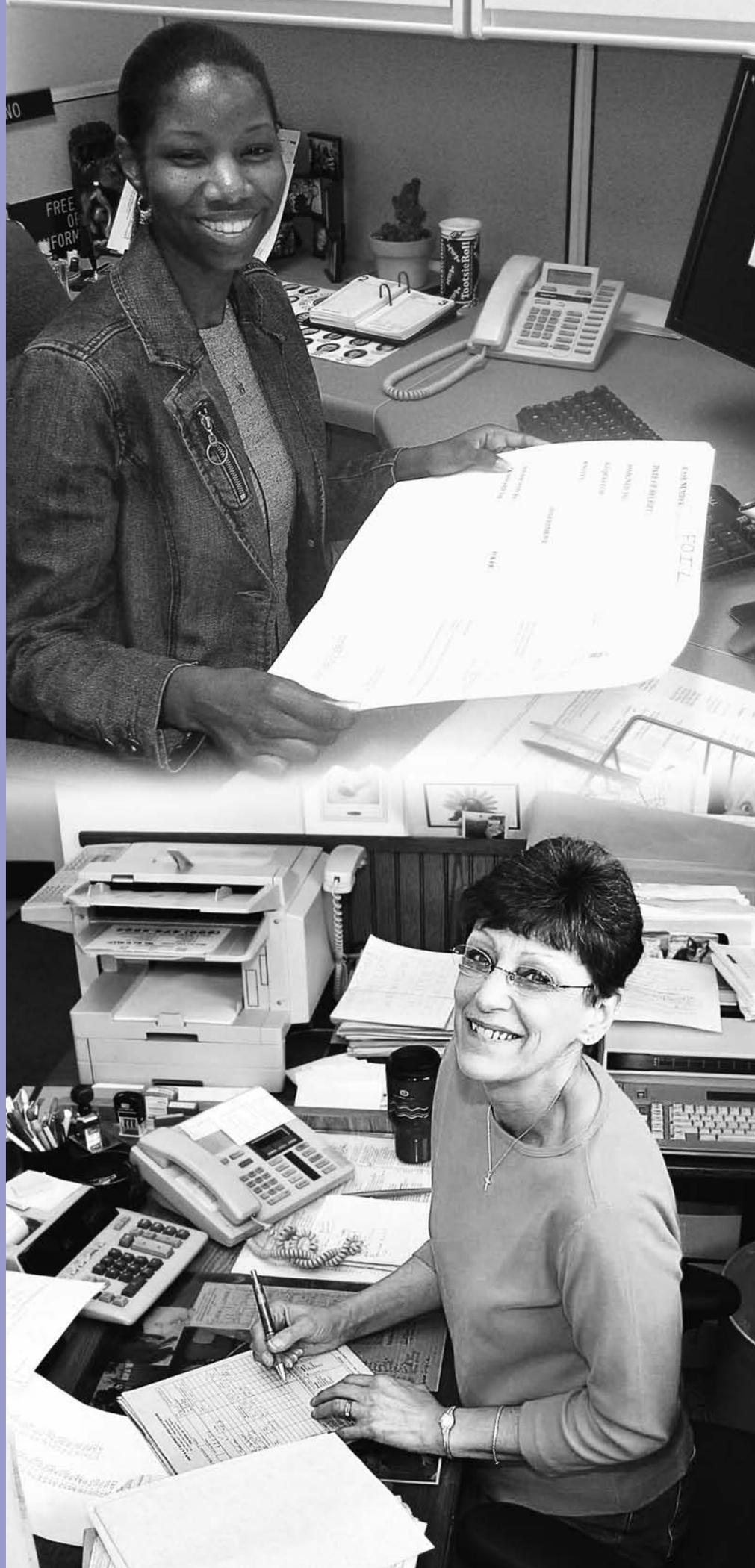


Secretary 1 and 2 Booklet 2

Examination Preparation Book



Civil Service Employees Association
Local 1000 AFSCME, AFL-CIO
Danny Donohue, President



Booklet SEC

Secretary 1 and 2

The CSEA Examination Preparation Booklet Series is designed to help members prepare for New York State and local government civil service examinations. This booklet is designed for practice purposes only and its content may not conform to that of any particular civil service examination.

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Introduction

Purpose

This booklet is designed to help you prepare for the Secretary 1 and Secretary 2 civil service tests. The booklet covers five topics that are normally included on these tests:

- Understanding and Interpreting Written Material
- Preparing Written Material
- Grammar, Usage, Punctuation, and Editing
- Office Record Keeping
- Office Practices

Each section contains practice questions about these topics. An answer key is provided on page 55, followed by explanations of the correct answers, beginning on page 56.

How to Use This Booklet

Complete a few questions at a time and then check your answers in the back of the booklet. The explanations in the back of the booklet tell you why the right answer was right and why the wrong answers were wrong. If you answer a question incorrectly, try to analyze why you chose the wrong answer.

Good luck!

Understanding and Interpreting Written Material

Questions in this section are intended to test your ability to understand and interpret various kinds of written material. You may be asked to determine the main idea of a passage, or you may have to choose which answer is best supported by a passage.

Here are some general tips about answering questions on this part of the test.

- **Don't be intimidated by technical subjects and language.** You will probably encounter some passages about topics that are completely foreign to you. For example, you might find passages about astronomy or meteorology or economics. These passages might contain technical vocabulary that you are not familiar with. Don't let these subjects or this unusual vocabulary throw you. The questions on this section of the test require no special knowledge of their subject. Read the question and the possible answers carefully and look for the relevant sentences in the reading passages. Focus on what the question is asking, not on technical terms that you don't understand.
- **Break down long sentences.** Sometimes sentences are so long that you have trouble understanding them. The best thing to do when this happens is to break the sentence down into its parts. Pay attention to the punctuation. It will help you see how the sentence is constructed.
- **Use only the information in the reading passage.** Sometimes you will come across a reading passage about a topic that you know well. It is easy in these situations to base your answer on your own knowledge. But you should resist this temptation. Use only the information presented in the reading passage.
- **Be careful of qualifying words.** Pay special attention to words such as *no, few, many, most, all, never, occasionally, usually, frequently, always, and except*. When they appear in a question, they can change the nature of the question. Also beware of these words in answers. Make sure the word used in an answer agrees with the word used in the passage. Does the passage say something happened *frequently* or *rarely*? Does the passage say that a certain thing is *usually true* or only *sometimes true*? Be especially careful of words like *all, none, always, and never*. They may make the statement too strong to be true.
- **When you don't know the answer to a question that asks for a specific detail, don't re-read the entire passage.** Skim it to find the relevant sentence. As you skim, look for key words that relate to the question.
- **Try reading the questions first.** If you are having trouble getting into a passage, you might try skipping to the question and see what you will need to know to answer it. This approach also works well with especially long passages. If you know what you are looking for before you read the passage, you can disregard the irrelevant information and focus on what you need to know.

- **Focus on the meat of the passage.** Some passages contain lots of details that are included mainly to distract you. If you are having trouble comprehending a passage, ask yourself this: what is important about what the writer is saying? What is the main point the writer is trying to make?
- **Watch out for math errors.** Although this part of the test is about reading comprehension, not math, there may be some questions that require simple computations. As in other sections, the people who write the test know what kinds of errors test takers are likely to make, and some of the possible answers are based on these errors.

For each of the following questions, select the letter that represents the best of the four possible answers.

1. The State of New York holds billions of dollars in unclaimed funds. Some of this money might be yours. Have you ever moved without giving your bank your new address? Have you ever left a job without picking up your last paycheck? Have you ever moved without getting a refund on your utility deposit? These are just some of the situations in which your money might eventually be turned over to the State. Unclaimed funds are held in trust by the Office of the State Comptroller. There is no time limit for claiming them, and there is no fee for this service. To recover your funds, you must be able to prove that you are entitled to them. At a minimum, you must be able to prove that you once lived at the address associated with the unclaimed funds.

According to the passage, which of the following statements is true?

- a. After a certain length of time, unclaimed funds become the property of the State.
 - b. To recover unclaimed funds, you must be able to prove that you once lived at the address associated with them.
 - c. If you do not attempt to recover unclaimed funds within a certain number of years, the money becomes the property of the State.
 - d. You will not receive any interest that might accumulate on unclaimed funds.
2. Financing for political campaigns has become a hotly debated issue at both the state and federal levels. One side in the debate says that money plays too large a role in politics. Politicians have to spend too much of their time raising money for their campaigns, and large donors gain undue influence through their contributions. Imposing limits on contributions would begin to address these problems. The other side in the debate believes that any limits on contributions would abridge the right of free speech. Donors to political campaigns are in effect making a political statement with their contributions, and the government has no authority to limit political discourse. This issue is so complex — and so important — that it will probably not be resolved any time soon.

Which of the following statements is the best expression of the author's views on campaign financing?

- a. Money plays too large a role in politics.
- b. Limiting contributions to political campaigns would interfere with the right of free speech.
- c. Financing for political campaigns is a complex issue.
- d. Large donors gain undue influence over politicians through their contributions.

3. A patient can choose one of three plans for Medicare supplemental insurance. Plan A has a premium of \$34 per month and requires a \$10 co-payment for doctor's office visits. Annual physicals are covered at 100%, as are lab tests ordered by one of the Plan's physicians. The Plan provides worldwide coverage for emergency care. Plan B has a premium of \$32 a month. The co-payment for doctor's office visits is \$8. Lab tests ordered by a Plan physician are also subject to the \$8 co-payment. Annual physicals are covered at 100% after the \$8 co-payment. The Plan provides worldwide coverage for emergency care after a \$50 fee for use of a hospital emergency room. Plan C has a premium of \$35 per month with a \$10 co-payment for doctor's office visits. Annual physicals are covered at 100%. Lab tests ordered by a Plan physician are also covered at 100%. The Plan provides worldwide coverage for emergency care if a patient is later admitted to the hospital. If a patient is not admitted, the Plan does not cover emergency care.

In 2007, a patient had an annual physical, made two other visits to the doctor's office, and had three lab tests ordered by a Plan physician. Under which Plan would the patient pay the most for medical care during that year?

- a. Plan A
 - b. Plan B
 - c. Plan C
 - d. It is not possible to tell from the information given.
4. Vitamins are organic compounds required by the body in small amounts for metabolism, to protect health, and for proper growth in children. Vitamins also assist in the formation of hormones, blood cells, nervous-system chemicals, and genetic material. Vitamins act as catalysts, combining with proteins to create enzymes that in turn produce hundreds of important chemical reactions throughout the body. Without vitamins, many of these reactions would slow down or cease. Nutrition experts recognize 13 specific vitamins, all of which fall into two broad categories: fat-soluble or water-soluble. The fat-soluble vitamins, including A, D, E, and K, are stored in the body's fat, and therefore they do not have to be consumed every day. The water-soluble vitamins, including the eight B vitamins and vitamin C, cannot be stored and must be consumed frequently, preferably every day. The body can manufacture only vitamin D; all others must be derived from the diet.

Which of the following statements is best supported by the above passage?

- a. Fat-soluble vitamins are more important in preserving health than water-soluble vitamins.
- b. The 13 commonly recognized vitamins should be consumed in some form every day.
- c. Some vitamins can be consumed only from meat and fish.
- d. Water-soluble vitamins are not stored in the body and should be consumed frequently.

5. Vegetarians have a variety of reasons for their beliefs. Some refuse to eat meat because they believe that the killing of animals is unnecessary or barbaric. They feel that processes such as butchering are degrading to the people who practice them and cruel to the animals slaughtered. Others believe that meat is harmful to the human body and that a purely vegetable diet is more nutritious. Still others choose vegetarianism because they believe that raising animals for meat is an inefficient use of land. They say that farmland could be put to better use growing crops for human consumption.

Which of the following statements is best supported by the above passage?

