



ACT English Course

For The New Enhanced ACT

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Table of Contents

Introduction to the English Test 1

What is on the English Test?
How to Approach the English Test?
Pacing

Part 1: Grammar Questions

Chapter 1: Sentence Structure.....4

Independent Clauses, Dependent Clauses, and Phrases
Sentence Fragments
5 Rules for Compound Sentences
Comma Splices

Chapter 2: Commas – 4 Types of Commas12

Unnecessary Information Commas
The Names Rule
“That” vs. “Which” Phrases
“ing” and “ed” Phrases
Punctuation for Prepositional Phrases and Transitional Word/Phrases
Listing Commas
Adjective Lists with and without Commas – “The Switching Trick”
The “1-Comma” Rule

Chapter 3: Semicolons, Colons, Dashes, Apostrophes, and Quotation Marks29

Semicolons Rules
Colons Usage and Rules
Dashes Usage and Rules
Apostrophes – Possession and Contractions
Quotation Marks and Commas Rules

Chapter 1-3 Problem Set40

Chapter 4: Verbs44

Subject-Verb Agreement
Verb Tense
Irregular Verbs – “a” vs. “u” version (swam vs. swum, ran vs. run, etc.)
How to Spot Subject-Verb Agreement vs. Verb Tense Questions

Chapter 5: Pronouns.....53

Pronoun Case
“Who” vs. “Whom”
Pronouns Agreement
Ambiguous Pronouns

Chapter 6: Misplaced Modifiers62
What is a Misplaced Modifier?
Misplaced Modifiers with Commas
Misplaced Modifiers without Commas
Misplaced Modifiers with Parentheses
How to Spot Misplaced Modifiers Questions

Chapter 7: Parallel Structure71
Parallel Structure and Lists
Parallel Structure and Comparisons
How to Spot Parallel Structure Questions

Chapter 8: Other Miscellaneous Topics.....77
Commonly Confused Words
“Than” vs. “Then”
“Have” vs. “of”
Countable vs. Non-countable Adjectives
Active Voice vs. Passive Voice
Prepositional Idioms

Chapter 9: Grammar Review83

Part 2: Style Questions

Chapter 10: Redundancy, Wordiness, and Irrelevance90
How to Spot Redundancy, Wordiness, and Irrelevance Questions

Chapter 11: Word Choice94

Chapter 12: Transitions.....98
How to Approach Transitions Questions
2 Types of Transitions Questions
Categories of Transitions

Part 3: Paragraph Modification Questions

Chapter 13: Which Choice102

Chapter 14: Adding or Deleting Information.....102

Chapter 15: Logical Placement.....116

Answer Key120

Introduction to the English Test

The English Test on the ACT is a 35-minute section composed of 50 questions designed to test your knowledge of grammar rules, language, and rhetorical skills. The questions will be presented in a variety of ways, all of which we will work through together in this course.

What is on the English test?

Overall, the English Test will feel like editing a paper. As you work through the passages, you will come across underlined portions or boxed numbers that will ask you to somehow edit or analyze the passage. We like to say that there are 3 general types of questions:

1. Grammar Questions

Grammar questions test your knowledge of standard English grammar rules. Grammar questions always ask:

1. Which choice makes the sentence most grammatically acceptable?

Topics tested on grammar questions include sentence structure, punctuation, verbs, pronouns, misplaced modifiers, parallel structure, and other miscellaneous grammar rules. To answer these questions correctly, you will need to know all of the grammar rules tests on the ACT. We promise that you will learn more grammar in this course than you have learned in all of high school so far! Grammar questions will range from easy to very difficult, so they are the most important to master to achieve top ACT English Test scores.

2. Style Questions

Style questions test your ability to analyze the style and effectiveness of the passage. More specifically, these questions test you on conciseness, redundancy, irrelevance, word choice, and transitions. Style questions on the new Enhanced ACT specifically tell you as to what topic the question is on. The questions look like this:

1. Which choice is least redundant in the content?
2. Which choice most effectively maintains the essay's tone?
3. Which choice is the clearest and most precise in context?
4. Which transition word or phrase is the most logical in context?

Overall, style questions are very easy once we teach you how to approach them and understand what the ACT is testing you on.

