

## Parts of Speech

“Parts of speech” is one of the most important concepts to learn in grammar, because every sentence involves the parts of speech. Study them well, because this book will refer to the words often.

“**Parts of speech**” refers to **how a word is used in a sentence**. You have probably heard of the basic parts of speech (noun, verb, adjective), but there are other parts of speech as well. They are listed below.

**NOUN** - person, place, thing, idea, or animal

*Nick, Mexico, computer, love, panda*

**VERB** - an action or state of being

*run, jump, feels, are*

**The most common verbs are ones that come from “to be” - these are the verbs “is, are, was, were.”**

Remember that these words are *verbs*.

**ADJECTIVE** - a word that describes a noun

*green, circular, tall, tasty*

**ADVERB** - a word that describes a verb (think of add+verb). Usually describes the way you do something.

Can also describe the time in which something is done. Usually ends with -ly. Adverbs can also go with an adjective or another verb.

*slowly, hungry, well, yesterday*

**PRONOUN** - replaces a noun for a noun. Think of how the word “noun” is inside this word.

*he, she, it, both, all, these, themselves, one*

**CONJUNCTION** - A word that connects ideas. Think of how this word sounds like “connection.”

*and, or, but, yet, so*

**INTERJECTION** - A word that shows emotion or expression. Think of how this word sounds like

“interruption.”

*wow, cool, yikes*

**PREPOSITION** - A word that tells position or relationship. Think about how the word “position” is inside this word. These words should not be confused with verbs. While these words may show a direction, they are not actions.

*Near, below, above, from, to, of, with*

**ARTICLE** - Tells whether a word is general or specific. There are only three articles in the English language. Some languages, like Italian or Spanish, have many articles depending on whether the subject is singular, plural, masculine, or feminine. English does not do this. Other languages, like Russian and Chinese, have no articles at all.

*a, an, the*

Let’s look at the sentence below and break down what parts of speech are used. Use the list above to help you.

*The incredibly hairy buffalo chased me up a tree, but luckily, I was able to escape. Phew!*

The = \_\_\_\_\_

Incredibly = \_\_\_\_\_

Hairy = \_\_\_\_\_

Buffalo = \_\_\_\_\_

Chased = \_\_\_\_\_

Me = \_\_\_\_\_

Up = \_\_\_\_\_

A = \_\_\_\_\_

Tree = \_\_\_\_\_

But = \_\_\_\_\_

Luckily = \_\_\_\_\_

I = \_\_\_\_\_

Was = \_\_\_\_\_

Able = \_\_\_\_\_

To = \_\_\_\_\_

Escape = \_\_\_\_\_

Phew = \_\_\_\_\_

Review: What is a noun? \_\_\_\_\_

Write an example of a noun. \_\_\_\_\_

What is a verb? \_\_\_\_\_

Write an example of a verb. \_\_\_\_\_

What is an adjective? \_\_\_\_\_

Write an example of an adjective. \_\_\_\_\_

What is an adverb? \_\_\_\_\_

Write an example of an adverb. \_\_\_\_\_

What is a pronoun? \_\_\_\_\_

Write an example of a pronoun. \_\_\_\_\_

What is a conjunction? \_\_\_\_\_

Write an example of a conjunction. \_\_\_\_\_

What is a preposition? \_\_\_\_\_

Write an example of a preposition. \_\_\_\_\_

What is an interjection? \_\_\_\_\_

Write an example of an interjection. \_\_\_\_\_

What is an article? \_\_\_\_\_

Write an example of an article. \_\_\_\_\_

Underline the nouns in this sentence: The man walks through the forest to look for \_\_\_\_\_.

Circle the verb in this sentence: I am twelve years old.

Find the adjective in this sentence: Science is my favorite subject.

Underline the adverb in this sentence: I can't wait to go home tomorrow!

Circle the pronouns in this sentence: They only want to get what is theirs.

Find a conjunction in this sentence: We will visit New Mexico or Arizona for vacation.

Circle the prepositions in the sentence: In the corner under the box, you can find an elf on the shelf.

Add to this sentence by writing an interjection: \_\_\_\_\_, I'm so glad we saw the elephants!

SAMPLE

## Verb Tense and Subject-Verb Agreement

A **verb is an action**, or something that someone does. *Run, play, walk, and fall* are verbs. A **verb is also a “state of being”**, meaning that even actions where people don’t seem to be doing much, like *sleeps, exists, can* or *is*, are all still verbs. Verbs have different tenses.

**Verb tense** refers to **when an action took place**. Here are some verb tenses.

**Past Tense** -> Shows that an **action happened in the past**. *Sung, swung, opened, swooped, were, and burned* are all examples of past tense verbs. Many of these have -d or -ed at the end, but not all of them.

**Present Tense**-> Shows that an **action is happening now or states a fact that is continually true**. *Walk, are, sing, play, grow, and laugh* are all examples of present tense verbs.

A sentence should say, “Tigers are a member of the cat family” because this will always be true. If we switch “are” with other verbs, like “will be” or “were”, the sentence is not accurate, because this fact is constant.

**Future Tense**-> Show that an action **will happen later**. *Will be, will go, will swim, and going to laugh* are examples of future tense verbs. Most of these have “will” or “going to” before the verb.

The above three are examples of simple tenses. Sometimes, you might read a sentence with special verbs like *could, would, or must* which indicate that something is possible (*could*), was regularly done in the past or possible in the past (*would*), or necessary (*must*).

You may also see **past perfect tense** which can look like a “double past” verb (had taken, had eaten), which is used in a special way. When a sentence is in the past tense, the past perfect indicates that something was done before that time.

For instance, look at this sentence: I looked for the milk, not realizing I had left it on the table.