- a. Some vegetarians choose not to eat meat mainly for health reasons.
 - b. A purely vegetable diet is more nutritious than a diet that includes meat.
 - c. Vegetarians are opposed to any use of animals for the benefit of humans.
 - d. Vegetarians favor laws to reduce the consumption of meat.
6. The amount of your retirement benefits from Social Security depends, in part, on when you retire. The earliest that you can begin to receive benefits is age 62. The longer you wait to begin receiving benefits (up to age 70), the higher your benefits will be.

If you were born between 1938 and 1960, you cannot receive “full retirement” benefits until age 66. If you were born in 1960 or later, your full retirement age will be 67. If you wait to receive benefits past your full retirement age, the amount you receive will continue to increase until you reach age 70. There is no advantage to waiting past age 70 to begin receiving benefits.

You can continue to work while you receive retirement benefits. If you do, the amount of your benefits will be reduced by one dollar for every two dollars you earn above a certain limit, until you reach your full retirement age. Once you reach your full retirement age, this limit no longer applies. The amount you earn will have no effect on your benefits.

According to this passage, which of the following statements is true?

- a. You cannot receive retirement benefits from Social Security while you are still working.
- b. If you were born in 1950, your full retirement age is 66.
- c. If you continue to work past your full retirement age, your benefits will be reduced by one dollar for every two dollars you earn.
- d. There is no advantage to waiting past your full retirement age to begin receiving benefits.

7. The Nobel Prize for Literature has been awarded to over 100 writers since 1901. Only two recipients, Boris Pasternak and Jean-Paul Sartre, have declined the prize. Pasternak, who is best known for his novel *Doctor Zhivago*, said that he was “immensely thankful” and “touched” by the award, even though he could not accept it. Some historians believe he declined the prize because he feared that if he traveled to Sweden to accept it he would not be allowed to return to his home in the Soviet Union. Others believe that the Soviet government forced him to decline the prize.

Sartre, who is best known for his writings on existentialism, had very different reasons for declining the prize. He wrote, “It is not the same thing if I sign Jean-Paul Sartre or if I sign Jean-Paul Sartre, Nobel Prize winner. A writer must refuse to allow himself to be transformed into an institution, even if it takes place in the most honorable form.”

Which of the following statements is the most reasonable assumption to make based on the information presented in the passage?

- a. Both Pasternak and Sartre had little regard for literary prizes.
 - b. The Nobel Prize for Literature has been awarded every year since 1901.
 - c. Sartre had a low opinion of Pasternak’s work.
 - d. Pasternak was more reluctant than Sartre to decline the Nobel Prize.
8. What is emotional intelligence? In the words of Daniel Goleman, who has written several books on the subject, emotional intelligence is “the capacity for recognizing our own feelings and those of others, for motivating ourselves, and for managing emotions well in ourselves and in our relationships.”

Emotional intelligence is different from what might be called academic intelligence, the type of intelligence that enables some people to get good grades in school and score well on standardized tests. More and more people are realizing that it takes more than just this type of intelligence to succeed in the workplace.

We all know “intelligent” people who have not been successful at work because they lack basic personal or social skills. Maybe they have trouble talking to other people. Maybe they become angry or discouraged too easily. Maybe they have a hard time getting along with their coworkers. Maybe they come across as unfriendly or snobbish or grouchy. These people lack emotional intelligence.

Which of the following statements is best supported by this passage?

- a. People who do well on standardized tests are usually not successful in their careers.
- b. Emotional intelligence may be more important than other types of intelligence in determining success in the workplace.
- c. Intelligence, as most people understand it, has little effect on personal success.
- d. Most people who are considered intelligent lack social skills.

9. The average air temperature near the earth's surface rose by a little over 1°F in the last century. Based on estimates by NASA, 2005 was the warmest year since reliable measurements became available in the late 1800s. Scientists have suggested several possible explanations for this phenomenon, but there is broad agreement that most of the increase is due to "greenhouse gases" generated by human activity. These gases trap infrared radiation near the earth's surface. Other possible explanations for global warming include variations in solar radiation and natural fluctuations in climate. There is still considerable uncertainty about the exact degree of climate change and how changes will vary from region to region around the globe. But there is an almost universal consensus that average temperatures will continue to rise throughout the predictable future.

Which of the following is the best statement of the main idea of this passage?

- a. The average air temperature near the earth's surface rose by a little over 1°F in the last century.
 - b. There is still considerable uncertainty about the exact degree of climate change and how changes will vary from region to region around the globe.
 - c. Average temperatures on earth are rising, and there is broad agreement that the increase is due to greenhouse gases generated by human activity.
 - d. Global warming can be controlled by restricting the emission of greenhouse gases.
10. The modern Olympics were conceived in the spirit of international friendship and cooperation, but conflicts between nations have sometimes interfered with this noble intention. In the 1936 Berlin Olympics, Adolf Hitler refused to recognize the achievements of Jesse Owens, a black American who won four gold medals. At the 1972 games, held in Munich, an Arab guerilla organization killed two Israeli athletes and took nine others hostage. Two additional athletes and five of the guerillas were later killed in a gun battle with police. Conflict arose again at the 1976 games, held in Montreal. The host Canadian government refused to allow the team from Taiwan to carry its flag or have its national anthem played at the games. The Taiwanese withdrew from the games. The same year, several African nations demanded that New Zealand be excluded from the Olympics because one of its rugby teams had recently played in South Africa. When their demand was refused, the African nations withdrew from the games.

Which of the following statements is best supported by the above passage?

- a. An Arab guerilla organization carried out an attack on the Israeli team at the 1972 Olympics.
- b. In the 1976 Olympics, the host country, Canada, banned Taiwan from the games.
- c. The New Zealand team was banned from the 1976 games because a rugby team from New Zealand had recently played in South Africa.
- d. Adolf Hitler was the first national leader to inject nationalism into the Olympics.

Preparing Written Material

There are usually two types of questions in this part of the test:

- Paragraph organization
- Information presentation

Paragraph Organization

These questions all follow the same general pattern. You are given five sentences and asked to arrange them in the correct order. There are several strategies you can use to answer these questions.

Strategy 1:

- 1. Look for what is logically the first sentence.** Read each sentence and ask yourself if it would make sense for it to be the first sentence in the sequence. Once you have identified the first sentence, you can eliminate the possible answers that begin with a different sentence.
- 2. Look for a sentence that should obviously come immediately after another sentence.** This may help you eliminate other possible answers.
- 3. Study the sentences that remain and see where they might fit in with the sentences you have been working with.** In steps 1 and 2, you have identified the first sentence of the passage and the logical order of two other sentences. Now look at the remaining sentences and see how they might fit in with these three.

When you are trying to see if one sentence logically follows another, look for *transition* expressions that might point back to the previous sentence. Transitions are words or phrases such as “on the other hand,” “these,” or “however.” Transitions signal the relationship of one sentence to another.

Strategy 2:

Begin by eliminating wrong answers. For example, some answers will begin with a sentence that is obviously not the first sentence. Then try out the remaining answers to see which one makes most sense.

Strategy 3:

Try to arrange the sentences in order yourself, without looking at the answers. Then see if your arrangement matches one of the possible answers given.

The following groups of sentences need to be arranged in a logical manner. Select the letter preceding the sequence that represents the best sentence order.

1.
 1. He described this period in his life in his memoir *A Moveable Feast*.
 2. Hemingway led a turbulent social life.
 3. He was married four times and allegedly had many romantic relationships.
 4. Nicknamed “Papa,” he was part of the 1920s expatriate community in Paris known as “the Lost Generation.”
 5. Ernest Miller Hemingway was an American novelist, short-story writer, and journalist.
 - a. 2-3-5-4-1
 - b. 5-2-4-1-3
 - c. 5-4-1-2-3
 - d. 5-2-3-1-4

2.
 1. It can be practiced for general fitness or as a full-contact sport.
 2. The fight does not continue unless both opponents are on their feet.
 3. There are different rules for different kinds of kick-boxing.
 4. Kickboxing refers to sport-fighting using kicks and punches and sometimes throws and bows.
 5. In many competitions, kickboxing is a standing fight sport.
 - a. 3-5-2-4-1
 - b. 4-1-3-5-2
 - c. 5-2-4-3-1
 - d. 4-1-5-3-2

3.
 1. It is propelled by a double-bladed paddle by a sitting paddler.
 2. A kayak is a small human-powered boat.
 3. The kayak was first used by the native Ainu, Aleut and Eskimo hunters in sub-Arctic regions of northeastern Asia, North America and Greenland.
 4. Modern kayaks come in a wide variety of designs and materials for specialized purposes.
 5. It typically has a covered deck and a cockpit covered by a spraydeck.
 - a. 3-2-1-4-5
 - b. 3-2-4-5-1
 - c. 4-2-1-5-3
 - d. 2-5-1-3-4

4.
 1. For these reasons, dictionaries try to reflect the way people actually write and speak, and they must be updated frequently to account for changes in the way people use language.
 2. Many words that were once considered slang have become accepted as standard English.
 3. Science and technology have also given us many new words, such as “laser” and “quark.”
 4. For example, the word “mob” was once considered a vulgar “street word,” but now it is accepted as part of standard English vocabulary.
 5. Our language is constantly changing.
 - a. 1-3-4-2-5
 - b. 2-3-4-1-5
 - c. 2-4-3-1-5
 - d. 5-2-4-3-1

5.
 1. Others think that the Second Amendment refers strictly to the right of citizens to bear arms in their common defense as part of an organized militia.
 2. No one expects the issue to be resolved soon.
 3. Some people consider any attempt to regulate firearms a violation of this right.
 4. The Second Amendment to the Constitution concerns the right of the people to keep and bear arms.
 5. This disagreement has been at the heart of the national debate over gun control for many years.
 - a. 4-3-5-1-2
 - b. 4-3-1-5-2
 - c. 3-1-5-2-4
 - d. 4-5-3-1-2

Information Presentation

In this section you are given several sentences about a particular topic, and then you are given four ways of saying the same thing in different words. You have to choose the best restatement of the original sentences.

These questions are meant to test your ability to recognize correct grammar, accurate paraphrasing, well-constructed paragraphs, and clear, concise writing. It's important that the answer you select contains only the facts or concepts given in the original sentences. It's also important that you be aware of grammatical errors, inappropriate transitions, unsupported opinions, incorrect usage, wordiness, and illogical sentence order. Paragraphs that don't include all the necessary facts and concepts, that distort them, or that add new ones are not considered correct.

The correct answer is an accurate, complete, well-written restatement of the original.

For questions 6 through 10, select the paragraph that best expresses the information contained in the sentences above it.

- 6.
1. Junk e-mail, commonly called “spam,” is almost as old as the Internet itself.
 2. In 1978, a marketing executive for a computer firm wanted a fast and efficient way to tell people about a new product his company was about to introduce.
 3. He decided to send an e-mail message to a large group of users on what was called the Arpanet, a network of government and university computers.
 4. Many people who received the message were outraged that their network was being used for commercial purposes.
 5. They had no idea that they were witnessing the birth of a new era in marketing.
- a. The first junk e-mail message was sent in 1978 by a marketing executive for a computer firm. He used what was then called the Arpanet to send an e-mail message about a new product his company was about to introduce. Many people who received the message were outraged. Without realizing it, they were witnessing the birth of a new era in marketing.
 - b. In 1978, a marketing executive for a computer firm sent the first junk e-mail, what we now call “spam.” His company was about to introduce a new product, and he wanted a fast and efficient way to tell people about it. He decided to send a message to a large group of users on the “Arpanet,” a network of government and university computers. Many people who received the message were angry that their network was being used for commercial purposes. They didn’t realize that they were witnessing the birth of a new era in marketing.
 - c. The first junk e-mail, what we now call “spam,” was sent by a marketing executive of a computer firm. He wanted to tell a large number of people about a new product. He sent an e-mail message to users of the Arpanet, an early version of the Internet. He didn’t realize that the reaction to his message would be so negative. He also didn’t realize that he was launching a new era in marketing.
 - d. “Spam” began in 1978 when a marketing executive sent the first e-mail message promoting a product. The message went to a large number of users of an early network of government and university computers. He didn’t realize that he was launching a new era in marketing. Many people were outraged by the message.