3. Paragraph Modification Questions

Paragraph modification questions test your ability to comprehend the author's argument, place information properly, decide whether to add or delete information, and answer questions related to specific details in the passage. To answer these questions correctly, you will need to read the questions carefully to identify what the ACT is asking you to do and read for context.

1. The writer is considering deleting the underlined sentence. Should it be kept or deleted?
2. Which choice best highlights why the boy dropped his ice cream?
3. If the writer were to delete _____, the sentence would primarily lose:
4. For the sake of logic and coherence, the underlined sentence should be placed:

Similar to style questions, paragraph modification questions are generally easy once you learn how to approach them correctly. Some common examples of paragraph modification questions are:

How to Approach the English Test?

It is important to read the entire passage. Do not skip between underlined portions. The most common mistake that students make is to rush and not read the passage and/or questions carefully enough. Take your time! This section is one that students generally do not have issues with time management, especially once you know all of the grammar rules we are about to learn.

When dealing with grammar questions, read the sentence and look for errors. Pay careful attention to punctuation, especially for commas. Even if you do not spot any errors, **always look at all of the answer choices.** Sometime the answers choices will help you spot an error that you initially missed or help you recognize what the question is testing you on.

Keep yourself moving. In other words, if you are not sure about a problem, do not waste too much time stressing about it. **If you are unsure about which answer is correct, bubble in your best guess, circle the questions number, and move on.** There are 50 questions on the test, so one question is not going to make or break your score. At the end, if you have time left over, you can return to the circled questions and spend more time on them. A fresh look at these questions may also help you spot the correct answer.

Pacing

On the English Test, you will answer 50 questions in 35 minutes. On average, you have 42 seconds per questions. Of course, that number is not helpful for pacing, so we recommend that you memorize that **you have 7 minutes for every 10 questions.**

You will work through 6 passages. The number of questions vary per passage. There will be 4 longer passages with 10 questions per passage and 2 shorter passages with 5 questions per passage. Since the number of questions vary in different passages, it'll take different amount of time per passage. So, you should not pace yourself based on what passage you are on. Instead, make sure you pace yourself by the question number that you are on.

As you work through the English test, you can use the pacing we discussed above to see if you are on pace, ahead of pace, or behind pace. After you finish every 10 questions, take a look at the clock to see how you are doing on pace. If you are on pace or ahead of pace, just keep working. If you are behind pace, start to work a bit more quickly. Do not freak out and start rushing; just be more aware of the time and your pace as you continue to work through the passage.

Part 1:

Grammar Questions

Many questions on the ACT English Test will test your grammar skills. All grammar questions on the ACT will start by saying:

1. Which choice makes the sentence most grammatically acceptable?

In Part 1 of this course, we will teach you every single grammar rule that appears on the ACT and how to spot which grammar rule you are being tested on.

Chapter 1: Sentence Structure

To conquer the ACT English Test, we first need to be able to identify the different parts of a sentence and know the rules for how they can and cannot be combined.

Clauses and Phrases

A **clause** is a group of words that contains both a subject and a verb. There are two types of clauses: **independent clauses** and **dependent clauses**.

An **independent clause** can stand as a sentence by itself. It always has a subject and a verb. The best way to identify an independent clause is to read the sentence and see if you can stop talking at the end. If you can stop, it is a complete sentence and an independent clause. Here are some examples of independent clauses:

The dog chased its tail.

Monique made some homemade peach scones for breakfast.

He picked it up.

The excited child opened up his present.

A **dependent clause** cannot stand alone as a complete sentence. Most often, clauses become dependent by adding a subordinating conjunction to the front of the clause. The most common subordinating conjunctions are listed below

after
although
as
because
before
even though
if

in order to
once
since
though
that
unless
until

whatever
when
whenever
whether
where
while

Notice how in the examples below these words turn independent clauses into dependent clauses:

While the dog chased its tail...

Although Monique made some homemade peach scones for breakfast...

Since he picked it up...

When the excited child opened up his present...

A **phrase** lacks a subject or verb or both. A phrase does not express a complete thought and can never stand alone as a sentence. As a result, phrases provide additional descriptive information in a sentence.

Chasing its tail...

Making some homemade peach scones for breakfast...