The sentence already is in the past tense (we know this because of the word “looked”) but even before the author started looking for the milk, she “had left” it on the table before then.

There is also a **continuous tense** which involves “-ing words.” Think of the difference between “I built the shelf,” which sounds like it occurred once, and “I was building the shelf,” which sounds ongoing.

There are a lot of tenses! However, when it comes to verb tense questions, **most answer choices mix past and present tense**, so keep this in mind. The most important tenses to know are the three simple tenses.

In a sentence or a paragraph, you want to **make sure that all the verb tenses match** each other. This is called **verb tense consistency**.

It would be incorrect and inconsistent to have a sentence that looks like this:

(X) INCORRECT: John went to the store to buy hair growth formula for middle schoolers, and then he goes home.

If you're not looking carefully, you might believe that sentence is fine. But the verb tenses don't match. "Went" is in the past and "goes" is in the present. **Verb tenses must match in a sentence.**

There are exceptions. For instance, you may have a sentence that reads:

(CORRECT): After John goes to the store to return the hair growth formula because of its disastrous side effects, he will go home.

This sentence is fine because we have the time word "after" to signal that there will be a future tense verb. Transition words often indicate that we can use a different tense. Therefore, you are not only checking to make sure that verbs match! You also need to **look for time words that tell you whether a verb in the sentence will be present, past, or future tense.** These words will usually be transition words that tell you about time. We will discuss transitions more in a later lesson.

### Subject-Verb Agreement

**Subject-verb agreement means that nouns and their verbs also need to agree (match up) in terms of singular (one) and plural (many).**

For instance, a sentence that says: "*The birds is hurt*" is clearly wrong, because "birds" is plural and "is" is singular.

However, the SHSAT will give you longer and more complex sentences, like:

*"The birds in the acacia tree along Pine Avenue is hurt."* (X: INCORRECT)

This sentence is tricky. Your brain may see the words "Avenue" and "is" and think, "Okay, these are both singular, so this sentence is correct."

However, the subject is the birds," since they are the ones with an action in this sentence (being hurt). The sentence *should* read:

*"The birds in the acacia tree along Pine Avenue are hurt."* (CORRECT)

Remember, "Avenue" is not the subject in the sentence, because that is not what's hurt.

**The most common verbs are any form of the word "to be" (is, are, were, was, being, etc.),** so make sure there are no mistakes with these words.

Review: What is a verb? \_\_\_\_\_

What is a verb tense? \_\_\_\_\_

What is verb tense consistency? \_\_\_\_\_

What are the three simple verb tenses? \_\_\_\_\_

What is subject-verb agreement? \_\_\_\_\_

What are the most common verbs? \_\_\_\_\_

Let's practice your verb tense skills on a sentence-by-sentence level. Rewrite the verbs in these sentences, looking out for any clues that tell you whether a verb will be past, present, or future tense and making sure there are no errors in subject-verb agreement.

When you are done, make sure to check your answers in the answer key. There may be more than one correct answer depending on how you chose to rewrite the sentence.

1. Yesterday, I walk to the store and buy some.  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. She were planning to visit her grandparents next weekend.  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. The company has announcing a new product at the end of the month.  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. We were studying for our exam when suddenly the power goes out.  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. By the time you arrived, I already leave for my appointment.  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. He always eats breakfast before he goes to work, but today he eats it late.  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. When I was a child, I think chocolate ice cream is the best flavor.  
\_\_\_\_\_

SAMPLE

## Modifiers

A **modifier** is a detail, typically describing a person or thing.

### Different Types of Modifiers

- Adjectives (*green*)
- Adverbs (*slowly*)
- Appositive Phrases (*, which is under the sea,*)
- ing phrases (*Running fast,*)
- Prepositional Phrases (*next to the table*)

Modifiers, especially ones involving -ing phrases, can create mistakes in a sentence. Look at the examples below.

✓: On the precipice of giving up, Geisel suddenly found an image that became the story's basis: a cat wearing a stovepipe hat.

X X X: On the precipice of giving up, Geisel's story suddenly found an image that became its basis: a cat wearing a stovepipe hat.

The incorrect sentence is wrong because it sounds like "Giesel's story" is "on the precipice of giving up". When we write sentences in English, ideas must follow a logical order. If two phrases are close together in a sentence, it implies that the ideas are connected. Let's look at a simpler example below.

✓: I ate the spicy chips.

X X X: Spicy, I ate the chips.

In the first example, the chips are spicy, so the word "spicy" goes near "chips." The second sentence seems to imply that the speaker, or the "I" is spicy, which is not logical. With modifier issues, we rewrite the sentence to what is most logical. Let's look at another example.

Driving down the highway, a bird dropped a cake on my car.

Here, the sentence implies the *bird* is driving down the highway, which is not logical.

There are two major types of modifier issues.

**Dangling Modifier** - When the modifier doesn't have a subject

Driving down the highway, a bird dropped a cake on my car.



The above sentence is an example of a dangling modifier because the subject (*I*) is missing.

**Misplaced Modifier** - When the modifier or subject that goes with it is in the wrong place

*Flying far, Antarctica is where some birds go.*

The above example contains a misplaced modifier because the detail or noun are in the wrong place. The phrase “flying far” should be near the noun it modifies, which is “birds.”

Since modifiers are often phrases that get added with a comma, a good way to avoid modifier issues is to **make sure the phrase before a comma matches what’s after the comma**. See the examples below.

