This is an old rule that is rarely followed anymore. However, it’s a good one to remember for occasions such as an SAT Exam. The correct response to this question is Choice **E**.
5. **C.** Did you catch this one? Good for you. If you had just heard this and not seen it, you would probably have missed it. The word you want is precedent, not president. Although in most areas of the country you will hear a slight variation in pronunciation, the words are close enough to be considered homonyms (words that sound alike but are spelled differently and have different meanings). Choice **C** is the one you want.
6. **B.** This is another one that needs a close look from you. The trust fund we call Social Security is actually singular. Therefore, the correct response is Choice **B**, “if *it* can be protected.”
7. **D.** All the words are okay in this sentence. The problem is that it consists of two independent clauses. The original, Choice **A**, has only a comma between the clauses—not strong enough. Choices **B**, **C**, and **E** just don’t sound right. Choice **D** is the correct choice. The clauses flow together and the semi-colon is there doing its job.
8. **C.** The original clause has too many words “of being able” is too wordy. Choices **B**, **D**, and **E** are just too awkward. Choice **C** is simple and straightforward, and the correct answer.
9. **C.** Hopefully, you caught the homonym error in this sentence. *Principal* (noun) is either the head of a school or in its adjective mode, the main or primary something (principal reason). *Principle*, on the other hand, means a rule, or code or standard. That’s the version needed in this sentence, Choice **C**.
10. **D.** Here we go again; however, this time the word isn’t *which*, it’s *that*. *That* does NOT take a comma in front of it. Therefore, the correct response is Choice **D**.
11. **B.** This underlined section lacks appropriate parallel structure. Either *knowing/asking* or *to know/to ask*. Choice **B** gives you the correct combination.
12. **A.** Such buildings do exist. Imagine the reinforcement that is necessary to hold up the extra weight for these roof-gardens. Actually this sentence is best stated just as it is, making Choice **A** the one you want.
13. **D.** Since the sentence says fly’s eye and not flies’ eyes, the sentence indicates singular *it* Choice **D**, not plural *them*, Choice **A**.
14. **C.** Here again is a cause and effect structuring. *nevertheless* and *however*, Choices **A** and **B**, are not cause-and-effect indicators. The correct answer is Choice **C**. *Consequently* is a good word to indicate cause and effect. Neither Choice **D** nor **E** has any cause-and-effect indicator. Also the structures of these two choices are awkward.

Rating Your Performance

Essay

Remember your essay will be read by two readers. So when you figure your **total points**, they will be out of 12, not just out of 6. It is best if you can have two different readers evaluate your writing, or at least you and another person for better accuracy. Evaluate your response using the Scoring Guide provided within the answers and explanations.

Essay subscore: _____

Multiple Choice, Set 1

Improving Sentences Questions 1–11 Number correct _____

Identifying Sentence Errors Questions 12–29 Number correct _____

Improving Paragraphs Questions 30–35 Number correct _____

Multiple Choice, Set 2

Improving Sentences Questions 1–14 Number correct _____

Subtotal _____ (A)

Wrong Answers (Do Not Count Unanswered Questions)

Section 2 Number wrong _____

Section 3 Number wrong _____

Subtotal _____ (B)

Subtract $\frac{1}{4}$ (.25) from B for each wrong answer _____ (C)

minus (C) = _____ (D)

Round (D) to the nearest whole number for your multiple-choice **Raw Score** _____**Essay subscore** _____

Conversion Table

This table will give you an approximation of what your score would be if this practice test had been an actual SAT Writing Test. The essay counts for about 30 percent of the final score; the multiple-choice questions count for about 70 percent.

For example: If your multiple-choice **raw score** was 35 and your **essay subscore** was 6, the table indicates that your final score on the test would fall between 500 and 710, or about 600 (out of 800).

Multiple-Choice Raw Score	Essay Subscore 0	Essay Subscore 2	Essay Subscore 4	Essay Subscore 6	Essay Subscore 8	Essay Subscore 10	Essay Subscore 12
40–49	520–690	530–720	550–740	580–770	620–800	650–800	680–800
30–39	430–630	450–660	470–680	500–710	530–740	560–770	590–800
20–29	360–540	370–570	390–590	420–620	460–650	490–690	520–710
10–19	270–460	280–490	300–510	330–540	370–580	400–610	430–630
0–9	200–380	200–410	210–430	240–450	270–490	300–520	330–560
–12– –1	200–280	200–310	200–330	200–350	240–390	270–420	300–450

Answer Sheet for Practice Test IV

(Copy or Remove This Sheet and Use It to Mark Your Answers)

Multiple Choice Questions

Set 1

1	A	B	C	D	E
2	A	B	C	D	E
3	A	B	C	D	E
4	A	B	C	D	E
5	A	B	C	D	E
<hr/>					
6	A	B	C	D	E
7	A	B	C	D	E
8	A	B	C	D	E
9	A	B	C	D	E
10	A	B	C	D	E
<hr/>					
11	A	B	C	D	E
12	A	B	C	D	E
13	A	B	C	D	E
14	A	B	C	D	E
15	A	B	C	D	E
<hr/>					
16	A	B	C	D	E
17	A	B	C	D	E
18	A	B	C	D	E
19	A	B	C	D	E
20	A	B	C	D	E
<hr/>					
21	A	B	C	D	E
22	A	B	C	D	E
23	A	B	C	D	E
24	A	B	C	D	E
25	A	B	C	D	E
<hr/>					
26	A	B	C	D	E
27	A	B	C	D	E
28	A	B	C	D	E
29	A	B	C	D	E
30	A	B	C	D	E

31	A	B	C	D	E
32	A	B	C	D	E
33	A	B	C	D	E
34	A	B	C	D	E
35	A	B	C	D	E

Set 2

1	A	B	C	D	E
2	A	B	C	D	E
3	A	B	C	D	E
4	A	B	C	D	E
5	A	B	C	D	E
<hr/>					
6	A	B	C	D	E
7	A	B	C	D	E
8	A	B	C	D	E
9	A	B	C	D	E
10	A	B	C	D	E
<hr/>					
11	A	B	C	D	E
12	A	B	C	D	E
13	A	B	C	D	E
14	A	B	C	D	E

CUT HERE

----- CUT HERE -----

A large rectangular box containing 30 horizontal lines for writing.