Picking it up...

Excited to open up his present...

All of these examples are missing the subject. From the phrase alone, we do not know who is doing any of these actions.

TIP – Independent Clauses vs. Dependent Clauses vs. Phrases

To tell the difference between an independent clause, a dependent clause, and a phrase, **read the sentence out loud (or “out loud” in your head)**. **If you can stop talking at the end of the sentence, it is an independent clause.** If you feel like you need to keep talking, the sentence is a dependent clause or a phrase and cannot stand alone.

To tell the difference between a dependent clause and a phrase, cover the first word and read the rest of the sentence. If you then have a complete sentence, it is a dependent clause. If you do not have a complete sentence, it is a phrase.

Independent Clause:	My brother Adam eats cookies every day.
Dependent Clause:	When my brother Adam eats cookies every day...
Phrase:	Eating cookies everyday...

Exercise: For each of the clauses or phrases below, identify if it is an independent clause (I), dependent clause (D), or phrase (P). Write I, D, or P next to each question.

- 1) A reference to Canadian politics in the 1980s
- 2) The new clothing brand that makes clothing entirely from recycled plastic bottles is popular
- 3) He created the new pair of shoes specifically for a special client with size 17 feet
- 4) Because the water bottle was manufactured with two layers of stainless steel
- 5) Illuminating the crime scene with a flashlight
- 6) Forgetting his calculator at home was a big mistake
- 7) Even though potted succulents grow far better in summer than winter
- 8) Running out of time to complete his sculpture for the spring art show
- 9) With no regard for his own health and safety
- 10) Rain is in the forecast for the next three days
- 11) Expertly kneaded bread will have air pockets
- 12) Hiking fifteen miles in a single day with only three liters of water and a small bag of trail mix
- 13) While Manu was accused of cheating by both the teachers and all of the students
- 14) Where Stephanie’s campaign for class president relied on donations from classmates

Sentence Fragments

A complete sentence must contain a subject and a verb. **Sentence fragments** are missing a subject or a verb or both and do not express a complete thought. In other words, **a sentence fragment cannot stand by itself**. To spot sentence fragments, read the entire sentence. The sentence will usually just sound plain wrong, and you will realize it is missing a subject or a verb.

Incorrect: The student running to get to class on time. (missing a verb – what did the student do?)

Correct: The student running to get to class on time dropped her water bottle.

Incorrect: Excited to go to the beach and surf. (missing a subject – who is excited to go to the beach?)

Correct: My little brother Shaun is excited to go to the beach and surf.

Clauses, Phrases, and Fragments Practice:

In the late 1960s, the “must-have” toy at the Cincinnati Toy Fair¹ a new type of diecast toy car that would later become the popular brand Hot Wheels.

1. A. NO CHANGE
B. Fair,
C. Fair;
D. Fair was

Spencer, who famously² noticed that a microwave can melt a chocolate bar.

2. A. NO CHANGE
B. Spencer famously
C. Spencer surprised famously
D. Spencer, who was famous for when he

After hummingbirds evolved long, thin beaks to reach pollen in flowers, however³ this evolutionary advantage allowed them to survive entirely on flower nectar, tree sap, and pollen.

3. A. NO CHANGE
B. therefore
C. and
D. DELETE the underlined portion

To clean all the windows on the tallest buildings, window cleaners work⁴ several twelve-hour shifts over the course of a week.

4. A. NO CHANGE
B. cleaners, who work
C. cleaners, working
D. cleaners who work

Her landmark doctoral thesis, published in 2019, asserting that⁵ unlike the other autoimmune disorders, Crohn’s disease has an underlying bacterial component.

5. A. NO CHANGE
B. asserted that
C. asserted,
D. an assertion

While the bakery varies its types of bread⁶ with the seasons, ranging from tomato basil loafs in the summer to olive rosemary focaccia in the fall, and always has a line around the block.

6. A. NO CHANGE
B. Having various types of bread
C. With the bakery having varied bread types
D. The bakery varies its types of bread

5 Types of Compound Sentences

Often on the ACT, we often face more complex sentences that have multiple clauses (more than one subject and verb). These are called compound sentences. On the ACT (and in English in general), multiple clauses must always appear as one of the 5 types below.