Correct

*Running upstairs, I tripped on the last step.*

*When he came for Christmas, Dad went straight for the refrigerator to eat the cake inside.*

*Teaching soldiers about the art of war, Sun Tzu wrote a book that contained his knowledge.*

Incorrect

*Running upstairs, the dog then tripped me.*

*When he came for Christmas, the cake inside the refrigerator was eaten by Dad.*

*Teaching soldiers about the art of war, Sun Tzu’s writing skills were contained in his book.*

Review

What is a modifier? \_\_\_\_\_

What words or phrases are modifiers? \_\_\_\_\_

What is a dangling modifier? \_\_\_\_\_

What is a misplaced modifier? \_\_\_\_\_

Write a sentence that contains a dangling modifier.

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Write a sentence that contains a misplaced modifier.

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Rewrite the sentences below to correct the errors.

1. After eating, the delicious pizza tasted even better.

2. Walking down the street, the trees looked particularly beautiful.

3. While driving, the accident caused a major delay.

4. Running through the park, my keys fell out of my pocket.

5. Sitting on the porch, the sunset painted the sky in vibrant colors.

6. Having been studying all night, the exam seemed easier than expected.

7. As a beginner, the advanced level of the class was overwhelming.

8. By practicing daily, the piano became easier to play.

9. With a broken leg, my friend helped me move the furniture.

10. Eating quickly, the meal left me feeling unsatisfied.

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## Grammar Review

In this exercise, you will be creating incorrect sentences on purpose. This way, you can understand how errors are created and will be more aware of them when you come across them. Refer to the glossary near the back of the book to check the meaning of terms if you are unsure.

Write a fragment.

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Write a run-on.

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Write a sentence with a modifier issue.

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Write a sentence with an error in subject-verb agreement.

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Write a sentence that contains an error in tense.

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Write a sentence that contains a pronoun error.

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Write a sentence that contains a comma splice.

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Write a sentence that misuses commas.

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Write a sentence that misuses the semicolon.

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## Choosing Conclusions

When editing passages, you can expect questions that will ask you for the best concluding sentence to summarize the passage and support the author's argument. So, once again, **pick the choice that summarizes the main ideas.**

Usually, the authors have three or four paragraphs to make their points. Write a few words that summarize each paragraph to understand what the author is talking about. **The best conclusion combines the main points of all the paragraphs.** Finding the main idea of each paragraph will be helpful here. We will practice that skill more later on in the reading section.

A **good conclusion** will usually do one or more of the following:

- \*Summarize the author's main points
- \*Recommend a plan for what to do in the future
- \*Explain how this topic connects to what is happening now or what happens later
- \*Explain how somebody or something will be remembered
- \*Connect to a larger point (*persistence, donate, efficiency* etc.) to explain why someone should care.

If an answer choice does one or more of these, it is more likely to be a correct answer. It is also possible to see bad conclusions in the answer choices, and these are ones that you can eliminate.

A **bad conclusion** will usually do one or more of the following:

- \*Bring up a new point that needs to be explained (Remember, we're here to *end* the passage!)
- \*Talk about something that is unrelated to the main idea
- \*Argue against the author's opinion
- \*Exclude a major point the author had (Remember that authors usually have multiple)
- \*Mention something from the past without connecting it to the present or future. Ideas are usually in sequence, and we don't want to go back in time!

A **conclusion also needs to feel like an ending.** If the answer choice you are reading does not feel like it ends or summarizes the passage, then it is probably not a good conclusion. Sometimes, it is helpful to find a choice that uses concluding transitions, like *in summation, to conclude, or overall*. Equally important is that you know how the author feels about what they are writing, so that you can **pick an answer choice that agrees with the author's opinion and tone.**

## Review

What is the basic function of a conclusion? \_\_\_\_\_

What are some features of a good conclusion? \_\_\_\_\_

What are some elements of a bad conclusion? \_\_\_\_\_

Should there be new ideas in the conclusion? \_\_\_\_\_

Let's practice. We will answer this first question together.

(1) Virtual reality became widely popular in the 1990s, but it has been a difficult concept to exact. (2) For one, graphics technology could only render polygons and other simple shapes, meaning that the images were crude compared to those found in the video games of today. (3) For another, a 5-digit price tag made the devices inaccessible to many people who couldn't afford them. (4) However, there has been a recent resurgence of interest in virtual reality technology, mostly because these problems have been remedied.

Which of these sentences serves as the best conclusion for the paragraph?

- a) In the 1990s, when virtual reality first emerged, computerization had not nearly reached the extent that it has today.
- b) The success of virtual reality led to Oculus, a company specializing in VR, to become a well-known name.
- c) Virtual reality may still be developing, but augmented reality apps have been released with multiple million-dollar levels of success.
- d) As computer graphics have advanced and the price point of the technology has lowered, along with getting rid of these two obstacles has led to the renewed interest in virtual reality.

Choice A takes a step back and brings up the early history of virtual reality. However, it would not make much sense to end the paragraph with this sentence, considering the passage goes in a sequence from the 1990s to the present day.

Choice B brings in a loosely related detail about a virtual reality company, but remember that endings should not bring up any new details – instead, they should restate what the author has already mentioned.

Choice C changes the subject and brings in a new point about augmented reality, and would thus not be a good conclusion.

Choice D refers to points that the author has mentioned in the paragraph: how the limiting price and poor graphics have changed. This sentence is also a good continuation of that last sentence, explaining how the problems have been solved. This is our best answer.

Ok, now do some practice on your own. Remember that **conclusions should restate what the author has already said.**

(1) The Appalachian Mountains span a huge range of the eastern United States, and the term "Appalachia" refers to the towns and surrounding scenery that cover the same area. (2) An estimated 25 million people live in Appalachia, which is about equal to the number of people living in Australia. (3) Life in Appalachia is, by necessity, different from life in other parts of the United States. The mountainous terrain is not conducive to large cities, and the area is dotted with small towns full of tightly knit communities. (5) The people of Appalachia tend to be more able to survive independently than city dwellers due to a lack of infrastructure. (6) A sizable number of residents even hunt for their own food.