Multiple-Choice Questions, Set 1

(Questions 1–35, 25 minutes)

Improving Sentences

The following sentences are questioning you about sentence correctness and expression of information. Part, or all, of each sentence is underlined. Following the sentence, five versions of the underlined portion are presented. Choice **A** repeats the original; the other choices are different. If you think a better sentence can be found in Choices **B–E**, then choose one of them. If the sentence is correct as stated, your answer will be **A**.

1. On our vacation at Clearwater Beach, our family rented snorkeling gear, parasailing for hours and even a bit of deep sea fishing.
 - A. rented snorkeling gear, parasailing for hours and even a bit of deep sea fishing.
 - B. renting snorkeling gear, parasailing for hours and even a bit of deep sea fishing.
 - C. rented snorkeling gear; parasailed for hours and even a bit of deep sea fishing.
 - D. rented snorkeling gear, went parasailing for hours, and even did a bit of deep sea fishing.
 - E. rented snorkeling gear, parasailing for hours and even did a bit of deep sea fishing.
2. Although Barbara claimed she really liked sweets and never worried about calories or her sugar intake, she ate hardly none of the fruit tarts or brownies that was placed before her.
 - A. ate hardly none of the fruit tarts or brownies that was
 - B. hadn't eaten none of the fruit tarts nor brownies that were
 - C. had eaten not of the fruit tarts nor brownies that was
 - D. had eaten not any of the fruit tarts or hardly no brownies that were
 - E. had eaten hardly any of the fruit tarts nor brownies that were
3. Either my brother Jason or Levan wanted to be a pro baseball player when they grew up.
 - A. wanted to be a pro baseball player when they grew up.
 - B. wants to be a pro baseball player when he grows up.
 - C. wanted to be a pro baseball player when they will grow up.
 - D. wanted when they grew up to be a pro baseball player.
 - E. wants to be a pro baseball player when they will grow up.
4. That many people to believe the incumbent governor to be the most competent and best-informed candidate for the position.
 - A. That many people to believe the incumbent governor to be
 - B. That many people believe the governor is
 - C. Many people believe the incumbent governor to be
 - D. Because many people believe the incumbent governor to be
 - E. Many people, believing the incumbent governor to be

5. A program was cancelled by the producer of the local station that was considered too sensational by members of the community.
- A. A program was cancelled by the producer of the local station that was considered too sensational by members of the community.
 - B. The producer of the local station cancelled a program that was considered too sensational by members of the community.
 - C. Members of the community, considered too sensational, had a local station producer cancel the program.
 - D. A program by members of the community was cancelled by the producer of the local station for being too sensational.
 - E. A program was cancelled by the local station producer considered too sensational by the community.
6. Once a college attended primarily by privileged white males, the admission directors at The University of Notre Dame now have a totally open policy for attendance, and they encourage anyone who is qualified to attend their school.
- A. Once a college attended primarily by privileged white males, the admission directors at The University of Notre Dame now have
 - B. Once a college attended primarily by while male admission directors, The University of Notre Dame has now
 - C. Primarily attended by privileged white male admission directors, The University of Notre Dame now has
 - D. Once a college attended primarily by privileged white males; the admission directors at The University of Notre Dame now have
 - E. A university once attended primarily by privileged white males, The University of Notre Dame admissions directors now have
7. There are several qualifications to be met and rules which must be followed by whomever is asked to join the National Honor Society.
- A. which must be followed by whomever is asked
 - B. that must be followed by whomever is asked
 - C. that they who are asked must follow
 - D. that whomever is asked must follow
 - E. that must be followed by whoever is asked
8. Proponents of the Senator's campaign fund are often accused by others of making such donations to politicians solely to be rewarded with special favors or to gain easy access to power.
- A. of making such donations to politicians solely to be rewarded with special favors or to gain easy access to power.
 - B. to make such donations to politicians solely to be rewarded with special favors or to gain easy access to power.
 - C. of making donations to politicians to be rewarded solely by special favors or by easy access to power.
 - D. of making such sole donations to politicians for rewarding special favors or gaining easy access to power.
 - E. to make such sole donations to politicians for the rewards or for the access to power.

GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE

16. According to^A the real estate agent, neither^B the empty building next to the strip mall nor^C the vacant lot next to the park provide^D a good location for my new shop. No error.^E
17. Tomas and Jose went on their annual biking trip even though he^A was suffering from^B a sprained ankle and they^C had to stop often to rest.^D No error.^E
18. Abraham and Ruth Ann offered^A their old roller blades to my sister and I,^B but we politely refused their charity, and we^C decided to earn^D money to buy new ones. No error.^E
19. Worried over^A getting his research paper done on time, in addition to^B studying for his AP Exam, and having to^C memorize his lines for the school play, Ernesto nearly had^D a nervous breakdown. No error.^E
20. After having failed^A her driver's test three times, Marti learned the hard way^B that both^C steady concentration on her driving or^D paying attention to the road are critical to passing. No error.^E
21. Whoever^A is responsible for the accident is not important; what is important is^B that everyone has learned^C a lesson from^D this experience. No error.^E
22. When she was little,^A Sara loved to go to sleep away camp mostly because she would be able to^B experience horseback riding, hiking^C nature trails, and swim^D in the lake. No error.^E
23. Her favorite activities,^A however,^B was at the day's end, after dinner, when she and her friends were allowed to find^C long sticks and to toast marshmallows over^D the fire. No error.^E
24. Now that the end-of-season sale is^A over, I could^B kick myself; I should of^C bought the sundress when it was half price and kept^D it for next year. No error.^E
25. Because an entirely new world opens up^A to you, SCUBA diving is a fantastic sport, but you must always remain conscience^B of your air supply, the position of^C your diving buddy,^D and your diving time and depth. No error.^E
26. Despite the principal consistent^A responding "No" to the requests from^B the Student Council, the students were still expected^C to carry on^D their duties successfully. No error.^E
27. Having performed well^A on the PSAT, Henri was confident that with a bit of studying and refreshing^B his writing skills, he would perform strongly^C on the SAT as well.^D No error.^E

GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE

28. The homeless, shabby^A dressed man shuffled along^B with his frowzy^C dog, both of them looking hungry and dispirited^D. No error^E.
29. Sasha and Suzie, the fourth-graders who^A love to work with^B clay, dream of becoming a famous sculptor^C one day and having their work displayed at the Museum of Art, which^D they recently visited on a school field trip. No error^E.

Improving Paragraphs

The following is an early draft of a short essay. Some parts need to be revised. Read the passage, paragraph by paragraph and choose the best answers for the questions that follow. In choosing answers, follow the rules of standard written English.

- 1) Many parents cringe whenever Disney or other filmmakers release a new child-oriented movie.
- 2) Some even get queasy about certain children's TV programs. 3) These parents have some very real issues with the commercialism that is spawned by some of the movies and TV characters. 4) It isn't that they necessarily object to their children watching "The Barney TV Show," or "Sesame Street," or taking them to see the movie *The Lion King* or *Shrek*.
- 5) What becomes problematic, however, is the masses of consumer goods their kids are bombarded with.
- 6) Every one of these TV programs and movies is accompanied by a retinue of costly accessories.
- 7) Children who are such victims of the media blitz are overwhelmed by their supposed need for such items. 8) No child's toy box is complete without a stuffed Simba or the action figures from *Shrek* or *Star Wars*. 9) In addition, this commercialism finds its way into décor as well. 10) For instance, the toy department of any WalMart will display toys and action figures connected to the particular cult figure. 11) Every eight-year-old male needs Spiderman sheets and pajamas, and little girls are determined that Cinderella, Snow White or the Little Mermaid should decorate their lamps and bedspreads. 12) Finally, this same commercialization finds its way into children's clothing.
- 13) One look at the breakfast cereal aisle in the grocery store will attest to this. 14) A second grader's day just cannot begin without a bowl of toasted Shrek Flakes. 15) What in the world are Shrek Flakes? 16) This influence is not only found in breakfast cereals, but in juice boxes and several other foods as well; most of them, interestingly enough, are of the snack food variety. 17) Many of our fast food restaurants sponsor these screen characters as well. 18) Buy a kids meal and you are bound to be rewarded by some gimmick related to a recent children's movie or TV show. 19) What power these children's cult figures have in our nation. 20) Moreover, it is not just the parents who should be concerned. 21) All of us need to pay more attention. 22) Several significant historical dictators were very aware of how they could control a nation by controlling its children.

- 30.** Sentence 5 can BEST be written:
- A. as it is now.
 - B. Problems arise, however, with the masses of consumer goods their kids are bombarded with.
 - C. What they see as problematic, however, are the masses of consumer goods with which their children are bombarded.
 - D. What they see as a problem is the consumer goods which bombard their children.
 - E. Problems arise because of consumer goods amassing their bombarded children.
- 31.** In paragraph two, sentence 10 would be best placed:
- A. where it is now.
 - B. after the first sentence, sentence 6.
 - C. as the last sentence of the paragraph.
 - D. after sentence 11.
 - E. after sentence 7.
- 32.** The BEST final sentence to paragraph two is:
- A. No final sentence needed.
 - B. One must have Harry Potter glasses, or a Star Wars sweatshirt or even yellow rain boots that look like Big Bird.
 - C. Every child needs some clothes with a picture on them.
 - D. The commercialization is a very bad situation.
 - E. T-shirts, ball caps and sweatshirts with logos on them are very common with young children.
- 33.** The best opening sentence for the third paragraph is:
- A. Sentence 13 is acceptable.
 - B. Food is one other area where these movie and TV characters show up.
 - C. Food that our children eat are also affected by these cult characters.
 - D. Children's food preferences are also effected by the cult figures of TV and movies.
 - E. Most importantly, however, is how this cult blitz has affected even the food that children eat.
- 34.** A sentence needs to be added after sentence 16. Considering the concerned tone of this paragraph in particular, the best choice is:
- A. Not to add another sentence.
 - B. Who knows, this is probably just another media ploy.
 - C. It figures, children love snack foods.
 - D. This is not a healthy trend.
 - E. These market people really know how to sell their products.
- 35.** You've been instructed to combine sentences 20 and 21. You decide the best way is:
- A. Parents are concerned so we should be concerned also.
 - B. Moreover, just because parents are concerned, not everyone needs to pay attention.
 - C. Moreover, it is not just the parents who should be concerned; all of us need to pay more attention.
 - D. Moreover, all of us needs to pay attention, not just the concerned parents.
 - E. In addition to parental concern, we need to be concerned also.

GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE

Multiple-Choice Questions, Set 2

(Questions 1–14, 10 minutes)

Improving Sentences

The following sentences are questioning you about sentence correctness and expression of information. Part, or all, of each sentence is underlined. Following the sentence, five versions of the underlined portion are presented. Choice A repeats the original; the other choices are different. If you think a better sentence can be found in Choices B–E, then choose one of them. If the sentence is correct as stated, your answer will be A.