7.
 1. The psychologist Daniel Goleman has written several books on what he calls “emotional intelligence.”
 2. He uses this term to describe the ability to understand our own feelings and those of others, and to manage emotions well in ourselves and in our relationships.
 3. Emotional intelligence is different from what might be called academic intelligence, the type of intelligence that enables some people to get good grades in school and score well on standardized tests.
 4. More and more people are realizing that it takes more than just this type of intelligence to succeed in the workplace.
 - a. Daniel Goleman defines “emotional intelligence” as the ability to understand and manage our own emotions and the emotions of others. In terms of success in the workplace, emotional intelligence is more important than academic intelligence, the ability to get good grades in school and on standardized tests. More and more people are coming to realize this.
 - b. Emotional intelligence is the ability to understand emotions, both in ourselves as well as others. It is different from the kind of intelligence that enables some people to get good grades and score well on tests. More and more people are realizing the importance of emotional intelligence.
 - c. What is emotional intelligence? The psychologist Daniel Goleman, who has written several books on the subject, uses the term to describe the ability to understand our own feelings and those of others, and to manage emotions well in ourselves and in our relationships. This ability is different from academic intelligence, the ability to do well in school and on standardized tests. More and more people are coming to believe that it takes more than academic intelligence to succeed in the workplace.
 - d. The psychologist Daniel Goleman uses the term “emotional intelligence” to describe the ability to understand our own feelings and those of others. He believes that emotional intelligence is more important than what might be called “academic intelligence,” the ability to do well on tests and in school. More and more people are coming around to Goleman’s views on this subject.

8.
 1. Asthma afflicts about 20 million Americans, including 6.3 million children.
 2. Since 1980, the biggest growth in asthma cases has been in children under five.
 3. In 2000 there were nearly 2 million emergency room visits and nearly half a million hospitalizations due to asthma, at a cost of almost \$2 billion.
 4. Asthma also is responsible for 14 million school days missed each year.
- a. Asthma affects almost 20 million Americans. In 2000, asthma led to nearly 2 million emergency room visits and nearly half a million hospitalizations. The cost of this treatment was almost \$2 billion. Since 1980, the biggest growth in asthma cases has been in children under five. There are 6.3 million children affected by the disease, and asthma is responsible for 14 million school days missed each year.
- b. Asthma affects almost 20 million Americans. It also affects 6.3 million children. It causes 14 million school days missed each year. Asthma also causes nearly 2 million emergency room visits and nearly half a million hospitalizations, which cost nearly \$2 billion.
- c. Asthma is becoming an increasingly common disease among the American public. Almost 20 million Americans, including 6.3 million children, suffer from it. Asthma is responsible for nearly 2 million emergency room visits a year and nearly half a million hospitalizations, at a cost of almost \$2 billion. Asthma is also responsible for 14 million school days missed each year.
- d. Since 1980, the biggest growth in asthma cases has been in children under five. Asthma affects almost 20 million Americans. In 2000, asthma led to nearly 2 million emergency room visits and nearly half a million hospitalizations. Asthma is also responsible for 14 million school days missed each year.

9.
 1. Frederick Douglass was one of the most eloquent spokesmen for the abolition of slavery.
 2. For 17 years, he edited the North Star, a newspaper advocating abolition through political activism.
 3. During the Civil War, he urged African Americans to join the Union army to fight for their freedom.

- a. For 17 years, Frederick Douglass edited a newspaper called the North Star. He urged African Americans in the Union army during the Civil War to fight for freedom. He was an eloquent spokesman for abolition.
- b. Frederick Douglass, one of the most eloquent spokesmen for the abolition of slavery, edited a newspaper called the North Star. He used the newspaper, which he edited for 17 years, to advocate abolition through political activism. During the Civil War, he urged African Americans to join the Union army to fight for their freedom.
- c. For 17 years before the Civil War, Frederick Douglass advocated abolition of slavery in his newspaper the North Star. During the Civil War, he urged African Americans to join the army to fight for their freedom.
- d. Frederick Douglass was one of the most eloquent spokesmen for the abolition of slavery. During the Civil War, he joined the Union army to fight for the cause of freedom. For 17 years, he edited a newspaper called the North Star, which advocated abolition.

10.
 1. The Periodic Table of the Elements is a listing of the chemical symbols of 109 elements.
 2. The elements are arranged in order of increasing atomic number from left to right and from top to bottom.
 3. The horizontal rows of elements are called periods; the vertical columns are called groups.
- a. The Periodic Table of the Elements lists the chemical symbols of 109 elements. The horizontal rows on the table are called periods, and the vertical columns are called groups. The elements are arranged in order of increasing atomic number, from left to right and from top to bottom.
 - b. The Periodic Table of the Elements lists the chemical symbols of elements in horizontal rows (periods) and vertical columns (groups). The elements are arranged on the table in order of increasing atomic number.
 - c. The Periodic Table of the Elements lists the chemical symbols of 109 elements. The elements are arranged in order from left to right and from top to bottom. The horizontal rows are called periods, the vertical columns are called groups.
 - d. In the Periodic Table of the Elements, 109 elements are arranged in order of increasing atomic number, from left to right and from top to bottom. The horizontal rows of elements are called groups, and the vertical columns are called periods.

Grammar, Usage, Punctuation, and Editing

Questions in this section test your knowledge of commonly accepted conventions of grammar, usage, and punctuation. Some questions test your ability to edit sentences to make them clear, concise, and correct.

Grammar

Parts of speech

Nouns are the names of persons, places, things, or ideas. Examples: *Fred, school, basket, peace.*

Verbs are action words and the various forms of the word “be” (*is, are, was, were, am*). Examples: *jump, think, skate.*

Pronouns are words that take the place of nouns. Examples: *he, she, we, you, they.*

Adjectives modify nouns or pronouns. Examples: *careful, sweet, happy.*

Adverbs modify verbs, adjectives, or other adverbs. Most adverbs end in *-ly*. Examples: *carefully, sweetly, happily.* There are also a number of adverbs that do not end in *-ly*. Examples include *well, very, too, rather, so, quite, more, most, less, least, almost, often,* and *seldom.*

Prepositions show possession or direction or location. Examples: *to, from, under, of.*

Conjunctions join parts of a sentence. Examples: *and, but, or.*

Parts of a sentence

The **subject** is what the sentence is about. The subject is a noun or a pronoun. It usually appears before the verb. You find the subject of a sentence by putting the questions “who?” or “what?” before the verb. Example: *Gwen* hit the ball. *Gwen* is the subject of this sentence.

The **predicate** is the verb and all the words related to it. Example: Elvis *has left* the building. The predicate is *has left*.

The **direct object** is a noun or pronoun that usually follows the verb and receives the action of the verb. Example: Gwen hit the *ball*. The direct object is *ball*.

A **prepositional phrase** is a preposition followed by a noun or pronoun and all the words that refer to the noun or pronoun. The noun or pronoun is called the object of the preposition. Example: She put the apples *in a large basket*. The prepositional phrase is *in a large basket*.

A **modifier** is a descriptive word or phrase. Modifiers give the words they describe more specific meaning, clarity, or detail. Examples: *As a new employee*, you will face *many difficult* challenges. *As a new employee* is a modifier. It modifies “you.” The words *many* and *difficult* are also modifiers. They modify “challenges.”

Basic principles of grammar

Recognize the subject and the verb in a sentence

In order to avoid two of the most common grammatical mistakes, you need to be able to identify the subject and the verb in a sentence.

The verb can be either an action word (*jump, think, flow*) or a word that shows a state of being (*is, are, was, were*).

To find the subject in a sentence, place the words *who?* or *what?* before the verb.

Example: The bank accepted my application for a loan.

In this sentence, you ask *who or what accepted?* The *bank* accepted, so *bank* is the subject of the sentence.

Make subject and verb agree in number

If the subject of a sentence is singular, you need to use the singular form of the verb. If the subject is plural, you need to use the plural form of the verb.

Example: One of the computers was (*not were*) damaged in shipping.

The correct choice is *was* because the subject of the sentence (*one*) is singular.

Use the correct form of pronouns

Some pronouns are used only as subjects in a sentence and some are used only as objects.

Subjects	Objects
I, we	me, us
he, she, they	him, her, them
who	whom

Examples:

Can you or he (*not him*) fly a plane?

Please give Carol and me (*not I*) a copy of the report.

Keep ideas parallel

Whenever you create a list or make a comparison, try to use the same grammatical form for each item in the list or the comparison.

From reading romance novels, I learned that there is nothing more important than being rich, looking good, and to have a good time.

To make the list in this sentence parallel, change it to:

From reading romance novels, I learned that there is nothing more important than being rich, looking good, and having a good time.

Make nouns and pronouns agree in number

A pronoun always refers back to a noun, called the antecedent. Pronouns should agree in number with their antecedents. Consider this sentence:

Each woman chose (her, their) own partner for the debate.

In this sentence, the correct choice is *her* because the pronoun refers to the singular noun *woman*.

Be sure that pronouns have clear antecedents

Pronouns should have clear antecedents. There should be no doubt about the nouns they refer to. Consider this sentence:

Mike told Paul that he would have to make some major changes in his proposal.

It is unclear whether the pronouns *he* and *his* in this sentence refer to Mike or Paul. You could clear up this confusion by saying:

Mike said to Paul, "You will have to make some major changes in your proposal."

Be consistent with tenses

It is a fairly common problem for writers to mix past and present tense by mistake:

We first **prepared** the samples by soaking them in distilled water. Then we **weighed** them on a laboratory scale. The samples **are** then **inserted** in the oven and heated for 45 minutes.

The verbs in the first two sentences are in past tense, but the verb in the third sentence is in present tense. You could use either present or past tense in this paragraph, but you should stick with whichever one you choose.

Correct misplaced modifiers

Modifiers are descriptive words or phrases. Modifiers should refer to what they are closest to in a sentence. Modifiers are misplaced when they are arranged awkwardly in a sentence. For example:

Clams were served to the diners seasoned with garlic.

Sentences such as this should be rewritten.

Clams seasoned with garlic were served to the diners.

Use adjectives and adverbs appropriately

Adjectives modify (describe) nouns and pronouns. Adverbs modify verbs, adjectives, and other adverbs. Most adverbs end in *-ly*, but several, such as *well*, *soon* and *seldom*, do not. Examples:

He was a *careful* driver. (adjective)

He drove *carefully*. (adverb)

Questions 1 through 8. For each of the following groups of sentences, select the sentence that represents the best example of English grammar.

1.
 - a. Carmen and me are planning to take vacation next week.
 - b. Lisa told Marie she would have to leave early.
 - c. When only five years old, Jim's uncle taught him Spanish.
 - d. Send a copy of your memo to Jane and me.

2.
 - a. I drove for almost five hours steady.
 - b. The reaction to our recommendations was more positive than we expected.
 - c. The work that Carlos and me have done on this project has been difficult.
 - d. Three sections of the report needs to be revised.

3.
 - a. Leaving the building, the alarm went off.
 - b. Lisa is known for her diligence, hard work, and she sticks with a job until it is finished.
 - c. Each applicant must submit a copy of their birth certificate.
 - d. One of the documents was destroyed in the fire.

4.
 - a. When the inspector arrived, we tell her that the work has already been completed.
 - b. I asked the mechanic to change the oil, check the brakes, and how did the tires look.
 - c. She tried to keep it a secret from Carol and me.
 - d. If Martin or her can't complete the project on time, we will have to ask someone else.

5.
 - a. Driving to work, the traffic report warned him of an accident on the expressway.
 - b. Hector has performed well this season.
 - c. Since finishing her degree, several businesses have offered Camille a job.
 - d. Management is creating unsafe conditions for we tenants.

6.
 - a. If anyone has information about the missing records, they should contact the security office immediately.
 - b. Who suggested this change in our procedures?
 - c. Before adjourning for the day, several questions were submitted by the jurors.
 - d. Hard work and perseverance is the secret of her success.