2. Which of the following sentences would make the best conclusion for the paragraph?

- a) Unfortunately, poverty is prevalent in many areas of Appalachia, and there are few long-term job prospects.
- b) The population of Appalachia has been stagnant and even decreasing in some areas – not everybody can deal with the rugged nature of mountain life.
- c) In short, the environmental circumstances around the Appalachian Mountains have created a certain way of life for its residents.
- d) The largest city in West Virginia is Charleston, with a modest population of 50,000.

Defend your answer. What are the words or phrases in the other sentences that can be found in the conclusion sentence you chose?

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Why are the other answer choices incorrect?

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(1) Basketball is a sport with an unlikely origin – despite its association with athleticism and determination, basketball was invented by a minister in training. (2) Noticing that his physical education class was disorderly, the minister invented a game that involved tossing balls into peach baskets. (3) He then established rules, and many of those rules are still employed in the basketball games of today.

3. Which of the following sentences would make the best conclusion for this paragraph?
- a) Basketball is now a multibillion-dollar sports industry with teams in several cities.
  - b) The minister took his inspiration from a rock-throwing game that he used to play as a child.
  - c) While the game has changed over the years, the principle of tossing a ball into a basket has remained constant.
  - d) This first game of basketball took place at a YMCA in Springfield, Massachusetts.

What are some irrelevant details in the other answer choices?

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(1) The percentage of people who drive cars in major cities has dropped sharply in the last few decades. (2) This has had some definite benefits, such as greater government investment in public infrastructure, and clean, less polluted air. (3) However, the reason behind this decline is sobering: many city residents no longer have the money to buy their own cars, particularly due to the decline in wages in the past few decades. (4) Owning a car also comes with a litany of associated charges, including maintenance, insurance, and gas.

4. Which of the following sentences would make the best conclusion for this paragraph?
- a) Despite these issues, car companies have largely managed to maintain their profits.
  - b) As the gap between rich and poor Americans widens, the amount of car owners will continue to decline.
  - c) However, instead of dwelling on those negatives, we should focus on the positive environmental aspects that such a change will bring.
  - d) Still, as gas mileage on newer cars improves, and as the United States moves closer to energy independence, gas prices will eventually no longer be a concern.

How does the answer you chose connect to the present or future?

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What are the irrelevant details in the other answer choices?

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## Moving Sentences

On the SHSAT, when you read a paragraph, one or more of the sentences may be in the wrong place, and it is your goal to figure out how to arrange that sentence. There are a few tricks for figuring out where a sentence should go in a passage. **When figuring out where to add or move a sentence, look for:**

- Shared Words
- Similar Sentence Structure
- Transitions
- Abbreviations
- Pronouns
- Paragraph Structure

Let's figure out how to use these strategies. This will make it really easy for you to place sentences where they belong.

**Shared words** and context are important considerations when figuring out where to put a sentence. Sentences are usually connected in some way, so two sentences that work together best when they are talking about a similar topic. For instance, if the passage is about medicine, and there are two sentences about doctors, chances are those two sentences will be close to each other.

Look for common words or phrases to figure out where to insert a sentence. If the sentence you move interrupts two ideas that should be connected, find another place for it!

Sometimes, a similar sentence **structure**, or the way the sentence is written, indicates two sentences will be near each other. Some sentences may say "*On the East Coast, some major industries are finance and technology.*" Another sentence might say "*In the Midwest, the major industries tend to be agriculture and manufacturing.*" These sentences have a similar structure because they are built in a similar way.

Let's break down the sentence mentioned before.

*On the East Coast, some major industries are finance and technology.*

(preposition) (article) (location), (specific examples of industries)

*In the Midwest, the major industries tend to be agriculture and manufacturing.*

(preposition) (article) (location), (specific examples of industries)

This similar structure is a strong sign that the two sentences will be near each other.



Next, **transitions**. Remember, these are words like “*however,*” “*because,*” or “*for example*”. (You should be able to name the four main types of transitions by now. If you don’t remember, look back.) Looking at transitions is a good way of figuring out where a sentence needs to be placed. Does it contrast with another point? Is it the cause or effect of something? Is the author using an example to give more information? Remember that there are also “time” transitions (*first/next/then/last*) that can help you figure out where to place a sentence.

Also, you can try to use **pronouns** to help you figure out where to place a sentence in a passage. If we have learned in Lesson 2, pronouns are words that replace nouns. For example: *he, she, it, we, these...* Pronouns can help you figure out where to put a sentence because authors need to write the full name of something before they can use a shortened form. It’s almost like the trick we use with abbreviations. The passage may say “Mark” at first, but will likely shorten that name to “he” later.

Pay attention to **abbreviations**, which are shorter versions of names, to help you. For example, you might see the phrase “W.H.O” at some point in the paragraph, but it would make sense for the author to write something like “World Health Organization” before that point, so that you can figure out what those letters stand for. To use another example, you may see “Mahatma Gandhi” at first as a full name, and later, just “Gandhi” as an abbreviated name.

You can look out for all these hints - shared words, pronouns, transitions, and abbreviations - in *surrounding* sentences as well.

You can also use your knowledge of **paragraph structure** (how paragraphs are built) to help place the sentence. You have already learned how to write introductions and conclusions, and you can use your skills to figure out if the sentence you must add should be at the beginning, middle, or end of the paragraph. Remember that paragraphs start out with general information and then add more specific supporting details later on.

After you have moved the sentence, it is a good idea to **check your work** to make sure the ideas flow smoothly and do not interrupt any major points.

Let’s try to do this and see if you can use these skills to figure out how to move sentences around. The first example is done for you.