1. She arranged the eyeglass frames on the counter, the salesclerk proceeded to explain the differences in styles and durability of each frame.
 - A. She arranged the eyeglass frames
 - B. The eyeglass frames, which were arranged by her
 - C. The eyeglass frames were first arranged by her
 - D. After arranging the eyeglass frames
 - E. She, after arranging the eyeglass frames,
2. Minnesota is famous for its beautiful lakes and its natural wilderness, while Iowa is known for rolling fields and prolific farmland.
 - A. Iowa is known for rolling fields and prolific farmland.
 - B. Iowa is known for its rolling fields and prolific farmland.
 - C. rolling fields and prolific farmland make Iowa famous.
 - D. Iowa's rolling fields and prolific farmland make it well-known.
 - E. Iowa is known for rolling fields and farmland that is prolific.
3. The movie was memorable not for being entertaining but because it was thought-provoking.
 - A. because it was thought-provoking.
 - B. because it was one that made you think.
 - C. because it was one that provoked thinking.
 - D. for being thought-provoking.
 - E. for being one that make you provoke your thinking.
4. The jewelry markets in Florence, Italy are filled with mosaics, which are the choicest mosaics in the world.
 - A. which are the choicest mosaics in the world.
 - B. that are the choicest mosaics in the world.
 - C. that represent the choicest mosaics in the world.
 - D. witch are the choicest mosaics in the world.
 - E. which the world looks to for the choicest mosaics.
5. The human skin is layered as fine as baklava: it upholsters the bone and muscle underneath; perforating with the most marvelous of openings, and it protects all the rest of us, keeping us together.
 - A. perforating with the most marvelous of openings,
 - B. the most marvelous perforated of openings,
 - C. perforated marvelously with openings,
 - D. marvelously perforated with openings,
 - E. it is perforated with the most marvelous of openings,

6. Few people realize that it was late in the nineteenth century before childbirth came under the protection of the medical world, and doctors took on the delivery room.
- A. doctors took on the delivery room.
 - B. doctors took over the delivery world.
 - C. the delivery room was took over by doctors.
 - D. the delivery room was taken on by doctors.
 - E. the doctors on the delivery room took over.
7. Bone is the keepsake of the earth, all that remains of a man when the rest has long since melted and seeped and crumbles away.
- A. melted and seeped and crumbles away.
 - B. Melting and seeping and crumbling away.
 - C. Melted and seeping and crumbed away.
 - D. Melting and seeped by crumbling away.
 - E. Melted and seeped and crumbled away.
8. Not only do some people object to teaching fairy tales to children because of their make-believe nature, it's because some involve the use of magic.
- A. it's because some involve the use of magic.
 - B. they also involve the use of magic.
 - C. but because they also involve the use of magic.
 - D. the use of magic is also present.
 - E. but because magic is used.
9. The magic, that is often present in fairy tales, can give children a false sense of reality.
- A. The magic, that is often present in fairy tales,
 - B. The magic like that present in fairy tales
 - C. The magic which is often present in fairy tales
 - D. The magic that is often present in fairly tales
 - E. The magic which is often present in fairy tales,
10. Children's television shows, despite their repetitive songs and jingles, teach important social issues, help children with their early education, and stress the importance of fair play and loving one another.
- A. teach important social issues, help children with their early education, and stress the importance of fair play and loving one another.
 - B. teaches important social issues, helps children with their early education, and stresses the importance of fair play and loving one another.
 - C. teach important social issues, early lessons, fair play and loving one another.
 - D. teach important social issues helping children with their early education and stressing the importance of fair play and loving one another.
 - E. teach important social issues and early education by stressing the importance of fair play and loving one another.

11. Bones can be grafted from one place to another to span the gap between two unhealed fragments or fusing an unstable joint.
- A. or fusing an unstable joint.
 - B. or unstable joints can be fused
 - C. or for the fusing of unstable joints
 - D. or to fuse joints that are unstable.
 - E. or to fuse an unstable joint.
12. The Stan Kubrick movie, *A Clockwork Orange*, based on a disturbing novel by Anthony Burgess, still raises controversy and objections because of the horrible images of sex and violence, nevertheless, these critics fail to see that this is a dark satire about parenting, the government and the true meaning of freedom.
- A. nevertheless, these critics fail to see that this is a dark satire about
 - B. nevertheless; these critics fail to see that this is a dark satire about
 - C. however, these critics fail to see that this is a dark satire about
 - D. but these critics fail to see that this is a dark satire about
 - E. therefore, these critics fail to see that this is a dark satire about
13. After entering into a friendly contest between her husband and another friend, Mary Shelley began writing her immortal classic, *Frankenstein*.
- A. After entering into a friendly contest between her husband and another friend,
 - B. Upon entering into a friendly contest among herself her husband and another friend,
 - C. After entering into a friendly contest with her husband and another friend,
 - D. A contest between her and her husband and another friend being established,
 - E. Once she entered into a friendly contest among her husband and another friend,
14. Director Steven Spielberg has commented that when he looks up to the heavens and realizes there are galaxies millions of light-years away, its natural for him to wonder if there is life out there.
- A. its natural for him to wonder if there is life out there.
 - B. he naturally wonders about life for him out there.
 - C. it's a natural wonder that life might be out there for him.
 - D. it's natural for him to wonder if there is life out there.
 - E. he wonders about natural life out there, if it exists.

Answer Key

Set 1

Improving Sentences

1. D
2. E
3. B
4. C
5. B
6. E
7. E
8. A
9. D
10. C
11. A

Identifying Sentence Errors

12. C
13. E
14. C
15. B
16. D
17. A
18. B
19. A
20. D
21. A
22. D
23. E
24. C
25. B
26. A
27. E
28. A
29. C

Improving Paragraphs

30. C
31. E
32. B
33. E
34. D
35. C

Set 2

Improving Sentences

1. D
2. B
3. D
4. A
5. E
6. B
7. E
8. C
9. D
10. A
11. E
12. D
13. C
14. D

Answers and Explanations

The Essay

Your essays will be judged according to the scoring guide that is discussed in Chapter 1. Review it before looking at the sample student responses to the essay prompt.