1. Two separate independent clauses with periods.

Mary loves dogs. Andrew loves cats.
Independent Independent

2. Comma + FANBOYS joining 2 independent clauses.

Mary loves dogs , and Andrew loves cats.
Independent Independent

3. Semicolon between 2 independent clauses.

Mary loves dogs ; Andrew loves cats.
Independent Independent

* A semicolon is the same as a period on the ACT.

4. Dependent clause followed by independent clause (comma).

While Mary loves dogs , Andrew loves cats.
Dependent Independent

5. Independent clause straight into dependent clause (no comma).

Mary loves dogs while Andrew loves cats.
Independent Dependent

TIP – FANBOYS

Memorize these 7 special words!

F or
A nd
N or
B ut
O r
Y et
S o

You need to memorize these 5 rules! The ACT will challenge you by putting answer choices that “look” or “sound” good on the exam but actually break one of our rules above. Next, we will cover the most common comma mistake students make with sentence structure.

Comma Splice

A comma by itself CANNOT be used to join two independent clauses. Joining two independent sentences with only a comma is called a comma splice and is always incorrect.

Incorrect: It is believed that bulls are enraged by the color red, they are actually colorblind.

Incorrect: I cannot believe you did not get the flowers, I left them at your front door.

Both of these sentences are comma splices. We can correct these comma splices using any of our 5 comma rules above. The first incorrect sentence is corrected below using all 5 rules.

Rule #1: It is believed that bulls are enraged by the color red. They are actually colorblind.

Rule #2: It is believed that bulls are enraged by the color red, but they are actually colorblind.

Rule #3: It is believed that bulls are enraged by the color red; they are actually colorblind.

Rule #4: While it is believed that bulls are enraged by the color red, they are actually colorblind.

Rule #5: It is believed that bulls are enraged by the color red though they are actually colorblind.

Compound Sentences Practice: Which answer choices are correct? For this exercise, multiple answer choices can be correct. **Select all answer choices that make the sentence correct.**

- 1) Hockey is my favorite _____ I cannot skate very well.
 - a. sport, although
 - b. sport, but
 - c. sport even though
- 2) While penguins are clumsy _____ amazingly graceful in water.
 - a. on land, they are
 - b. on land they are
 - c. on land; they are
- 3) Swimming is a great _____ works all the muscle groups in the body.
 - a. workout; it
 - b. workout because it
 - c. workout, for it
- 4) Tomato plants need full sunlight to grow to full _____ lettuce grows better in partial sunlight.
 - a. size, but
 - b. size; and
 - c. size;
- 5) _____ I still prefer it.
 - a. My friends say the extra hot salsa is too spicy,
 - b. Although my friends say the extra hot salsa is too spicy,
 - c. My friends say the extra hot salsa is too spicy, but
- 6) On my day off, I will go _____ go spearfishing.
 - a. surfing, or I will
 - b. surfing or I will
 - c. surfing, or will
- 7) The entire school loves chef _____ makes the best pulled pork.
 - a. Victoria because she
 - b. Victoria; because she
 - c. Victoria, she
- 8) Liz could not _____ she adopted the adorable golden doodle puppy.
 - a. resist, so
 - b. resist and
 - c. resist,

TIP – How to Spot Sentence Structure Questions

Sentence structure questions usually have at least one of the following characteristics:

- 1. Period, semicolons, commas, and FANBOYS are in the answer choices.** If you see answer choices with any of these, you are most likely looking at a sentence structure question.
- 2. Some answer choices have a subject or verb and others do not.** For more advanced sentence structure questions, some answer choices have subjects or verbs while others do not. The verbs may also vary in their forms; for example, one answer choice may say “drove” while another says “driving”. For these questions, be on the lookout for comma splices.

On the ACT, sentence structure questions commonly look like this:

The roller coaster is opening next week, the wait time is expected to be over 4 hours long.

1. Which choice makes the sentence most grammatically acceptable?
A. NO CHANGE
B. week; with the
C. week and the
D. week. The

In August 2005, Hurricane Katrina hit New Orleans; resulting in over 1,800 deaths and \$125 billion in damage.