(1) Animal lovers are often told to adopt their pets rather than get them from the pet store. (2) While the animals in pet stores are typically pure and free of complications, they tend to be more expensive. (3) The logic of the animal lovers is that the animals from shelters need love too. (4) Sometimes, there is an abundance of animals that pile into these shelters. (5) One result of this problem is that if animals are not adopted within a certain period, they are killed.

The author wants to add the sentence: “Unfortunately, this is a common problem in many shelters.” What would be the best place to insert this sentence?

- a) After sentence 1
- b) After sentence 2
- c) After sentence 3
- d) After sentence 4

Let's look at that sentence again. We have the **transition** of unfortunately, meaning that this sentence will introduce or explain more about a problem. We have the **pronoun** "this," and we need to figure out what "this" means in the sentence. We also have the **shared word** "problem," meaning that the previous sentence must have defined a problem.

Considering all these clues, the best place for the sentence is after Sentence 4. Sentence 4 talks about how sometimes shelters have too many animals. The sentence we need to add talks about an unfortunate side effect and explains that "this" is a "problem". Thus, Choice D is correct.

A and B are incorrect because the author has not yet talked about shelters.

C is incorrect because the previous sentence did not talk about a problem.

Try to answer these next few problems without help this time. Remember to check your work when you have finished.

(1) Imagine if it were possible to send mail through a tube. You would write a letter, drop it into the tube, and have it delivered to somebody in the same city just a few minutes later. (2) Unfortunately, the pneumatic tube system was discontinued as people found faster and cheaper ways to send mail. (3) For many people in New York City, this futuristic dream was a reality. (4) From the late 1800s to the mid-1900s, the city had a system of tubes tunneling through many major buildings. (5) People used these pneumatic tubes to send all types of mail – one person even sent a cat! (6) Unfortunately, the pneumatic tube system was discontinued as people found faster and cheaper ways to send mail. (7) However, in certain iconic office buildings, such as 500 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue and the Empire State Building, it is still possible to see remnants of these tubes.

1. The author wants to insert the sentence "This way seems more convenient for waiting several days for mail to come in." Where would be the best place in the paragraph to do so?

- a) After Sentence 2
- b) After Sentence 3
- c) After Sentence 4
- d) After Sentence 5

What are some "clue words" or phrases in the sentence you are asked to insert?

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(1) Students worldwide learn about Vincent van Gogh from their art classes. (2) Van Gogh represents a tortured soul with a brilliant creative mind. (3) However, Van Gogh was not immediately successful in his artistic endeavors. (4) In fact, he had attained very little commercial success until after his death.

2. The author wants to add the sentence "In fact, van Gogh is often one of the first classic figures the learn about." What is the best place for this sentence in the paragraph?

- a) Before Sentence 1
- b) Before Sentence 2
- c) Before Sentence 3
- d) Before Sentence 4

What transition in the sentence you are asked about helps you understand where it should be placed?

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What abbreviation is in the sentence?

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What pronoun is in the sentence?

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You can tell whether this sentence should come earlier or later in the paragraph - how do you know?

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## How to Read Poetry

Many students find poetry challenging. This is because poems are written differently than other forms of writing. Deciphering poetry is like solving a riddle. The words can be challenging, the form is unusual compared to other forms of writing, and there is often a heavy emphasis on **figurative language**, which means language that is not literal. The goal of this lesson is to help you understand poetry more and answer poetry questions more confidently.

First, what are some features unique to poetry? Poetry is more focused on **form**, which is the shape the poem makes on paper. Form sometimes adds depth to the poem. Rather than tell a story, poems often freeze a moment in time and describe it in great detail along with the larger themes that can be learned from that moment and the emotions the speaker feels. **The speaker is the narrator of the poem.**

Poetry focuses on sound because many poems are meant to be read aloud. Some of your favorite songs probably started out as poems! Poets are thought of as master-level writers, so they will use advanced words very specific to the situation they are writing about. In good poetry, the placement and use of every word serves a purpose. Poems are often much denser and more descriptive than other types of writing. The aim of poetry is to pack as much information into as little space as possible. This means that many of our usual reading strategies need to be adapted. Here is some advice for reading poetry.

### -Focus on literal meaning.

Although poems use many metaphors, most of the questions will ask you quite literally what happens. You need to understand the basic idea of the poem before you can think about the figurative parts.

### -Expect things to be metaphorical.

Because poems use metaphors often, things are often not what they seem to be. If the author talks about "*walking down a long road*," this may not be literal. Maybe the poet is referring to a difficult or lengthy process, and the road could be a metaphor for life.

### -Read sentence by sentence rather than line by line.

Often you are taught to read poems aloud and stop at the end of the line, especially with rhyming poetry. However, it is easier to understand poems when you read them as if they are any other passage, stopping at the end of the sentence, because this is where the idea ends. Poems on the SHSAT are typically non-rhyming poems.

### -Read it more slowly than usual.

Poems have atypical sentence structures. If you read a line like "*Came down the snow, heavily,*" it may take a moment for your brain to untangle that sentence, because it is not written in a common sentence structure.

### -Think about what theme(s) the poem focuses on.

Poems often focus on one, or a few, broader themes. Some common themes in poetry include *change, love, nature, beauty, death, family, and aging.*

**-Annotate after each stanza.**

A **stanza** is like a paragraph in poetry. Each stanza has a main idea. Just like in your other reading comprehension practice, writing a few words about each stanza after you have read it will help you stay on track.

**-Pay attention to the connotation.**

Are the items in the poem generally described as more positive or negative? What is the mood of the poem and the emotions associated with those words?