Essay Scoring Guide

- 6** This score is reserved for *outstanding* essay responses. A student earning a 6 response has effectively and insightfully developed a point of view on the issue and demonstrates exceptional critical thinking, using appropriate examples and reasons within the response. These essays are well organized, clearly focused, and exceptionally coherent. This level of essay demonstrates skillful use of language, apt vocabulary, and a variety of sentence structure. Although not without flaws, a 6 response is relatively free of most errors of usage, mechanics, and grammar.
- 5** This score reflects an effective essay; it demonstrates *reasonable mastery* of composition skills. It may have occasional lapses in quality; overall it is a very successful response. A student earning a 5 response has effectively developed a point of view on the topic or issue, has demonstrated strong critical thinking skills, and generally has used appropriate examples to develop his or her point of view. The organization is focused, showing good coherence and progression of ideas. This essay will exhibit facility in the use of language and appropriate vocabulary for the task. A variety of sentence structure is present with a minimum of mechanical and grammatical errors.
- 4** This score reflects a *competent response*, which demonstrates adequate mastery, although it will have lapses, in contrast to the quality of the 5 and 6 responses. A student earning a 4 response has developed a point of view and demonstrates critical thinking on the issue. However, the examples and development of ideas are less strong or less consistent than 5 or 6 responses. General organization is evident, and progression and coherence is present, although not always consistent. Language and vocabulary skills may be more limited or less appropriate. Some sentence structure variety is used, although grammar, punctuation, and mechanical skills may be less evident.
- 3** This score reflects an *inadequate response* to the essay question. It does, however, demonstrate a developing mastery of composition skills. The point of view will be evident, along with critical thinking, but it may be inconsistent. Examples and support are often weak or inadequate to make the writer's point. Organization, coherence, and focus are less well developed, and lapses may be found in sentence structure and/or flow of ideas. Vocabulary may be limited. Grammar, usage, and mechanical errors are present.
- 2** This score reflects a *seriously limited* essay response, which demonstrates little mastery. The point of view is present but limited due to vagueness, weak critical thinking, or inappropriate or insufficient examples, reasons, or other evidence to support the writer's position. The essay is poorly organized; it has little coherence, and it displays little facility in the use of language. Sentence structure is not varied, and errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics are serious enough to obscure meaning.
- 1** This score reflects an essay that is *fundamentally lacking*. No mastery is evident as demonstrated by a lack of a viable point and/or little or no evidence to back a position. The essay is disorganized and/or unfocused, resulting in an incoherent response. Vocabulary is limited; sentence structure displays serious flaws; mechanical, grammatical, and usage errors are pervasive, seriously interfering with the meaning.

Essay Prompt

Mohandas Gandhi labeled close friendships as dangerous because “friends react on one another and sometimes loyalty to a friend will lead us into wrongdoing.”

George Orwell stated that “sometimes one is willing to commit sins for the sake of loyalty to others.”

What do you think—are close friendships dangerous because they may lead us to wrongdoing, or is it okay that we sometimes commit “sins” for the sake of loyalty to others?

Marco’s Response

I think that if you have a close friendship with the wrong person(s), then yes, close friendships are dangerous and may lead to wrongdoing. For example, if I had a close friendship with a gang member and hung out with him and his fiends, then they might try to make me do something illegal or stupid, such as getting involved with drugs or breaking the law in other ways. If I had a close friendship with a straight-A student who helps out in the community then no, that friendship would not be dangerous, but it is possible for that person to pressure me into doing things against my nature as well.

It’s not that Gandhi is right or wrong in what he says. What he really should have said was to choose friends wisely or we might be coerced into doing something wrong or dangerous because of that friendship. Orwell has a different view on things. He feels that sometimes we might have to go out on a limb for a friend.

In most situations committing a sin or unlawful act for loyalty would be wrong, but in certain situations; for instance, if one were to rob a bank with a group of friends and one friend had second thoughts about robbing the bank and tried to persuade you to leave with him and another tried to persuade you to stay—then you would have to decide which friend you were more loyal to the one who wanted to leave or the one who wanted you to stay, and if you chose the one who wanted you to stay then you would be committing a crime just to prove you were loyal to that friend.

Of course, that is a rather extreme example, but like Gandhi’s ideas, much of this depends on how well we choose our friends. We have to be selective and maybe sometimes wary when it comes to those really good friends who might come to have that much influence over us. Sometimes it is wise not to listen to their influence, and other times it might be OK to “sin a little” because they are our friend.

Commentary

Marco makes a good effort here to respond to two very challenging quotations. In some ways these two quotes seem to be in direct conflict with each other. Marco seems to be a diplomat, however; he takes a very middle-of-the-road approach.

At first he seems to agree with Gandhi, but then he back pedals a bit. Then he seems to agree with Orwell, but goes on to qualify. This might be construed as a weakness in his response, but Marco saves himself by drawing his own very valid conclusion—wisdom in choosing friends is what is most important.

Based on the Scoring Guide, Marco's response is a solid four. He responds adequately and has mastery in his writing. Some might even argue for a five for Marco. It is true that he demonstrates reasonable mastery. His writing is good. His waffling on the issue, usually a weakness in a response, can be construed as his strong point in this case.

This "waffling" about his score is important for you to understand as well. There is no one perfect four response, nor is there a perfect six response. Within each number, falls a great range of responses. Likewise, what one reader sees as a four, another might see as a five. That is okay. In a holistic scoring evaluation, such how the SAT essays are scored, readers can be one point different from each other, and it happens. If they are two points apart, however, a third reader is brought in to evaluate the situation. Just remember that your score is the total of both scores. Marco's paper, therefore, would very probably earn him a 9 (4 plus 5) for that part of the exam.