7.
 - a. His explanation was confusing to Sam and I.
 - b. The money from all the restaurants, stores, and other businesses in the neighborhood are deposited in that bank.
 - c. Whom did she meet at the conference?
 - d. While flying to Montreal, her passport was lost in the terminal.

8.
 - a. The mugger was described as a tall man with a heavy mustache weighing approximately 180 pounds.
 - b. She gave Patricia and I some additional time to complete the project.
 - c. One of the books that he ordered was damaged in shipping.
 - d. While talking on a cell phone, the car Gina was driving skidded off the road.

Questions 9 through 12. In these sentences, there may be a problem with English grammar. If there is a problem, select the letter that indicates how the sentence should be changed. If there is no problem, select choice a.

9. Only one of the eight stores offer a large selection of organic foods.
 - a. no changes are necessary
 - b. change *eight* to 8
 - c. delete the word *Only*
 - d. change *offer* to *offers*

10. The director offered Sylvie and I new office furniture, but we told her we were happy with what we had.
- no changes are necessary
 - insert the word *to* before *Sylvie*
 - change *Sylvie and I* to *I and Sylvie*
 - change *I* to *me*
11. While preparing her report, several coworkers gave Diana new statistics.
- no changes are necessary
 - change *several coworkers gave Diana new statistics* to *Diana received new statistics from several coworkers*
 - insert the word *some* before *new statistics*
 - change *gave Diana new statistics* to *gave new statistics to Diana*
12. Patricia and me like the clothes at that store, but the prices are very expensive.
- no changes are necessary
 - change *me* to *I*
 - change *that* to *the*
 - change *but* to *and*

Usage

Questions in this section test your ability to distinguish between words that sound alike (or almost alike) but are spelled differently and have different meanings. Read the following list of problem words before trying the practice questions. Read this list again shortly before the exam.

accept, except. *Accept* means to receive. *Except* means “but.”

He *accepted* her resignation.

Everyone *except* Martin was invited.

adapt, adopt. To *adapt* is to modify something for a new purpose. To *adopt* is to take something over as it is. A new manager who *adopted* her predecessor’s policy would take it over without change. If she *adapted* her predecessor’s policy, she would use it with modifications.

advice, advise. *Advice* is a noun. *Advise* is a verb. When people *advise* you, they give you *advice*.

affect, effect. *Affect* means to influence. Your religious beliefs may *affect* your political opinions. *Effect* as a noun means a result or consequence. Doctors worry about the *effects* of smoking on health. As a verb, *effect* means to create or to bring about. The new tax law may *effect* radical changes in the way people use their credit cards.

all ready, already. *All ready* means everything or everyone is ready. *Already* means previously.

The trainees are *all ready* for their first assignment.

They have *already* completed their first assignment.

allusion, illusion. An *allusion* is an indirect reference. In his speech he made an *allusion* to his opponent’s record. An *illusion* is an unreal or false impression. The film director created an *illusion* of choppy seas.

appraise, apprise. *Appraise* means to estimate the value of. *Apprise* means to notify.

He *appraised* the damage at five million dollars.

The lieutenant *apprised* the officers of the new regulations.

averse, adverse. *Averse* means opposed. *Adverse* means unfavorable.

Many people are *averse* to gun control legislation.

The boat left the harbor in extremely adverse weather.

between, among. Use *between* when referring to two items. Use *among* when referring to more than two.

He had to choose *between* two unsatisfactory alternatives.

Carol has a reputation *among* her peers as an exceptionally hard worker.

break, brake. *Break* means to shatter or destroy. *Brake* means to stop or slow a vehicle. A *brake* is the device that stops or slows a vehicle.

capital, capitol. *Capitol* refers only to the building in which a legislative body meets. *Capital* is the correct word in all other cases. Albany is the *capital* of New York State. In some states murder is a *capital* offense. To start a business, you need to raise *capital*.

censer, censor. A *censer* is a vessel in which incense is burned. A *censor* is a person who has the authority to restrict the publication of dangerous or objectionable material.

cite, sight, site. *Cite* means to refer to or to recognize, to mention in an official document, or to summon. *Sight* means something that is seen. A *site* is a location.

The officer *cited* Section 32.3 of the Motor Vehicle Code to support the arrest.

The accident was a depressing *sight*.

The business has been located at that *site* for 54 years.

complement, compliment. A *complement* completes something or makes a fitting addition to something. Her scarf *complements* her hair. A *compliment* is a bit of flattery.

comprehensible, comprehensive. *Comprehensible* means understandable. *Comprehensive* means including many things.

comprise, compose. *Comprise* means to contain or include. The parent corporation *comprises* three major divisions. *Compose* means to make up. Three major divisions *compose* the parent corporation. The parent corporation is *composed* of three major divisions.

conscience, conscious. *Conscience* means a sense of what is right and wrong. *Conscious* means aware.

Some criminals seem to have no *conscience*.

I am *conscious* of your efforts to improve morale.

council, counsel. A *council* is a group or a committee. A *counsel* is an attorney. *Counsel* also means advice; as a verb, to *counsel* means to give advice. When a *counsel* *counsels* you, she is giving you *counsel*.

descent, decent. *Descent* means a downward path or a line of ancestry. Decent means moral or humane.

Their *descent* from the mountain was treacherous.

He is of Irish *descent*.

She is a *decent* human being.

discreet, discrete. *Discreet* means tactful or judicious, careful about what you say and do. *Discrete* means separate and distinct.

disinterested, uninterested. *Disinterested* means impartial. *Uninterested* means indifferent, not interested.

elicit, illicit. *Elicit* means to draw out. *Illicit* means illegal.

His statement *elicited* boos from the audience.

Traffic in *illicit* drugs has declined in the past five years.

ensure, insure, assure. *Ensure* means to make certain. *Insure* means to provide insurance, such as life insurance or health insurance. *Assure* means to state as a certainty.

The law *ensures* that there will be enough money to complete the project.

The company *insures* more than a million individuals and corporations.

He *assured* us that there was no sign of foul play.

flaunt, flout. *Flaunt* means to parade. *Flout* means to treat with contempt.

formally, formerly. *Formally* means in a correct or prescribed manner. *Formerly* means previously.

Sergeant Grasso was *formally* recognized for his bravery.

This building was *formerly* the site of one of the city's oldest department stores.

imply, infer. A speaker *implies*. A listener *infers*.

its, it's. *Its* is a possessive pronoun. *It's* is a contraction for "it is."

lead, led. *Led* is the past tense of lead.

lie, lay.

Lie means to rest or recline. It never takes an object. You never *lie* something down.

Present: Stan *lies* down after lunch every day.

Past: The book *lay* on the table.

Perfect: Jan has *lain* in a sick bed for days.

Lay always takes an object. You *lay* something down.

Present: *Lay* the book on the table.

Past: She carefully *laid* the tomatoes on the counter.

Perfect: I have *laid* the foundation for my house.

loose, lose. *Loose* is the opposite of tight. *Lose* means to be defeated or to misplace.

Loose clothing will help keep you warmer.

I was afraid I might *lose* my wallet.

We expect to *lose* tonight's game.

ordnance, ordinance. *Ordnance* means weaponry. An ordinance is a law.

precede, proceed. *Precede* means to go before. *Proceed* means to continue.

An argument *preceded* the assault.

The meeting *proceeded* without further interruptions.

principle, principal. A *principle* is a basic belief or truth. A *principal* is the head of a school. The *principal* is the part of a loan on which you pay interest. As an adjective, *principal* means main or most important.

stationary, stationery. *Stationary* means fixed in one place. *Stationery* means writing paper.

there, their, they're. *There* means in that place. *Their* is the possessive form of them. *They're* is a contraction for they are.

to, too, two. *To* means in that direction. *Too* means also. *Two* is a number.

who's, whose. *Who's* is a contraction for "who is." *Who's* minding the store? *Whose* is the possessive of "who." *Whose* glasses are these?

Questions 13 through 22. In the following groups of sentences, select the sentence in which the underlined word is used correctly.

13. a. They need to raise additional capitol for their business.
b. The company is reconsidering it's decision to build a new warehouse.
c. The store sells office products and stationery.
d. The players left there helmets on the bus.
14. a. The officer sited Section 21 of the Motor Vehicle Code.
b. The votes have already been counted.
c. His theory violates the principals of physics.
d. Who's glasses are these?
15. a. Lose clothing will help keep you warmer.
b. Lisa offered him some sound advise.
c. The president decided to accept the ambassador's resignation.
d. She complemented him on his choice of colors.
16. a. In 1944, General Eisenhower lead the invasion of Normandy.
b. Doctors worry about the affects of smoking on health.
c. The workers used sledge hammers to break up the pavement.
d. The teacher gave her students wise council.
17. a. This building was formerly the site of one of the city's oldest department stores.
b. In his position, Albert must be very discrete in handling confidential information.
c. He was to tired to continue the race.
d. Each of his mortgage payments was about evenly divided between principle and interest.

18. a. Carol decided to lay down for a while after dinner.
b. No one is sure how the new laws will effect taxpayers.
c. Two new members were elected to the city council.
d. The police confiscated a large quantity of elicit drugs.
19. a. Please lay the packages on the sofa.
b. Their are many reasons why you should stay in school.
c. I need to replace the breaks on my car.
d. The principle decided to send the students home early.
20. a. I appraised the committee members of the new procedures.
b. Each cat has its own dish.
c. Please advise Harold on the new procedure for recording expenses.
d. Carol excepted the award on behalf of her mother.
21. a. The police spent several hours at the cite of the accident.
b. A majority of the public support capitol punishment.
c. The magician used mirrors to create a convincing illusion.
d. The heiress flouted her wealth by wearing expensive jewelry.
22. a. The engineers will decide how to adapt the old equipment for this new purpose.
b. Firefighters often have to work in extremely averse conditions.
c. The judge told the attorney to precede with his opening statement.
d. Divide the work equally between Sara, Luke, and Todd.

Punctuation

The Comma

Use commas to separate items in a series.

The company has branch offices in Utica, Corning, and Buffalo .

The comma before “and” in a list like this is optional.

Use a comma to separate two or more adjectives, if you pause between the adjectives.

This is difficult, tedious work.

The manager gave her an interesting new project.

In the first sentence, you use a comma between the adjectives *difficult* and *tedious* because you pause between them. In the second sentence you do not use a comma between the adjectives *interesting* and *new* because you do not pause between them.

Use a comma to separate independent clauses joined by a coordinating conjunction.

An independent clause is a sentence. It has a subject and a verb, and it expresses a complete thought. The coordinating conjunctions are *and, but, or, nor, for, yet, and so*.

Most of my friends work in Albany, but I work in Saratoga Springs.

Use a comma to set off a long introductory clause from the rest of the sentence.

Before you hire a consultant for this project, you should see if anyone on staff can handle it.

Use a comma or a pair of commas to set off transitional words.

Finally, we were able to see some positive results.

In most cases, however, the application process takes several weeks.

Use commas to set off parenthetic words or phrases in a sentence.

Clarence, the senior member of our staff, has worked here for 21 years.

Use a comma to separate the name of a city from the name of a state or country.

Syracuse, New York

Paris, France

Use a comma to separate a date from a year.

June 6, 2007

The Semicolon

Use a semicolon to separate independent clauses that are not joined by a conjunction.

Pessimists consider the glass half empty; optimists consider it half full.

Use semicolons to separate items in a series if the items contain commas.

Additional funds have been appropriated for New Orleans, Louisiana; Shreveport, Mississippi; and Galveston, Texas.

The Colon

Use a colon to introduce a list or an explanation.

We have received applications from three employees: Carol Lewis, Dennis Miller, and Simon Brown.

We have two alternatives: raise taxes or cut services.

The Apostrophe

Add an apostrophe and an “s” to form the possessive of a singular noun.

John’s office, the director’s message

Add an apostrophe after the “s” to form the possessive of a plural noun.

the players’ enthusiasm, the oil companies’ position

Do not use an apostrophe to form the plural of a noun.