**-Pay attention to the last stanza.**

Writing poetry is often like a therapy session for the writer, where he or she will have loose ideas at first and come to an ultimate realization at the end. This is part of why the last stanza is so important. There is also a convention in poetry of having a shift in tone near the end, so see if that applies to the poem you are reading.

Let's practice identifying themes. Remember that common themes in poetry are *change, love, nature, beauty, death, family, and aging*. Read the couplets (two-line poems) below and identify which theme fits best for that poem.

*In life's dance, time weaves its rhythmic,  
Transforming souls, revealing every heart.*

Theme: \_\_\_\_\_

*In my brother's embrace, our eternal song,  
Binding hearts together, forever strong.*

Theme: \_\_\_\_\_

*As years unfurl like pages in a book,  
Wrinkles bring depth, each chapter worth a second look.*

Theme: \_\_\_\_\_

*In shared moments, hearts beat as one,  
A symphony of souls beneath the sun.*

Theme: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Read this paragraph.

(1) Every morning, Jane wakes up early and makes herself a cup of coffee. (2) She then reads the newspaper while she enjoys her breakfast. (3) Yesterday, she also went for a jog in the park before starting her workday. (4) Last week, Jane finishes reading a novel that she had started a month ago.

Which of the following sentences should be corrected to fix an incorrect shift in verb tense?

- a) Sentence 1
- b) Sentence 2
- c) Sentence 3
- d) Sentence 4

#### REVISING/EDITING Part B

**DIRECTIONS:** Read the passage below and answer the questions following it. You will be asked to improve the writing quality of the passage and to correct errors so that the passage follows the conventions of standard written English. You may reread the passage if you need to. Mark the best answer for each question.

### Off-the-Beaten Path

(1) In the bustling city of New York, there are many things to see and things to do. (2) From the towering buildings of Manhattan to the serene segments of Central Park, there is never a dull moment. (3) However, with so much activity going on, it can be easy to overlook the smaller details that make the city unique. (4) Take, for example, the hidden alleyways tucked away between buildings or the quaint coffee shops nestled in quiet neighborhoods. (5) New York City is a city that has historically been known for its alleys, but other cities such as Boston and Chicago now have more prominent alleys than New York. (6) Exploring these lesser-known spots can provide a more authentic experience of the city, allowing visitors to discover its true charm and character.

(7) As visitors delve deeper into the city's labyrinthine streets, they may stumble upon vibrant street art along the walls of Bushwick or Greenwich Village, or encounter a street performer captivating passersby in Union Square or Times Square with their talents. (8) Each corner reveals a new facet of New York's rich cultural tapestry, from the aroma of sizzling food carts offering diverse culinary delights in Chinatown to the melodic sounds of jazz music drifting from cozy bars in Harlem. (9) Beyond the well-trodden paths lies a plethora of lesser-known museums such as the Skyscraper Museum, the Bone Museum, and the Kennel Club Museum of the Dog. (10) New York City is overall a unique and interesting place.

4. How can sentence 1 be rewritten to become more precise?

- a) In the bustling city of New York, there are many things to see and activities to do.
- b) In the bustling city of New York, there are many sights to observe.
- c) With over 400 skyscrapers and a prominent 843-acre park, the bustling city of New York has something to offer everyone.
- d) The bustling city of New York has many parks and skyscrapers.

5. Which sentence is irrelevant to the passage and can be deleted?

- a) Sentence 3
- b) Sentence 4
- c) Sentence 5
- d) Sentence 6

6. What sentence would best follow and support sentence 9?

- a) These locations offer a fascinating glimpse into aspects of architecture and culture.
- b) Many New Yorkers also enjoy the world-class performances on the busy streets of Broadway.
- c) The museums have varying hours, so it is important to check before planning a visit.
- d) The latter museum is particularly interesting to those who have a fascination with animals.

7. What transition word would best begin sentence 9?

- a) However,
- b) Moreover,
- c) For instance,
- d) As a result,

8. What sentence would best replace sentence 1 to conclude the passage overall?

- a) In conclusion, the famous tourist areas are popular for a reason, and are thus worth visiting.
- b) Indeed, the heart of New York beats not only in its iconic landmarks but also in its hidden corners, waiting to be discovered by those who dare to venture off the beaten path.
- c) New York City is a place that undergoes great change, building structures that then get demolished within a generation.
- d) While the most covert locations in and around New York City are fascinating, the cost of living makes the city a challenging place to thrive in.

9. Sentence 2 should be placed:

- a) Where it is now
- b) After Sentence 3
- c) After Sentence 5
- d) After Sentence 9

## The Challenger

*This poem compares a ride in the New York City subway system to space travel.*

Hurling through dark, star after star crosses - some redshifted, some blue  
The floor is a maple constellation. We fly on a  
Craft tethered to metal, propelling us to the planet Prince Street where  
Men and women small as a beach ball walk on tiled walls.

Suddenly the shuttle screeches to a stop, blast doors slide open and there is this  
Electric crackle punching the air as a red light flashes, a beep, pneumatic hiss.  
High frequency radio transmissions – Control makes announcements  
“Ladies and Gentlemen, we are going out of hyperdrive.”  
And we shuttle through the detour of deer space.

17. What imagery does the poet use to describe the stars in the first line of the poem, and what effect does this imagery create?

- a) The stars are described as flickering and evoking a sense of warmth and comfort.
- b) The stars are compared to lights flashing by in a dark tunnel, creating a feeling of speed.
- c) The stars are likened to dancers twirling in the night, conveying a sense of grace and fluidity.
- d) The stars are compared to raindrops falling from the sky, suggesting a feeling of abundance and movement.

18. How does the poet describe the floor of the craft?

- a) The floor is described as cold and metallic.
- b) The floor is likened to a garden of flowers.
- c) The floor is depicted as a mosaic of wood.
- d) The floor is compared to a mirror.