Shannon's Response

Whichever way you decide to think about closeness and giving another being all your trust is a big part of your personality. Whether you decide to give someone all your trust and hope they don't turn their back on you and betray you. Or maybe you feel that if they know nothing, they say nothing.

As Mohandas Gandhi says, maybe giving loyalty to a friend will lead us to bad things. The more a person knows you, the easier it is to deceive you. First of all, you already trust them and your heart will think of any excuse to prove to yourself your friend is not an enemy.

Your friend may have an alternative side that you have no idea about. He/she could be feeding your secrets to the "enemy." Anybody can become your friend, but maybe they became your friend to tell someone else what happened to you to your "old" best friend—all those things you never wanted that person to know. Be careful of handing out your trust as if it were mere rocks; make the recipient earn it as if it were gold.

As for George Orwell's opinion that it is good to have loyalty, maybe this person will help you when you are having a hard time. Everyone loves to have a good friend—someone you can count on to laugh with, tell stories to, crack some jokes with. Not only is it nice to have such a person, but it is healthy. When you have a bad day and need to let off a little steam, it is great to do that with this person. If you allow too many things to build up inside and you are dying to tell someone it is not at all healthy. Maybe that includes being a bit of a "sin committer" as Orwell mentions, but these are friends that are invaluable. They can listen to you and give support when you need it. Through their help, you can decide just how you will face the world. You just have to be smart enough to know not to be pressured into doing things you should not do.

Commentary

Shannon seems to have fallen into the trap that many writers do who respond to such prompts. She seems to be seeing this through very narrow eyes. She has personalized the quotations and her response. Although she attempts to separate the two quotations, her response is actually rather generalized. For her, friends are one's lifeblood. Without them, one has no emotional outlet. That is not really what the quotations are talking about.

However, she does attempt to separate the two points of view. Gandhi she interprets more as friends ending up not trustworthy, so perhaps you should not have them in the first place. Orwell, she agrees with more, since she feels that having reliable friends are worth maybe sinning a bit.

Looking at the scoring guide, this is a three response. It demonstrates inadequate mastery, but developing skills. With some more time and work, Shannon probably could turn this paper around. In the time she had, however, she kept her viewpoint narrow. She took the concept of friends and friendship very literally and personally. Although Marco's response is not exactly global, it is more hypothetical. It does not sound as much like a personal response to the importance of friends and friendship in one's life. It is important for you to try to think outside the box, as they say. Try not to respond entirely from the gut; attempt to respond from your mind.

Multiple-Choice Questions, Set 1

Improving Sentences

- D.** What this sentence has is a series of verbs with their respective objects. When you have a series, all the parts of the series should be parallel. What you want is a balance. If you read the original aloud, and then read Choice **D** aloud, you should be able to hear how **D** just sounds better. That's because it is parallel and now has a rhythm to it.
- E.** This sentence has a double negative. Since this is not a math lesson, two negatives do not make a positive. Words such as *hardly*, *scarcely*, *barely* are negative already. Therefore, when you add the word *none*, the sentence suddenly has two negatives. Choice **E** gives us the best alternative.
- B.** Words such as either or neither are singular. Either Jason or Levan means just one of them. Therefore, *One(Jason or Levan) wants to be a baseball player when he grows up* is the correct singular construction.
- C.** As it stands, this is not a sentence. Instead it is one long fragment. It lacks a subject and verb and a complete thought. Choice **C** gives us the *subject, people*, and the *verb, believe*, and the thought is completed by the rest of the sentence that tells us what they believe.
- B.** If you missed this one because it sounded okay, you aren't entirely wrong. It does sound okay. The problem with it, however, is that it is in passive voice. That is, the program was cancelled. It was acted upon by somebody. Choice **B**, however, has the station manager actively canceling the show. Active voice is always preferred. Sometimes we talk and write (and read) so much passive voice that we forget that it is not the preferred construction for a sentence.
- E.** This is a tough sentence, isn't it? Perhaps it would be better to rework it altogether, but that is not an option. We have to find the best presentation of the information. The problem is that the first phrase, *Once a college attended primarily by privileged white males*, has nothing to modify. We know this refers to Notre Dame, but it is not stated, and you are not expected to assume. That's why **E** gives us our only reasonable response. The inclusion of the words, *A university*, now gives that phrase about early attendees something to modify.
- E.** Remember that 99 percent of the time the conjunction *which* requires a comma in front of it. If no comma is present, then you should use the conjunction *that*.
- A.** This is a parallel structure: *to be rewarded* and *to gain*. Since the structure is parallel, it is correct as it is.
- D.** It sounds like poor Georgio was not a happy camper. Although the original presentation is understandable, it is way too awkward. The verb to squelch is also tricky. It is possible to squelch something, like Tom squelched the nasty rumor. But Georgio's desire did not squelch, it was squelched. Therefore, Choice **D** gives us the best presentation.
- C.** Once again we have a series of verbs and their objects. Build coordination, strengthen bodies, learn how to play and practice sportsmanship is the best presentation of these verbs and their objects.
- A.** One problem with this question might be the word *besieged*. Meaning overwhelmed by, this word is one you need to add to your vocabulary if it isn't already there. Although several of the choices make sense, the sentence as it is gives us the best version.

Identifying Sentence Errors

- C.** This is a sentence with a series of infinitives. *Thinking* does not fit the series. It should be *to think*.
- E.** Sometimes we get caught by sentences like this one because the subject follows the verb. The subject is singular, *barber shop*, so the singular verb *is*, is correct. It comes *between* two other businesses, and the other underlined words are also correct.
- C.** This sentence has a subject-verb agreement error. The pond is the subject; the verb should be *has*. Having all the prepositional phrases appear between the subject and verb sometimes causes us to lose sight of the actual subject. Always find the verb, ask who or what. The answer to who or what should give you the actual subject.