Questions 23 through 27. *In the following groups of sentences, select the sentence that is punctuated incorrectly.*

23. a. All of the employees except Carl have completed their assignments.
b. She left her bags at the airport, she said she was in a hurry.
c. Ask Maria, our office manager, about getting a new computer.
d. Several of the participants said that building a new mall on the site would create serious traffic problems.
24. a. Most residents in our town are in favor of building a new airport, however some people think it will create too much congestion.
b. The firm has branch offices in Dallas, Houston, and San Antonio.
c. Anyone who has an objection to this plan should speak to the deputy director.
d. Some of my coworkers want to work overtime, but I prefer not to.
25. a. This weeks goal is to complete all the remodeling work in our offices.
b. The next time you change your password, choose something you will remember.
c. Carl Taylor, the most experienced programmer in our office, knows more about this software than anyone.
d. These new investments have become very popular among people saving for retirement.
26. a. If you cannot finish the project on time, we will have to ask for an extension.
b. All of the participants but Harry chose to stay an extra day.
c. Many people like to travel on vacation, but I prefer to stay home and sleep.
d. Which of these printers do you like best.
27. a. Yogi Berra said that no one goes to that restaurant any more because it is too crowded.
b. Several players had to leave the game early because they were injured.
c. The meeting ended early, the moderator had another commitment.
d. Can you tell me how to get to Sesame Street?

In the next three questions, each sentence may or may not contain an error in punctuation. If there is an error, select the letter that corresponds to the part of the sentence that must be changed to make the sentence correct. If the sentence has no error, select choice d.

28. Is the choice for president of the company George Dawson or Marilyn Jones?

a b c

No error

d

29. When I asked my daughter what she knew about politics she claimed she knew

a b

nothing. No error

c d

30. Russell asked Maria Ramone his supervisor, if he could change his work hours for

a b

the next two weeks. No error

c d

Editing

These questions test your ability to select the best way to revise a sentence that is poorly written. The sentence may be awkward or wordy, or it may include errors in grammar, usage, or punctuation.

For each group of sentences below, select the choice that represents the best editing of the problem sentence.

31. Each woman chose their own approach to the problem.
 - a. All the women chose an approach to the problem.
 - b. In approaching the problem, each woman had a unique approach.
 - c. Each woman chose her own approach to the problem.
 - d. The problem was approached by each woman.

32. I want to get a new computer for my secretary, preferably with more memory.
 - a. I want to get my secretary a new computer, preferably with more memory.
 - b. My secretary's computer needs more memory.
 - c. I want to get more memory for my secretary's computer.
 - d. I want my secretary to have more memory in her computer.

33. As soon as the employees left the offices, the custodian cleaned them.
 - a. As soon as the employees left the offices, they were cleaned by the custodian.
 - b. The employees left the offices, and then the custodian cleaned them.
 - c. The offices were cleaned by the custodian after being left by the employees.
 - d. The custodian cleaned the offices as soon as the employees left.

34. Small children in an accident can be injured or killed when sitting in the front seat of a car by the force of the air bag.
 - a. Air bags can injure or kill small children in the front seat of cars in accidents when they deploy.
 - b. In an accident, it is possible that a small child may feasibly be injured or even killed by the force of the air bag in the front seat of the car.
 - c. Air bags in the front seat of a car in an accident have a high potential of injuring or killing small children.
 - d. In an accident small children sitting in the front seat of a car can be injured or killed by the force of the air bag.

35. It is easier for workers to produce paperwork now as opposed to before computers and therefore it seems they are generating more paperwork than they used to.
 - a. Paperwork is easier to produce now than before because of computers, and people seem to producing more paperwork as a result of this development.
 - b. Computers have made it easier for workers to produce paperwork; therefore, they seem to be generating more of it.
 - c. Paperwork generation with computers by workers has increased because of the ease with which it can be generated.
 - d. Computers generate more paperwork by workers than in the past because of the ease of producing it.

Office Record Keeping

Questions in this section test your ability to record and analyze data. Questions might include combining data from several sources, scheduling, and maintaining a record system with running balances. You may need to perform calculations involving totals, subtotals, averages, and percents.

Working with Percentages

In order to solve problems that involve percentages, you need to understand the relationship between percentages and decimals.

Let's begin by thinking about 100%. If you have 100% of something, you have all of it. Another way of saying this is:

$$100\% = 1$$

or

$$100\% = 1.0 \text{ (1.0 is the same as 1)}$$

If you have less than 100%, you have less than 1. Think about sales tax. Suppose you have to pay a sales tax of 8%. How would you express this as a decimal? You know that a tax of 8% is the same as 8¢ on the dollar.

$$8\% = 8¢ \text{ on the dollar}$$

or

$$8\% = .08$$

Here is another example. You see a sweater on sale for 20% off. You know this means that you will save 20¢ off every dollar of the original price. In other words, you will be saving \$.20 off every dollar of the original price. So

$$20\% = .20$$

If you look at these two examples, you will see that you convert a percentage to a decimal by moving the decimal point two places to the *left*.

$$20\% = .20$$

You convert a decimal to a percentage by doing just the opposite: You move the decimal point two places to the *right*.

$$.20 = 20\%$$

Let's see how we can approach some sample questions by using the relationship between percentages and decimals.

Question. A coat that was originally priced at \$100 is on sale for 25% off. How much do you save?

Answer. To answer this question, you need to convert the percentage to a decimal. You convert a percentage to a decimal by moving the decimal point two places to the *left*.

$$25\% = .25$$

Now multiply the original price by the decimal

$$\$100 \times .25 = \$25$$

You save \$25 on the coat. This question asked you to use a percentage to calculate an amount. The next question asks you to do just the opposite. It asks you to use an amount to calculate a percentage.

Question. Between 1995 and 2000, the average price of a house in Middlebury went up from \$100,000 to \$120,000. What was the percentage increase in the average price of a house?

Answer. To answer this question, you need to know the actual amount of the increase.

$$\begin{array}{r} \$120,000 \quad \text{average price in 2000} \\ - \underline{\$100,000} \quad \text{average price in 1995} \\ \$20,000 \quad \text{increase} \end{array}$$

Now divide the increase by the original price:

$$20,000 \div 100,000 = .20$$

This is one of the basic types of percentage questions. When a question asks,

What was the percentage increase or decrease?

you divide the amount of the increase or decrease by the original number.

Now you have to convert .20 to a percentage. To do this, you move the decimal point two places to the *right*.

$$.20 = 20\%$$

So the answer to this question is 20%.

Question. In Middlebury High School, there are 330 freshmen, 300 sophomores, 290 juniors and 280 seniors. What percentage of the total student body are sophomores?

Answer. To answer this question, you need to know two numbers: the number of sophomores and the total number of students. You are told in the question that there are 300 sophomores. To find out the total number of students, add the numbers in each class. The total number of students is 1,200.

To find the percentage of the student body that are sophomores, divide the number of sophomores by the total number of students.

$$300 \div 1,200 = .25$$

This is another one of the basic types of percentage questions. When a question asks,

What percentage of the total is represented by a certain part?

you divide *the part* by the total.

Now you have to convert .25 to a percentage. To convert .25 to a percentage, move the decimal point two places to the **right**.

$$.25 = 25\%$$

So the answer to this question is 25%.

Use the tables below to answer questions 1 through 4.

Test Results for Elementary Students in Springfield School District

	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
3rd Grade Reading	8	22	24	10
3rd Grade Math	11	26	19	8
8th Grade Reading	12	23	15	12
8th Grade Math	15	24	14	9
8th Grade Science	13	23	16	10

Summary of Test Results

	Levels 1–2	Levels 3–4
3rd Grade Reading	30	34
3rd Grade Math		
8th Grade Reading		
8th Grade Math		A
8th Grade Science		

Key

Level 1: Significantly below expectations

Level 2: Below expectations

Level 3: At expectations

Level 4: Above expectations

1. What is the value of A?
 - a. 9
 - b. 14
 - c. 23
 - d. 32

2. Approximately what percentage of students scored at or above expectations on the 3rd grade math test?
 - a. 19%
 - b. 27%
 - c. 42%
 - d. 50%

3. On which of the following tests did most students score below or significantly below expectations?
 - a. 3rd Grade Reading
 - b. 3rd Grade Math
 - c. 8th Grade Reading
 - d. 8th Grade Math

4. Level 3 and Level 4 scores are considered “passing.” On which of the following tests were there more passing than failing grades?
 - a. 3rd Grade Reading
 - b. 3rd Grade Math
 - c. 8th Grade Reading
 - d. 8th Grade Science

Use the following information to answer questions 5 through 7.

There are eight employees in your unit: Evelyn, Jack, Chris, Maria, Hector, Simon, Carlos, and Sue. Everyone in the unit must attend a training session the week of Monday, June 8. The training is being offered twice during the week, on Monday, June 8, and on Wednesday, June 10. Everyone must attend one or the other of these sessions. In scheduling this training, you must be sure that there are always three employees working in the unit (that is, not attending the training). There is one further complication: Evelyn does not work on Mondays and Jack does not work on Wednesdays.

5. Which of the following is a possible roster for the training session on Monday, June 8?
 - a. Evelyn, Jack, Simon, Sue
 - b. Chris, Maria, Hector, Simon
 - c. Jack, Chris, Maria, Carlos
 - d. Jack, Chris, Maria, Simon, Sue

6. Which of the following is a possible roster for the training session on Wednesday, June 10?
 - a. Evelyn, Simon, Hector, Sue
 - b. Jack, Chris, Hector, Sue
 - c. Evelyn, Hector, Sue
 - d. Chris, Maria, Hector, Sue

7. If Hector, Chris, Simon and another employee attend the training session Monday, June 8, which of the following is a possible roster for the session on Wednesday, June 10?
 - a. Jack, Evelyn, Carlos, Sue
 - b. Evelyn, Maria, Carlos, Sue
 - c. Evelyn, Chris, Maria, Sue
 - d. Evelyn, Carlos, Sue

Use the following information to answer questions 8 through 12.

Assume that your unit works Monday through Friday. You need to determine the work and vacation schedules of the employees for the month of July. These are the employees:

Carol	7 years seniority	receptionist
Tom	6 years seniority	keyboard specialist
Phil	11 years seniority	keyboard specialist
Mike	3 years seniority	analyst
Jill	2 years seniority	analyst
Alan	8 years seniority	principal clerk
Susan	7 years seniority	clerk
Carmine	3 years seniority	clerk
George	1 year seniority	trainee
Barbara	4 years seniority	secretary

Vacation Preferences:

Employee	First Choice		Second Choice	
	First Day	Last Day	First Day	Last Day
Carol	8/16	8/20	8/23	8/27
Tom	8/9	8/13	8/2	8/6
Phil	8/9	8/18	8/16	8/25
Mike	8/2	8/11	8/9	8/18
Jill	8/9	8/13	8/16	8/20
Alan	8/2	8/13	8/9	8/20
Susan	8/9	8/13	8/23	8/27
Carmine	8/9	8/13	8/16	8/20
George	8/23	8/27	8/16	8/20
Barbara	8/16	8/20	8/23	8/27

Employees with seniority have first choice for their preferred vacation dates. These are the minimum staffing requirements:

- one secretary or receptionist
- one keyboard specialist
- one analyst
- two clerks (either clerk or principal clerk)

Employees who do not receive their first choice of vacation days should be given their second choice.

The calendar on the next page may be helpful in answering these questions.

Sun	Mon	Tues	Weds	Thurs	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

8. How many workers will be on vacation on August 23?
 - a. 2
 - b. 3
 - c. 4
 - d. 5

9. How many workers will be working on August 17?
 - a. 4
 - b. 5
 - c. 6
 - d. 7

10. When will Jill begin her vacation?
 - a. August 9
 - b. August 11
 - c. August 12
 - d. August 16

11. Of the following, who will work on August 17?
 - a. Carol
 - b. Tom
 - c. Jill
 - d. Carmine

12. When will Tom begin his vacation?
 - a. August 2
 - b. August 9
 - c. August 16
 - d. August 19

Use the following information to answer questions 13 through 18.