19. Describe the atmosphere and setting portrayed as the craft arrives at "Prince Street." What elements contribute to the sense of otherworldliness?

- a) The atmosphere is described as bustling and crowded, with neon lights illuminating the streets.
- b) The setting is depicted as ethereal, with gravity-defying individuals walking on tiled walls.
- c) The atmosphere is tense and foreboding, with ominous shadows lurking in the corners.
- d) The setting is chaotic and unpredictable, with unpredictable weather patterns and unfamiliar terrain.



20. What sensory details does the poet use to convey the moment after the shuttle comes to a stop? How do these details contribute to the reader's experience?

- a) The poet describes a deafening silence, emphasizing the suddenness of the stop and creating a sense of suspense.
- b) The poet focuses on the smell of burning rubber, evoking a feeling of danger and urgency.
- c) The poet mentions odd lights and sounds, symbolizing the transition from stillness to movement.
- d) The poet describes a feeling of weightlessness, highlighting the disorienting nature of space travel.

21. How does the phrase "going out of hyperdrive" contribute to the development of the poem?

- a) It depicts a train shifting from express to local service.
- b) It shows that the train is going into a yard and suggests the journey is ending.
- c) It signifies a shift in focus from the physical world to the spiritual world.
- d) It highlights the dangers of technology and progress, warning against the consequences of unchecked advancement.

## Practice Test 3

SAMPLE TEST, FORM PART 1 — ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

IMPORTANT NOTE: The Revising/Editing section (Questions 1-11) is in two parts: Part A and Part B.

REVISING/EDITING Part A DIRECTIONS: Read and answer each of the following questions. You will be asked to recognize and correct errors in sentences or short paragraphs. Mark the best answer for each question.

1. Read this sentence.

After a difficult basketball game, Anthony took the time to do nothing on the bleachers.

Which of these is the most precise revision of the words **took the time to do nothing on the bleachers**?

- a) breathed in and out of the bleachers
- b) regained his breath by sitting on the bleachers
- c) did absolutely nothing in the bleachers
- d) came back to normal breathing in the bleachers

2. Read this paragraph.

(1) Cheetahs are the fastest land animals, capable of reaching speeds up to 60 miles per hour. (2) Their sleek bodies and long legs are adapted for swift running, aiding them in chasing down prey on the African savannah. (3) With keen eyesight and sharp claws, cheetahs are formidable hunters, relying on their speed and ability to catch food. (4) As the sun sets over the horizon, the silhouette of a cheetah in the tall grass, camouflaging it from potential threats.

Which sentence should be revised to correct a fragment?

- a) Sentence 1
- b) Sentence 2
- c) Sentence 3
- d) Sentence 4

## The Acid Jazz Cartoon

Hey Arnold, an animated television series created by Craig Bartlett, captivated audiences with its unique blend of humor, heart, and memorable characters. One of the distinctive elements of the show was its eclectic soundtrack, which incorporated various genres of music to enhance the storytelling experience. Among these genres, acid jazz emerged as a prominent musical influence, adding depth and sophistication to the series' soundtrack.

Acid jazz, a genre that combines elements of jazz, funk, soul, and electronic music, became popular in the 1980s and 1990s. Characterized by its funky bass lines, syncopated rhythms, and improvisational style, acid jazz provided a dynamic and contemporary sound that resonated with Hey Arnold's urban setting and diverse cast of characters.

Throughout the series, acid jazz served as the backdrop for many memorable scenes, enhancing the mood and atmosphere of Arnold's bustling city neighborhood. From the lively streets of Hillwood to the cozy confines of Arnold's boarding house, the infectious grooves of acid jazz infused each episode with energy and vitality.

One notable example of acid jazz's influence in Hey Arnold is evident in the show's opening theme song, composed by Jim Lang. The catchy, upbeat melody, accompanied by jazzy instrumentation and funky rhythms, perfectly captures the essence of the show and sets the tone for the episodes.

In addition to the theme song, acid jazz can be heard in various other musical cues and background tracks throughout Hey Arnold. Whether it's the smooth saxophone solos, funky guitar riffs, or soulful keyboard melodies, acid jazz adds depth and texture to the series' audio landscape, creating a rich and immersive auditory experience for viewers.

Beyond its role in enhancing the show's soundtrack, acid jazz in Hey Arnold also reflects the multicultural and diverse nature of the urban environment in which the series is set. By incorporating elements of funk, and soul, Hey Arnold pays homage to the vibrant musical heritage of cities like New York, where different cultures and musical styles coexist and influence one another.

In conclusion, the use of acid jazz in Hey Arnold demonstrates the show's commitment to creating a rich and immersive storytelling experience. Through its infectious rhythms, soulful melodies, and dynamic instrumentation, acid jazz adds depth, energy, and authenticity to the series, leaving a permanent mark on the memories of fans worldwide.

47. According to the article, what role did acid jazz play in the television series Hey Arnold?

- a) It served as the primary focus of the show's storyline.
- b) It provided a dynamic and modern soundtrack for the series.
- c) It was featured exclusively in the show's opening theme song.
- d) It represented a departure from the show's urban setting and diverse characters.

48. According to the sixth paragraph, how does the article suggest that acid jazz reflects the multicultural nature of Hey Arnold's urban environment?

- a) By incorporating elements of jazz, funk, and soul, acid jazz pays homage to the vibrant musical heritage of major cities.
- b) By contrasting the show's urban setting with the diverse musical influences of acid jazz.
- c) By limiting the use of acid jazz to specific characters or storylines that represent multiculturalism.
- d) By emphasizing the role of acid jazz in creating a rich and immersive storytelling experience for viewers.