15. **B.** Here we have another series. This time it is a series of infinitives (verb plus the word *to* in front of it). *To illustrate, to give* and *to recruit* should be the series.
16. **D.** Either and neither are pronouns that indicate the singular. Neither this one or that *one* provides.
17. **A.** Who has the sprained ankle, Tomas or Jose? It's not clear, is it? That's why the word *he* has to be changed to the name of one of the boys—the one who is hobbling around.
18. **B.** Offered to my sister and offered to *me*, not *I*. When faced with a question like this, take each part and say the sentence. After you do that, you will immediately realize that something is offered to me not offered to I. This sentence calls for the objective pronoun, *me*.
19. **A.** As mentioned several other times in this book, American English has a lot of idioms that are certain ways of using verbs and prepositions together. In this case, Ernesto is worried about; not over. Actually, worried over is not correct usage in any instance.
20. **D.** Since Marti has two things to worry about, the pronoun both has to stay. Therefore, she needs to worry about concentration and attention. This is not an either/or situation. Unless she learns that, she may not ever pass her driver's test!
21. **A.** Who (or whoever) is the subject form of the pronoun. Whom (or whomever) is the object. In this sentence, we need the subject responsible for the accident, so Choice **A** has to be changed and is consequently the answer to this question.
22. **D.** Another series question—this should alert you to the idea that SAT considers items in a series and keeping things parallel and balanced in your writing very seriously. In this case, we have a series of gerunds (*-ing* form of the verb used as a noun): riding, hiking, swimming.
23. **E.** Sara's got the right idea. Toasted marshmallow's are the best way to end a day of outdoor activity. *To find* and *to toast* are correct, and one usually toasts over a fire, so all the underlined words are correct as they are.
24. **C.** This one is tricky. Read it too quickly, and you might miss it. Because we Americans are lazy and often slur our speech, the verb would have is often shortened to would've. We make a contraction out of the two words. Although it is not an "official" contraction such as don't, we use it, hear it, and read it everywhere. The word of sounds like the 've sound. Of is a preposition, however, and has no business hanging out with the verb would.
25. **B.** Here's another one that might catch you napping. Although conscious and conscience if pronounced carefully, really don't sound alike, sometimes, when a speaker is in a hurry, they sound more similar than they should. Hopefully you were conscious of this and your conscience is not bothering you for having missed it.
26. **A.** Did you get caught by this one? Were you just sure it was the wrong principal or there was something wrong with the 's? If so, you need to wake up. The principal is your pal, even though the Student Council might disagree. Also the 's is the correct possessive. What is wrong, however, is that consistent, the adjective form of the word, should be consistently, an adverb modifying responding. How was he responding, "No?" Consistently.
27. **E.** Just when you were sure you would be facing another difficult sentence, this one is correct as it stands. *Well* is the correct adverb form: performed *how*? Performed well. Sometimes when you have a sentence with "No error," it can be as difficult as ones with errors. You spend all your time just positive that there has got to be something wrong somewhere. "No error" is just as valid a response as Choices **A** through **D**.
28. **A.** This is another adverb problem. Unfortunately, in some parts of our country, local speech uses adjectives and adverbs interchangeably. That is not acceptable on the SAT, however. How was the man dressed? He was *shabbily* dressed.
29. **C.** Both Sasha and Suzie cannot become one sculptor. They could, however, become two successful sculptors. Choice **C** should read *famous sculptors*.

Improving Paragraphs

30. **C.** Frequently, the last sentence of an introductory paragraph is central to an essay. It is a statement that indicates the central idea of the entire passage. Choice **C** presents the ideas in the clearest manner.

- 31. E.** Sentence 10 has to do with toys. It is actually expanded by sentence 8; therefore, it is best placed after sentence 7.
- 32. B.** The last sentence of this paragraph mentions clothing but says nothing more about it. Choice **B** gives us some very specific examples of what is mentioned in sentence 12.
- 33. E.** In many passages, the last paragraph is set up as the strongest. It might bring an argument to conclusion or reveal the climax of a narrative. In this case, the writer moves from generalizations about children's screen-cult figures influencing toys, décor, and clothing to a more serious statement. The last paragraph not only discusses the influence on food (and indirectly children's health), but then it closes with mention of the far reaching power of those who can control children. It makes sense, therefore, to open this paragraph with a sentence that begins, "Most importantly,".
- 34. D.** The key to this answer is in the wording of the question, "considering the concerned tone of this paragraph in particular." Concerned tone should have directed you immediately to Choice **D**. This is not a healthy trend. In light of recent reports about childhood obesity and the importance of good eating habits being established in childhood, this response makes the most sense.
- 35. C.** Whether or not you want to combine sentences 20 and 21, just pretend that you do. Which is the best, or the correct way of doing so? That is your challenge. Choice **A** falls flat; **B** is too dismissive; **D** is incorrect because "needs" should be "need;" and Choice **E** is just clunky. That makes Choice **C** the winner.