You are responsible for ordering office supplies for your unit. You order supplies at the beginning of each month. For each item, you must order enough so that you have at least as many on hand as you used during the previous month. For example, if you used 25 blank CDs last month and you have 10 on hand, you must order at least 15.

You order each item in certain quantities. For example, you must order blank CDs in quantities of 50. If you needed only 15, you would still have to order 50.

The table on the next page summarizes your inventory of supplies. You will notice that there are three blank columns: amount used, amount needed, and amount to order. This is how you fill in these columns.

- The amount used equals the beginning amount minus the ending amount.
- The additional amount needed equals the amount used minus the ending amount. For example, if you used 25 blank CDs last month and you have 10 on hand, you must order at least 15.
- The amount to order is the amount you will actually order. Remember that you have to order each item in certain quantities. The quantity for blank CDs is 50. Even if you only need 15, you will have to order 50.

Item	Beginning Amount	Ending Amount	Amount Used	Additional Amount Needed	Order in Quantities of	Amount to Order
blank CDs	25	10			50	
copy paper	15 reams	7 reams			5 reams	
folders	5 boxes	2 boxes			2 boxes	
small envelopes	4 boxes	2 boxes			1 box	
large envelopes	5 boxes	2 boxes			1 box	
black toner cartridges	4	3			1	
color toner cartridges	4	2			1	
legal pads	45	39			20	

13. How many legal pads did you use during the month?

- a. 6
- b. 20
- c. 39
- d. 45

14. How many color toner cartridges will you order?

- a. 0
- b. 1
- c. 2
- d. 3

15. How many reams of copy paper will you order?

- a. 3
- b. 5
- c. 10
- d. 15

16. How many boxes of folders will you order?
- a. 1
 - b. 2
 - c. 3
 - d. 4
17. A box of large envelopes costs \$14 and a box of small envelopes costs \$12. How much will you spend on large and small envelopes?
- a. \$14
 - b. \$26
 - c. \$40
 - d. \$52
18. How many legal pads will you order?
- a. 0
 - b. 6
 - c. 10
 - d. 20

Office Practices

Questions in this part of the test concern generally agreed-upon principles governing personal interactions in the workplace, as well as efficient and effective methods to accomplish office tasks. Specific topics might include:

- Planning workflow
- Setting priorities
- Dealing effectively with visitors, callers, and other staff members
- Filing and retrieving information
- Using office equipment
- Recommending ways to improve office operations

Here are some general guidelines to keep in mind concerning office practices.

1. Treat coworkers consistently. Do not show favoritism.
2. Criticize in private; praise in public.
3. Choose appropriate methods of communication. For example, it is better to deal with some subjects in person rather than through e-mail.
5. Practice mutual respect. Be fair, impartial, and open-minded in your interactions with coworkers.
6. Always keep the feelings, abilities, and dignity of your coworkers in mind.
7. Encourage team work and shared responsibility.
8. Be an active listener.
9. Strive to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of your work.
10. Present a professional image in your interactions with people outside your unit. Treat visitors and callers with courtesy and respect.

For each of the following questions, choose the answer that represents the best understanding of commonly accepted office practices.

1. In reviewing a request for a purchase order, you discover a math error that makes the total amount of the request less than it should be. Of the following, the most appropriate action for you to take is:
 - a. Tell your supervisor about the error
 - b. Send the request to the finance office so that they can correct it
 - c. Investigate other requests by the employee to see if they contain similar errors
 - d. Return the request to the employee and ask her to correct it

2. You sent a memo to everyone in your unit explaining a complicated new procedure for completing travel vouchers. Several employees have told you that they do not understand the new procedure. What would be the best way to handle this situation?
 - a. Respond by e-mail to any questions you receive
 - b. Rewrite the memo and send it again
 - c. Schedule a meeting to explain the procedure and answer questions about it
 - d. Wait to see what mistakes employees make when they submit their vouchers

3. You are responsible for collecting case logs from the employees in your group. One employee is always late in giving you her case logs. What would be the best way to handle this situation?
 - a. Send a memo to all employees in your group reminding them to submit their case logs on time
 - b. Raise the issue at a staff meeting
 - c. Speak to the employee individually about the importance of submitting case logs on time
 - d. Take no action and hope that the situation will improve

4. Your group has just received approval to renovate your offices. Your supervisor has asked you to solicit opinions from the staff about the renovation. What would be the best way for you to do this?
 - a. Speak informally to people whose opinion you value
 - b. Schedule a meeting so that staff members can discuss their opinions about the renovation
 - c. Send an e-mail message to the staff asking them to respond with suggestions about the renovation
 - d. Send a memo to staff members asking them to submit suggestions to you in writing

5. Your supervisor asks you to take on a task that must be completed by the end of the week. You do not think that you will be able to meet this deadline because you have other assignments that also have tight schedules. Of the following, what would be the best way to handle this situation?
 - a. Postpone your other work so that you can meet the deadline
 - b. Tell your supervisor that you cannot accept any new work until you have completed your current assignments
 - c. Ask your supervisor to help you establish priorities for your work
 - d. Try to meet the deadline while still keeping up with your other work

6. You send an e-mail to Lisa, a coworker, asking her to provide some information that your supervisor needs to include in a report. Lisa sends you an e-mail saying that she does not report to you and she does not have time to provide you the information. Of the following, what would be the best way to handle this situation?
 - a. Speak to Lisa in person about the situation
 - b. Avoid all further contact with Lisa
 - c. Tell your supervisor that the information she requested is not available
 - d. Try to gather the information without Lisa's assistance

7. Which of the following would be the most appropriate way to tell an employee that the project she has been working on for the past three months is being cancelled?
 - a. An e-mail message, with copies to all other staff
 - b. A one-on-one discussion
 - c. An announcement at a staff meeting
 - d. A phone call or voice mail message

8. In preparing written instructions for employees on how to operate new office equipment, it is best to:
 - a. Keep instructions general to encourage employees to ask questions about specific actions they may need to take.
 - b. Give careful thought to what employees already know and what you may need to explain.
 - c. Omit routine steps in order to keep the instructions brief.
 - d. Use long sentences to make the instructions easier to follow.

9. You are attempting to teach an employee how to use a new software program. The employee is having a great deal of difficulty, even though you consider the program to be very simple and easy to use. Before you spend more time instructing the employee, what should you do?
 - a. Reassign the work to be done with this program to another employee.
 - b. Tell the employee that this is an easy program and you don't understand why he is having so much trouble with it.
 - c. Review the steps you have already explained, and determine whether the employee understands them.
 - d. Tell the employee that you will continue your explanation another day because you are becoming too frustrated.

10. Another staff member tells you about a new laser printer that offers better quality than the printer you are using now. How should you respond?
 - a. "I'll ask the people in Information Technology if they're familiar with the printer."
 - b. "We don't make decisions about computer equipment. The decision is out of our hands."
 - c. "I think the printer we have now meets our needs. I don't see the need for something new."
 - d. "If this printer is really better than what we have now, someone would have told us about it already."

11. While you are on the phone answering a question about your agency, a visitor comes to your desk and starts to ask you a question. There is no emergency or urgency in either situation, that of the phone call or that of answering the visitor's question. In this case, you should:
 - a. Excuse yourself to the person on the phone and tell the visitor that you will be with him or her as soon as you have finished on the phone.
 - b. Explain to the person on the phone that you have a visitor and must shorten the conversation.
 - c. Continue to talk to the person on the phone while looking up occasionally at the visitor to let him or her know that you know he or she is there.
 - d. Continue to talk with the person on the phone until you are finished and then let the visitor know that you're sorry to have kept him or her waiting.

12. You are at work at your desk on a special project when a visitor approaches you. You cannot interrupt your work to take care of this person. Of the following, the best and most courteous way of handling the situation is to:
- a. Avoid looking up from your work until you are finished with what you are doing.
 - b. Tell the visitor that you will not be able to assist him or her for quite some time.
 - c. Refer the individual to another employee who can take care of him or her right away.
 - d. Chat with the individual while you continue to work.

Answer Key

Understanding and Interpreting Written Material

- | | | |
|------|------|-------|
| 1. b | 5. a | 8. b |
| 2. c | 6. b | 9. c |
| 3. c | 7. d | 10. a |
| 4. d | | |

Preparing Written Material

- | | | |
|------|------|-------|
| 1. c | 5. b | 8. a |
| 2. b | 6. b | 9. b |
| 3. d | 7. c | 10. a |
| 4. d | | |

Grammar, Usage, Punctuation, and Editing

- | | | |
|-------|-------|-------|
| 1. d | 13. c | 25. a |
| 2. b | 14. b | 26. d |
| 3. d | 15. c | 27. c |
| 4. c | 16. c | 28. d |
| 5. b | 17. a | 29. a |
| 6. b | 18. c | 30. a |
| 7. c | 19. a | 31. c |
| 8. c | 20. b | 32. a |
| 9. d | 21. c | 33. d |
| 10. d | 22. a | 34. d |
| 11. b | 23. b | 35. b |
| 12. b | 24. a | |

Office Record Keeping

- | | | |
|------|-------|-------|
| 1. c | 7. b | 13. a |
| 2. c | 8. b | 14. a |
| 3. d | 9. c | 15. b |
| 4. a | 10. d | 16. b |
| 5. c | 11. b | 17. a |
| 6. a | 12. a | 18. a |

Office Practices

- | | | |
|------|------|-------|
| 1. d | 5. c | 9. c |
| 2. c | 6. a | 10. a |
| 3. c | 7. b | 11. a |
| 4. b | 8. b | 12. c |

Answers and Explanations

Understanding and Interpreting Written Material

1. The answer is choice b. Choice b is supported by the last sentence of the passage. There is nothing in the passage to support the other choices.
2. The answer is choice c. This passage summarizes the debate about financing for political campaigns. Choices a and d represent one side of the debate — the side that believes that campaign financing should be more tightly regulated. Choice b represents the other side in the debate — the side that believes that limiting contributions to political campaigns infringes on the right of free speech. The question asks, “Which of the following statements is the best expression of the *author’s* views?” The author does not appear to take sides in this debate. The best expression of the author’s view is choice c, which is supported by the last sentence of the passage.
3. The answer is choice c. This passage presents lots of detailed information about the cost of these three health insurance plans. The best way to compare the plans is to make a table like this.

	Plan A	Plan B	Plan C
Premiums (12 months)	408	384	420
Physical	0	8	0
Doctor’s Visits (2)	20	16	20
Lab Tests (3)	0	24	0
TOTALS	428	432	440

Notice that the question asks about the costs for an entire year. Therefore, to compare the plans, you need to consider a year’s worth of premiums.

4. The answer is choice d. Choice a is incorrect because it is not supported by anything in the passage. Choice b is incorrect because the passage says that fat-soluble vitamins do not need to be consumed every day. Choice c is incorrect because it is not supported by anything in the passage. Choice d is supported by the second to last sentence of the passage.
5. The answer is choice a. There is nothing in the passage to support choices b, c, or d. Choice a is supported by the fourth sentence in the paragraph.

6. The answer is choice b. This passage describes the fairly complex rules that govern retirement benefits under Social Security. To understand the information being presented, you need to read the passage very carefully. A careful reading of the passage will tell you that if you were born between 1938 and 1960 your full retirement age is 66. So choice b is correct. Choice a is incorrect because you can, in fact, receive retirement benefits while you are still working, although the benefits will be reduced until you reach your full retirement age. Choice c is incorrect because once you reach your full retirement age, your benefits are not affected by the money you earn if you are still working. Choice d is incorrect because, until you reach age 70, your benefits will continue to increase if you wait to receive them.
7. The answer is choice d. It appears from the passage that Pasternak declined the Nobel Prize because he felt pressured in some way by the Soviet government. Sartre, on the other hand, declined the prize because he thought it would change the way the public viewed him. So it is reasonable to assume that Pasternak felt more reluctant to decline the prize. There is nothing in the passage to support choices a or c. Choice b might seem reasonable, but the passage does not actually say the prize has been awarded every year since 1901. In fact, there were several years in which no prize was given, and in some years it has been given to more than one writer.
8. The answer is choice b. The other statements are distortions of what is said in the passage. They overstate various points about the conventional concept of intelligence.
9. The answer is choice c. The question asks about the “main idea” of the passage. Answers a and b are true, but they are too limited to be the “main idea” of the passage. There is nothing in the passage to support choice d. Choice c is the best statement of the main idea of the passage.
10. The answer is choice a. Choice b is incorrect because it is not supported by the passage. According to the passage, Canada “refused to allow the Taiwanese team to carry its flag or have its national anthem played.” The Taiwanese “withdrew”; they were not banned. Choice c is incorrect because, again, it is not supported by the passage. Several African nations demanded that New Zealand be banned from the games, but their demands were not met. Choice d is incorrect because it, too, is not supported by the passage. Hitler is the first national leader mentioned who injected a spirit of nationalism into the games, but the passage does not say he was the first one to do this. Choice a is supported by sentence three.