49. Which line best illustrates the best example of the content of an acid jazz song?

- a) *Among these genres, acid jazz emerged as a prominent musical influence, adding depth and sophistication to the series' soundtrack.* (Paragraph 1)
- b) *Characterized by its funky basslines, syncopated rhythms, and improvisational style, acid jazz provided a dynamic and contemporary sound...* (Paragraph 2)
- c) *Throughout the series, acid jazz serves as the backdrop for many memorable scenes, enhancing the mood and atmosphere of Arnold's bustling city neighborhood.* (Paragraph 3)
- d) *One notable example of acid jazz's influence on Hey Arnold is evident in the show's opening theme song, composed by Jim Lang.* (Paragraph 4)

50. Read this line from the article.

**The catchy, upbeat melody, accompanied by lively instrumentation and funky rhythms...**

How does this line contribute to the development of the passage?

- a) It shows how acid jazz added flavor to an otherwise boring television program.
- b) It shows how the music in Hey Arnold imbued the show's opening with a lively energy.
- c) It indicates the complex and gloomy side of acid jazz instrumentation.
- d) It presents an irritating genre of music that composer Jim Lang would like to distance himself from.

51. Which of these answer choices best summarizes the first two paragraphs?

- a) In Hey Arnold, acid jazz serves as a central element of the show's soundtrack, while in other series, it is used sparingly for specific scenes or characters.
- b) The animated television series "Hey Arnold" incorporated acid jazz into its soundtrack, reflecting the dynamic urban setting and diverse cast.
- c) In the animated series Hey Arnold, acid jazz is primarily associated with specific characters or storylines, whereas in other series, it is used more broadly throughout the soundtrack.
- d) In the program Hey Arnold, acid jazz is used exclusively in the show's opening theme song, while in other series, it is used interchangeably with other genres of music.

52. What is the author's apparent opinion about the use of acid jazz in Hey Arnold?

- a) Acid jazz is overall an unimportant attribute of the series.
- b) The use of acid jazz inspired the creators to add a multicultural cast of characters.
- c) Acid jazz is a dynamic genre that resonates with the urban setting and diverse cast of characters.
- d) Acid jazz provides the harsh backdrop that emphasizes the gritty realism of Hey Arnold's urban environment.

SAMPLE

40. Answer: A

The passage mentions that *some scientists argue that the harsh conditions on Mars make it unlikely to support life as we know it, while others contend that life may exist in subsurface environments where liquid water and organic compounds could provide the necessary ingredients for microbial life*. This reflects a debate within the scientific community about the likelihood of life on Mars.

B is incorrect because the passage states that there are differing opinions among scientists regarding the likelihood of life on Mars, so not all scientists agree that Mars is incapable of supporting life.

C and D are incorrect because they contain extreme statements that were not even mentioned in the passage.

41. Answer: B

The passage mentions the harsh conditions on Mars, including a thin atmosphere and high levels of radiation, which some scientists argue make it unlikely to support life as we know it, suggesting that these conditions may not be conducive to life.

A is incorrect because it goes against the logic of the statements in the passage. The presence of water and organic compounds suggests the possibility of life on Mars, so it would not be considered a sign that there may not be life on the planet.

C and D are incorrect because these features are irrelevant to the presence of life on Mars.

42. Answer: C

The passage states that future missions, including sample return missions and human exploration, hold the promise of furthering our understanding of Mars' potential for harboring life, suggesting that one of their primary purposes is to search for signs of life in Martian subsurface environments.

B and D are incorrect because while human exploration and rock analysis are mentioned as future missions, these things are not explicitly mentioned as a primary purpose.

A is incorrect because terraforming Mars to make it habitable for humans is not mentioned as a primary purpose of future missions in the passage.

43. Answer: C

The chart shows U.S. Residents' Belief in Extraterrestrial Life, 2022 Survey Results, indicating that it serves to provide information about Americans' beliefs regarding extraterrestrial life, suggesting that Americans are interested in the possibility of life on other planets.

A is incorrect because The chart does not establish a probability of life on other planets but rather reflects Americans' beliefs regarding the existence of extraterrestrial life.

B is incorrect because the chart does not show scientists' opinions but rather Americans' beliefs regarding extraterrestrial life.

C is incorrect because the chart does not show the likelihood of life on different planets but rather polls Americans' beliefs regarding the existence of extraterrestrial life.

44. Answer: A

The chart shows that more than half of Americans altogether have a strong or moderate belief in the existence of extraterrestrial life, suggesting that a majority of Americans believe life exists outside Earth.

B is incorrect because the chart does not specify whether Americans believe in alien life within our own solar system but rather reflects their beliefs regarding extraterrestrial life in general.

C is incorrect because the chart shows the opinion of the public, not of scientists.

D is incorrect because the chart does not provide historical data to compare changes in public opinion over time, focusing only on one year.

45. Answer: B

The passage presents both sides of the debate regarding the likelihood of life on Mars, acknowledging arguments from scientists who are skeptical as well as those who believe in the possibility of life.

A and C are incorrect because the passage presents arguments from scientists who are skeptical and optimistic about the likelihood of life on Mars but does not indicate that the author shares these feelings.

D is incorrect because this is not an opinion that the author states.

46. Answer: C

The passage provides the strongest evidence that Mars may host life because methane detection, a gas primarily produced by biological processes on Earth, suggests the possibility of organic compounds and potentially microbial life on Mars.

A is incorrect because while evidence of Mars' watery past is significant, it does not directly suggest the presence of current life.

B and D are incorrect because the missions that are described provide valuable data but do not directly indicate the presence of life.

Roosevelt Speech

47. Answer: C

The passage discusses the economic distress faced by citizens, highlighting unemployment, low wages, and the failure of the financial system, indicating that economic hardship is the main issue.