Multiple-Choice Questions, Set 2

Improving Sentences

- D.** Because of the meaning of this sentence as it is, two independent clauses just don't work. This requires a sequence of events. First the sales clerk arranges the eyeglass frames; then she explains. That makes Choice **D** the most logical response to show this chronology of events.
- B.** This one might have caught you dozing. On the surface it seems perfectly okay, but it isn't. To make the two clauses "match," that is, to make them parallel, we need to defer to Choice **B**. This option is a parallel to the first statement. Remember, the SAT is looking for the BEST writing skills, not just okay writing skills.
- D.** This question is also one of parallelism. We need to find something that will match "not for being entertaining." The only response that works is Choice **D**.
- A.** This question is a bit more difficult than some others because for most students, the jewelry markets in Florence are a total unknown. Whether you know something about the subject or not is *not* important. The only thing you have to worry about is whether or not the sentence is correct, and if it is not, then how can it best be fixed. In this case, all is okay, so Choice **A** is the correct answer.
- E.** The semi-colon after the word underneath, should have tickled your antennae. Semi-colons are rarely used except to separate two independent clauses. Therefore, Choice **E**, which is an independent clause, is the BEST response for this question.
- B.** Here we have another American idiom. You might *take on* an opponent in boxing, but you *take over* a place. In this case, the doctors *take over* the delivery room, Choice **B**.
- E.** Another case of parallelism—are you getting the picture? Parallel structure is important to these SAT folks. Here we have a series of adjectives that need aligning. Melted and seeped and crumbled must align with each other, making **E** the only acceptable response.
- C.** Notice that the word nature is followed by a comma. Always check to see what punctuation is within the underlining (therefore, it might be changed), or outside the underlining, indicating that we must work with what is there. In this case, then, Choice **C** works because of the coordinating conjunction "but". Remember, any coordinating conjunction—BOY FANS— (conjunction that combines two independent clauses) always requires a comma in front of it.
- D.** Here we have a situation of commas and the conjunction "that." Just remember: when you use the subordinate conjunction "which" you always need to insert a comma in front of it. If you replace "which" with "that," then no commas are required.
- A.** There is absolutely nothing wrong with this sentence in its original form. I hope you have agreed with me.
- E.** In this sentence we have another series problem. What the sentence is saying is what bones can do. Bones are grafted *to span* and *to fuse*.
- D.** Hopefully, this question was an easy one for you. Since the word violence, just before the underlined portion, is followed by a comma, then the best choice is to just make the second part of this sentence another independent clause joined by the coordinate conjunction *but*.
- C.** For this question you must remember the rules about between and among. *Among* means in the middle of more than two. *Between* means just two. In this case, Mary Shelley entered into a contest with her husband and another friend.
- D.** This question is forcing you to tax your brain with the its/it's dilemma. In this case, *it is (it's) natural for him to wonder*.

Rating Your Performance

Essay

Remember your essay will be read by two readers. So when you figure your **total points**, they will be out of 12, not just out of 6. It is best if you can have two different readers evaluate your writing, or at least you and another person for better accuracy. Evaluate your response using the Scoring Guide provided within the answers and explanations.

Essay subscore: _____

Multiple Choice, Set 1

Improving Sentences Questions 1–11 Number correct _____

Identifying Sentence Errors Questions 12–29 Number correct _____

Improving Paragraphs Questions 30–35 Number correct _____

Multiple Choice, Set 2

Improving Sentences Questions 1–14 Number correct _____

Subtotal _____ (A)

Wrong Answers (Do Not Count Unanswered Questions)

Section 2 Number wrong _____

Section 3 Number wrong _____

Subtotal _____ (B)

Subtract $\frac{1}{4}$ (.25) from B for each wrong answer _____ (C)

minus (C) = _____ (D)

Round (D) to the nearest whole number for your multiple-choice **Raw Score** _____**Essay subscore** _____

Conversion Table

This table will give you an approximation of what your score would be if this practice test had been an actual SAT Writing Test. The essay counts for about 30 percent of the final score; the multiple-choice questions count for about 70 percent.

For example: If your multiple-choice **raw score** was 35 and your **essay subscore** was 6, the table indicates that your final score on the test would fall between 500 and 710, or about 600 (out of 800).

Multiple-Choice Raw Score	Essay Subscore 0	Essay Subscore 2	Essay Subscore 4	Essay Subscore 6	Essay Subscore 8	Essay Subscore 10	Essay Subscore 12
40–49	520–690	530–720	550–740	580–770	620–800	650–800	680–800
30–39	430–630	450–660	470–680	500–710	530–740	560–770	590–800
20–29	360–540	370–570	390–590	420–620	460–650	490–690	520–710
10–19	270–460	280–490	300–510	330–540	370–480	400–610	430–630
0–9	200–380	200–410	210–430	240–450	270–490	300–520	330–560
–12– –1	200–280	200–310	200–330	200–350	240–390	270–420	300–450

Final Thoughts

By now you've practiced writing essays, and it seems as if you've practiced hundreds and hundreds of multiple-choice questions, and since you've gone through this book, you almost have. In addition, you've reviewed rules of grammar and usage, and you feel like the BOY FANS might even be your friend. You are ready.

But . . . you reply, "There's so much to remember and so many things resting on this exam." That is true. However, you are not alone. The day you take your test, millions of students across the nation will be sitting down to do the very same thing within the same time limitations that you have. Many of them, however, have not had your advantage of having prepared for the Writing Section the way you have.

Remember, the Writing Section of the test is actually made up of four things: the essay itself, identifying grammar and usage mistakes, revising sentences to sound better, and revising paragraphs to sound better. Even before you opened this book you had already done all of those things many times in your middle and high school career.

Also, the Writing Section is only one-third of the total exam; it's not the entire thing. The SAT is just one of many things that colleges look at during the acceptance process. What you have to do is chill out and relax.

Get a good night's sleep on Friday. Get up in time to have a decent breakfast. You'll need it: The test is now more than four hours long. Bring some juice or an energy bar with you for break time. You will probably be permitted to have capped water in the testing area. However, that can vary among the test sites. As to test site—if you are unfamiliar with the exact location of the site where you are to take the exam, be sure to drive there at least once before the day of the test. Late test takers are not permitted, and if you are late, you will have to wait for the next test date.

Bring a timepiece—preferably the same one you've been using to time yourself all along. Never count on a clock being available at the test site. Even if it is, it might not be working; you cannot easily set it to the time limits of the test sections like you can your own, or it might not be readily visible from where you are seated. Remember your registration confirmation that you got in the mail, a picture ID, calculator, extra batteries, and several sharpened #2 pencils. You are now appropriately armed—go forth and conquer.

So, when you hear the SAT test proctor say these words: "Good Morning and welcome," your mental response will be "*Bring it on; I'm ready!*"