Preparing Written Material

1. The answer is choice c. This is the most logical way to arrange these sentences. Choice a is incorrect because the only logical place to put sentence 5 is at the beginning of the paragraph. It is obviously the topic sentence. Choice b is incorrect because sentence 3 should come immediately after sentence 2. Sentence 3 explains what sentence 2 refers to as Hemingway's "turbulent social life." Choice d is incorrect because sentence 1 should come after sentence 4. Sentence 1 mentions "this period in his life." This refers back to Hemingway's experiences in Paris, which are mentioned in sentence 4.
2. The answer is choice b. Choice a is incorrect because it begins with sentence 3, but sentence 4 would make a better topic sentence. Choice c is incorrect for the same reason. Sentence 4 is a better topic sentence than sentence 5. Choice d is incorrect because sentence 2 should come immediately after sentence 5. Sentence 2 explains the statement in sentence 5 about kickboxing being a "standing fight sport."
3. The answer is choice d. Of these five sentences, sentence 2 would make the best topic sentence, and choice d is the only one that begins with sentence 2.
4. The answer is choice d. One way to approach these questions is to look for the transition words, words that point back to the previous sentence. Let's look at the transition words in these five sentences. Sentence 1 begins "For these reasons." This sounds like a "summing up" statement. You know that it can't be the first sentence, so choice a, which starts with this sentence, is wrong. Let's look at the other choices. Choice b begins in this order: 2-3-4. Sentence 4 begins with the phrase "For example." What does this refer to? It is obvious that this is an example of the statement in sentence 2. So sentence 4 should come immediately after sentence 2. This rules out choice b. Choice c is a definite possibility, but it ends with sentence 5, which sounds more like an introductory sentence than a concluding sentence. Choice d, the correct answer, ends with sentence 1, which we said makes a good "summing up" statement.
5. The answer is choice b. Again you might approach this question by looking at the transition words. Every sentence except sentence 4 contains a transition that refers back to something that has already been said. Therefore, sentence 4 must be the first sentence. This rules out choice c. Let's look at the other choices. Choice a has sentence 3 after sentence 4, which seems possible, but the next sentence begins with the words "This disagreement." So far there has been no mention of a disagreement. So this rules out choice a. Choice d has the same problem. "This disagreement" appears before any discussion of a disagreement.

6. The answer is choice b. Choice a is incorrect because it leaves out some information that was presented in the original. It omits the term “spam.” It does not explain what the Arpanet was and why some Arpanet users were outraged by the e-mail they received. Choice c is incorrect for two reasons. The writing is repetitious. Four sentences in a row begin with the word “he.” It also omits some information. It does not explain that the Arpanet was a network of government and university computers. Choice d is incorrect because it also omits some information. It does not include the term “Arpanet,” and it does not explain why some users were outraged about the e-mail message they received.
7. The answer is choice c. Choice a is incorrect because it omits some information and changes the meaning of the original. It does not identify Daniel Goleman as a psychologist, and it does not mention that he has written several books on the subject of emotional intelligence. It changes the meaning of the original by saying that emotional intelligence is more important than academic intelligence. The original does not say this. Choice b is incorrect because it omits part of the definition of emotional intelligence – the ability to “manage emotions well in ourselves and in our relationships.” Choice d is incorrect for the same reasons as choice a. It does not identify Daniel Goleman as a psychologist, and it does not mention that he has written several books on the subject of emotional intelligence. It changes the meaning of the original by saying that Goleman believes emotional intelligence is more important than academic intelligence.
8. The answer is choice a. Choice b is incorrect because it omits some information — that the biggest growth in asthma cases has been in children under 5. Choice c is incorrect because it begins with a statement that is not supported by anything in the original — that asthma is becoming an increasingly common disease among the American public. Choice d is incorrect because it omits some information — that asthma affects 6.3 million children.
9. The answer is choice b. Choice a is incorrect because it changes the meaning of the original. The original says that Douglass urged African Americans to join the Union army. Choice a says nothing about this. Choice c is incorrect because it also changes the meaning of the original. Choice c says Douglass edited the North Star for 17 years before the Civil War. The original does not say when he edited this newspaper. (Actually he edited the newspaper before and during the Civil War.) Choice d is incorrect because it also changes the meaning of the original. It says that Douglass joined the Union army during the Civil War. The original does not say this.
10. The answer is choice a. Choice b is incorrect because it does not say there are 109 elements on the Periodic Table. Choice c is incorrect because the last sentence is a run-on sentence (two sentences run together without a conjunction). Choice c also omits the fact that the elements are arranged in order of increasing atomic number. Choice d is incorrect because it contains incorrect definitions of groups and periods.

Grammar, Usage, Punctuation, and Editing

1. The answer is choice d. The correct pronoun in this sentence is *me* rather than *I* because the pronoun is being used as an object, the object of the preposition *to*. In choice a, the pronoun *me* should be changed to *I* because it is being used as a subject in the sentence. In choice b, there is no clear antecedent for the pronoun *she*. Does it refer to Lisa or Marie? Choice c begins with a misplaced modifier. The phrase *When only seven years old* does not refer to Jim's uncle.
2. The answer is choice b. In choice a, the adjective *steady* should be replaced with the adverb *steadily* because it modifies the verb *drove*. Adjectives modify nouns and pronouns. Adverbs modify verbs, adjectives and other adverbs. In choice c, the pronoun *me* should be changed to *I* because it is being used a subject in the sentence. In choice d, the verb *needs* should be changed to *need*. The subject of this sentence, *sections*, is plural, so you need the plural form of the verb, *need*.
3. The answer is choice d. The singular form of the verb, *was destroyed*, is correct here because the subject, *One*, is singular. Choice a is incorrect because it begins with a misplaced modifier. The phrase *Leaving the building* does not refer to *the alarm*. Choice b is incorrect because the third item in the list, *she sticks with a job until it is finished*, is not parallel with the first two. Choice c is incorrect because the pronoun *their* is plural, but it refers to a singular noun, *applicant*.
4. The answer is choice c. The pronoun *me* is correct here because it is being used as an object, the object of the preposition *from*. Choice a is incorrect because it switches from past tense, *arrived*, to present tense, *tell*. Choice b is incorrect because the third item in the list, *how did the tires look*, is not parallel with the first two. Choice d is incorrect because the pronoun *her* should be changed to *she* because it is being used as a subject in the sentence.
5. The answer is choice b. The adverb *well* is correct here because it modifies the verb *has performed*. Adjectives (*good*) modify nouns and pronouns. Adverbs (*well*) modify verbs, adjectives and other adverbs. Choice a is incorrect because it begins with a misplaced modifier. The phrase *Driving to work* does not refer to *traffic report*. Choice c also begins with a misplaced modifier. The phrase *Since finishing her degree* does not refer to *several businesses*. Choice d is incorrect because the pronoun *we* should be changed to *us* because it is being used as an object, the object of the preposition *for*.
6. The answer is choice b. The pronoun *Who* is correct here because it is being used as a subject in the sentence. Choice a is incorrect because the pronoun *they* is plural, but the word it refers to, *anyone*, is singular. Choice c is incorrect because it begins with a misplaced modifier. The phrase *Before adjourning for the day* does not refer to *several questions*. Choice d is incorrect because the subject, *Hard work and perseverance*, is plural, but the verb, *is*, is singular.

7. The answer is choice c. The correct pronoun here is *Whom* not *Who* because the word is being used as an object in this sentence. Choice a is incorrect because the pronoun *I* should be changed to *me* because the word is being used as an object, the object of the preposition *to*. Choice b is incorrect because the verb, *are deposited*, is plural, but the subject, *money*, is singular. Choice d is incorrect because it begins with a misplaced modifier. The phrase *While flying to Montreal* does not refer to *passport*.
8. The answer is choice c. The singular form of the verb, *was damaged*, is correct because the subject, *One*, is singular. Choice a is incorrect because it contains a misplaced modifier. The phrase *weighing approximately 180 pounds* does not refer to *moustache*. In choice b, the pronoun *I* should be changed to *me* because it is being used an object. Choice d is incorrect because it begins with a misplaced modifier. The phrase *While talking on a cell phone* does not refer to *car*.
9. The answer is choice d. The subject of the sentence, *one*, is singular, so you need the singular form of the verb, *offers*.
10. The answer is choice d. The pronoun *I* should be changed to *me* because the word is being used as an object.
11. The answer is choice b. The original version of the sentence contains a misplaced modifier. The phrase *While preparing her report* does not refer to *coworkers*.
12. The answer is choice b. The pronoun *me* should be changed to *I* because the word is being used as a subject.
13. The answer is choice c. In choice a, *capitol* should be *capital*. In choice b, *it's* should be *its* (the possessive of it). In choice d, *there* should be *their* (the possessive of them). In choice c, *stationery* is correct because it refers to paper products.
14. The answer is choice b. In choice a, *sited* should be *cited* (referred to). In choice c, *principals* should be *principles* (basic beliefs or truths). In choice d, *Who's* should be *Whose* (possessive of who). In choice b, *already* is correct because it means previously.
15. The answer is choice c. In choice a, *lose* should be *loose*. *Lose* means to misplace; *loose* is the opposite of tight. In choice b, *advise* should be *advice*. *Advise* is a verb; *advice* is a noun. In choice d, *complemented* should be *complimented*. To *compliment* is to flatter; to *complement* is to go well with. In choice c, *accept* is correct because it means to receive.
16. The answer is choice c. In choice a *lead* should be *led*. *Led* is the past tense of lead. In choice b, *affects* should be *effects*. *Effect* means a result or consequence. In choice d, *council* should be *counsel*. A *council* is a group or committee; *counsel* means advice. In choice c, *break* is correct because it means to shatter or destroy.
17. The answer is choice a. In choice b, *discrete* should be *discreet*. *Discrete* means separate and distinct; *discreet* means cautious in word or deed, careful about what you say and do. In choice c *to* should be *too*. In choice d, *principle* should be *principal* (the amount of money on which interest is earned or paid). A *principle* is a basic belief or truth. In choice a, *formerly* is correct because it means previously.

18. The answer is choice c. In choice a, *lay* should be *lie*. *Lie* means to rest or recline. *Lay* means to put or place. In choice b, *effect* should be *affect*. *Affect* means to influence. In choice d, *elicit* should be *illicit*. *Elicit* means to draw out. *Illicit* means illegal. In choice c, *council* is correct. A *council* is a group or committee.
19. The answer is choice a. In choice b, *Their* should be *There*. *Their* is the possessive form of them. In choice c, *breaks* should be *brakes*. *Brakes* stop or slow a vehicle. To *break* is to shatter or destroy. In choice d, *principle* should be *principal*. A *principle* is a basic belief or truth. In choice a, *lay* is correct. *Lay* means to put or place.
20. The answer is choice b. In choice a, *appraised* should be *apprised*. To *appraise* is to estimate the value of something. To *apprise* is to notify. In choice c, *advice* should be *advise*. *Advice* is a noun; *advise* is a verb. In choice d, *excepted* should be *accepted*. To *accept* is to receive. In choice b, *its* is correct. *Its* is the possessive form of it.
21. The answer is choice c. In choice a, *cite* should be *site*. To *cite* is to refer to. A *site* is a location. In choice b, *capitol* should be *capital*. The word *capitol* has only one meaning. It is the site where a legislative body meets. In choice d, *flouted* should be *flaunted*. To *flaunt* is to show off. To *flout* is to treat with contempt. In choice c, *illusion* is correct. An *illusion* is an unreal or false impression.
22. The answer is choice a. In choice b, *averse* should be *adverse*. *Averse* means opposed. *Adverse* means hostile or difficult. In choice c, *precede* should be *proceed*. To *precede* means to go before. To *proceed* means to continue. In choice d, *between* should be *among*. Use *between* with two items; use *among* with three or more. In choice a, *adapt* is correct. *Adapt* means to modify something for a new purpose.
23. The answer is choice b. This run-on sentence contains two independent clauses. You need more than a comma to join independent clauses. You can use either a semicolon or a comma and a conjunction.
24. The answer is choice a. This run-on sentence contains two independent clauses. You need more than a comma to join independent clauses. You can use either a semicolon or a comma and a conjunction. The word *however* is not a conjunction.
25. The answer is choice a. The word *weeks* should have an apostrophe (*week's*).
26. The answer is choice d. This sentence should end with a question mark.
27. The answer is choice c. This run-on sentence contains two independent clauses. You need more than a comma to join independent clauses. You can use either a semicolon or a comma and a conjunction.
28. The answer is choice d. It is not necessary to set off George Dawson with commas because he is an essential part of the sentence. It is appropriate to use a question mark at the end of this sentence because it is a direct question. There is no punctuation error in the sentence.
29. The answer is choice a. The long introductory clause in this sentence should be followed by a comma.
30. The answer is choice a. The parenthetic expression *his supervisor* should have a comma before and after it.

31. The answer is choice c. In the original sentence, the plural pronoun *their* does not agree with the singular noun *woman*. Choice a changes *woman* to *women*. In this version there is no indication that each woman chose her own approach. Choice b is repetitious. It includes the words *approaching* and *approach*. In choice d, the wording does not indicate that each woman chose her own approach.
32. The answer is choice a. In the original sentence the phrase *preferably with more memory* is a misplaced modifier. It should be placed next to *computer*, not *secretary*. Choices b, c, and d are incorrect because they do not mention a *new* computer.
33. The answer is choice d. In the original sentence, it is not clear if the word *them* refers to the offices or the employees. Choices a and b do not correct this problem. Choice c is awkwardly written.
34. The answer is choice d. The original sentence is awkwardly written. Choice a is also awkwardly written. Choice b is wordy. The words *it is possible that* and *feasibly* are unnecessary. Choice c is awkwardly written. The words are arranged in a confusing, illogical order.
35. The answer is choice b. The original sentence is wordy and awkward. Choice a is also wordy, particularly the phrase *as a result of this development*. Choice c is awkward and repetitious. The words are arranged in an illogical order. Choice d is incorrect because it says that computers, rather than workers, are generating more paperwork.

Office Record Keeping

1. The answer is choice c. The question asks, “What is the value of A?” This means, “What number does A represent?” When you find A on the Summary table, you see that it represents the number of students who scored in Level 3 or Level 4 on the 8th Grade Math test. When you check the first table, you see that 14 students scored at Level 3 and 9 students scored at Level 4. So 23 students scored at these Levels 3 or 4 on this test.
2. The answer is choice c. To find the percentage of students who scored at or above expectations on the 3rd Grade Math test, you have to find how many students took the test altogether. When you add the numbers for the four levels, you find that 64 students took the test. Now you need to find how many students scored at or above expectations. You find this number by adding the numbers for Level 3 and Level 4. You find that 27 students scored at or above expectations. Now to find what percentage this is, divide 27 by 64, the total number of students who took the test.

$$27 \div 64 = .4218$$

To convert this decimal to a percent, move the decimal point two places to the right.

$$.4218 = 42.18\%$$

3. The answer is choice d. To find the answer, you need to calculate how many students scored at Level 1 or Level 2 on these four tests. This is what you find:

3rd Grade Reading: 30
 3rd Grade Math: 37
 8th Grade Reading: 35
 8th Grade Math: 39

4. The answer is choice a. To find the answer, you need to calculate how many students scored at Level 1 or Level 2 and how many scored at Level 3 or Level 4 on these four tests. This is what you find:

	Levels 1–2	Levels 3–4
3rd Grade Reading	30	34
3rd Grade Math	37	27
8th Grade Reading	35	27
8th Grade Science	36	26

So the 3rd Grade Reading test is the only one which had more passing than failing grades.

5. The answer is choice c. Choice a is incorrect because the roster includes Evelyn, and Evelyn does not work on Mondays. Choice b is incorrect because the roster does not include Jack. Jack does not work on Wednesdays, so he must take the training on Monday. Choice d is incorrect because with this roster there would be only two employees left in working in the unit – Hector and Carlos. You might want to make a little chart for each of these possible answers. For choice d, your chart might look like this:

Monday, June 8		
In Training	Working in the Unit	Not Working
Jack, Chris, Maria, Simon, Sue	Hector, Carlos	Evelyn

You can see that this roster would not work because there are only two employees left working in the unit.

6. The answer is choice a. Choice b is incorrect because the roster includes Jack, and Jack does not work on Wednesdays. Choice c is incorrect because if you have only three employees in training on Wednesday, you will have to have five employees in training on Monday. As we saw in the previous question, this will not work because you will be left with only two employees in the unit. With choice c, your schedule for Monday would look like this.

Monday, June 8		
In Training	Working in the Unit	Not Working
Jack, Chris, Maria, Simon, Carlos	Hector, Sue	Evelyn

Choice d is incorrect because the roster does not include Evelyn. Evelyn does not work on Monday, so she will have to take the training on Wednesday.

7. The answer is choice b. Choice a is incorrect because the roster includes Jack, and Jack does not work on Wednesday. Choice c is incorrect because the roster includes Chris, and Chris is scheduled to take the training on Monday. Choice d is incorrect because we are told that four employees took the training on Monday. Therefore, if everyone in the unit must attend the training, there must be four employees scheduled for Wednesday.

Vacation Schedule

Sun	Mon	Tues	Weds	Thurs	Fri	Sat
1	2 Alan Tom Mike	3 Alan Tom Mike	4 Alan Tom Mike	5 Alan Tom Mike	6 Alan Tom Mike	7
8	9 Phil Alan Mike	10 Phil Alan Mike	11 Phil Alan Mike	12 Phil Alan	13 Phil Alan	14
15	16 Phil Carol Jill Carmine	17 Phil Carol Jill Carmine	18 Phil Carol Jill Carmine	19 Carol Jill Carmine	20 Carol Jill Carmine	21
22	23 Susan Barbara George	24 Susan Barbara George	25 Susan Barbara George	26 Susan Barbara George	27 Susan Barbara George	28
29	30	31				

8. The answer is choice b. Susan, Barbara, and George will be on vacation on August 23. Susan and Barbara had to be given their second choice of vacation dates.
9. The answer is choice c. There are ten employees in the unit and there are four on vacation: Phil, Carol, Jill, and Carmine. So there are six employees working. Jill and Carol had to be given their second choice of vacation dates.
10. The answer is choice d. Jill received her second choice because Mike, the other analyst, had more seniority.
11. The answer is choice b. Carol, Jill and Carmine will be on vacation.
12. The answer is choice a. Tom and Phil, the two keyboard specialists, had a conflict in their vacation requests. Phil had more seniority, so Tom was given his second choice.
13. The answer is choice a. You had 45 at the beginning of the month and 39 at the end of the month, so you must have used 6.
14. The answer is choice a. You used 2 during the month, but you still have 2 on hand. You have as many on hand as you used during the month, so you do not have to order any.
15. The answer is choice b. You used 8 reams of copy paper and you have 7 left, so you need to order at least one. But you have to order copy paper in quantities of 5 reams.
16. The answer is choice b. You used 3 boxes of folders and you have 2 left, so you need 1 more. But you have to order folders in quantities of 2 boxes.
17. The answer is choice a. You used 2 boxes of small envelopes and you have 2 left, so you don't need to order any. You used 3 boxes of large envelopes and you have 2 left, so you have to order 1. And 1 box of envelopes costs \$14.
18. The answer is choice a. You used 6 legal pads and you have 39 left, so you don't need to order any.

Office Practices

1. The answer is choice d. Choice a is incorrect because involving your supervisor in this situation would waste your supervisor's time and serve no useful purpose. Choice b is incorrect because it simply dumps the problem on someone else. Choice c seems like an over-reaction to the situation. Choice d is the best course of action for everyone involved.
2. The answer is choice c. There seems to be widespread confusion about this complicated new procedure. Holding a meeting (choice c) would give you a chance to ensure that all staff members understand what they should be doing. Choice a does not give you this opportunity, and it does not approach the problem in a comprehensive way. Just responding to individual questions might not clear up the confusion about this new procedure. Choice b is a possibility, but it does not seem like the best choice. You have already tried writing a memo on this subject and it didn't work. Sometimes it is better to explain complex subjects in person. Choice d is incorrect because it would waste time and delay the processing of vouchers.
3. The answer is choice c. Only one employee is submitting case logs late. Choices a and b imply that submitting case logs late is a common problem. This is somewhat insulting to all the employees who submit their case logs on time. Choice d is incorrect because it does nothing to address the problem.
4. The answer is choice b. Holding a meeting gives all staff members a chance to express their opinions and to hear the opinions of others. Choice a is incorrect because it takes into account only a select group of employees. Choice c is incorrect because e-mail is not an effective way to have a discussion or an exchange of opinions. Choice d is incorrect because it has no provision for discussing this topic.
5. The answer is choice c. Choice a is incorrect because your other work also has tight deadlines. Postponing your other work may create problems. Choice b is incorrect because it shows a lack of flexibility and an unwillingness to rethink priorities. Choice d is incorrect because you might not complete any of your assignments on time.
6. The answer is choice a. Choice b is incorrect because it does nothing to address the problem. Choice c is incorrect for the same reason. It is also dishonest. Choice d also avoids the problem and does nothing to address the conflict between you and Lisa.
7. The answer is choice b. In a situation like this, where there is a great potential for hard feelings, it is best to speak to the person involved face to face. Choices a and c are incorrect because the person involved should receive this news before other staff members. Choice d is a possibility, but the best way to break news like this is in person.
8. The answer is choice b. Whenever you write instructions, you make assumptions about what the reader knows already and what you may need to explain. You should give careful thought to these assumptions and not assume that employees know more than they really do. Choice a is incorrect because instructions should be specific enough to stand on their own. They should not require additional explanations. Choice c is incorrect because employees might not be familiar with what you

consider routine steps in a process. Choice d is incorrect because long sentences are difficult to read and understand.

9. The answer is choice c. Sometimes training an employee to perform a particular task requires patience and repetition. Choice a is incorrect because it is an impatient response to the situation. It also reflects a careless attitude toward the human resources available to the supervisor. Reassigning work so abruptly is not an intelligent use of human resources. Choice b is incorrect because it is insulting and discouraging to the employee. Choice d is incorrect because it also reflects a lack of patience on the part of the supervisor, and because it would probably be discouraging to the employee.
10. The answer is choice a. This approach lets the employee know that you take her suggestion seriously enough to pass it on to someone who can act on it. Choice b is incorrect because it is too negative. Such a defeatist attitude would discourage employees from ever trying or suggesting anything new. Choice c is incorrect because it belittles the employee's suggestion. All suggestions should be taken seriously. Choice d is incorrect because it reflects an unwillingness to listen to different ideas or opinions unless they come from "official" sources.
11. The answer is choice a. Choice a deals with the visitor in the most courteous manner possible. We are not told which question is more important, the visitor's or the caller's. We also don't know if the conversation can or should be shortened, or if shortening the conversation would mean calling the person back and wasting time. Given the information we have, it's better to finish up with the caller before handling the visitor.
12. The answer is choice c. This is the most efficient and most courteous way to handle the situation.