2. Which choice makes the sentence most grammatically acceptable?
A. NO CHANGE
B. New Orleans, the result was
C. New Orleans, and the result was
D. New Orleans. The result being

Anytime you spot a sentence structure question, use the following approach:

- 1. Find where the sentence is being “split.”**
- 2. Look left and right of the “split” point and identify the clauses or phrases.**
- 3. Apply the sentence structure rules.**

In the first example above, the answer is D because we have two independent clauses. A is a comma splice. In B, the second half is not an independent clause. C is missing the comma with the FANBOYS.

In the second example, the answer is C because we have two independent clauses linked by a comma + FANBOYS. A and D are incorrect because the second half is not an independent clause. B is a comma splice.

Chapter 1 Practice:

Most people drink coffee in the morning, although

I prefer not to.

1

1. A. NO CHANGE
B. morning; while I
C. morning; I
D. morning but I

Sea turtles are known for swimming incredible

distances, but many people do not know that

2

female sea turtles journey back to their

birthplaces to lay their eggs.

2. A. NO CHANGE
B. distances, many
C. distances. While many
D. distances many

Reorganizing the schedule after Jill called in sick

is not just an inconvenience, it is also a logistical

3

nightmare.

3. A. NO CHANGE
B. inconvenience, also it
C. inconvenience but it
D. inconvenience. It

The first warning given out to a business violating

the new rules will not include a fine; while a

4

second violation will be a guaranteed \$1,000 fine.

4. A. NO CHANGE
B. fine, while
C. fine while
D. fine and

Redwood trees are one of the tallest types of trees

in the world, some have grown as tall as 350 feet.

5

5. A. NO CHANGE
B. world; and some
C. world and some
D. world; some

While the ancient Egyptian pyramids were built

over 4000 years ago, still standing today and

6

attract millions of tourists to Egypt each year.

6. A. NO CHANGE
B. ago; they still stand
C. ago, they still stand
D. ago, they still standing

The pizza was guaranteed to be free if it was not

delivered in 30 minutes or less; but the delivery

7

man still demanded money when he arrived late.

7. A. NO CHANGE
B. less; the
C. less, though the
D. less but the

Bella wanted to make blueberry waffles for

breakfast, but her waffle iron was broken.

8

8. A. NO CHANGE
B. breakfast, however
C. breakfast but
D. breakfast; but

Most restaurant owners have a security system installed at their businesses, because it helps protect them from theft.
9

9. A. NO CHANGE
B. businesses because
C. businesses, since
D. businesses; since

The eucalyptus tree is unique, it is known not only for its flowers but also for the health benefits it can produce.
10

10. A. NO CHANGE
B. unique and it
C. unique; it
D. unique it

The audience could not believe the incredible performance put on by the ten-year-old pianist, they were enthralled, once he finished his final flurry of perfectly struck notes, everyone stood together and applauded.
11

11. A. NO CHANGE
B. pianist; they were enthralled,
C. pianist. They were enthralled;
D. pianist, enthralled

Many houses in beach towns on the east coast have no basements. Instead, the houses sit on wooden beams that keep them out of the water, and ensure that no damage will be done if hurricane flooding occurs.
12

12. A. NO CHANGE
B. water to ensure
C. water and these beams ensure
D. water; ensuring

Although pesto, which is made of pine nuts, olive oil, basil leaves, and parmesan cheese, is mostly used in classic Italian food; many restaurants now serve it on a variety of dishes and even offer different types of pesto featuring ingredients such as kale or cilantro.
13

13. A. NO CHANGE
B. food, many restaurants now serve
C. food, many restaurants serving
D. food, but many restaurants now serve

The international commission was ecstatic over the release of the new report, although there little press given from major newspapers about the announcement.
14

14. A. NO CHANGE
B. report; although there
C. report, there
D. report although there

Chapter 2: Commas – 4 Types of Commas

Commas are the most common type of punctuation on the English Test. In order to successfully handle comma questions, we need to become familiar with the 4 types of commas that appear on the ACT.

So far, we have already discussed the first two types of commas.

1. Comma + FANBOYS

Correct: My alarm clock did not go off this morning, so I arrived late at school.

Use a comma and a FANBOYS (for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so) to join two independent clauses.

2. Dependent clause followed by independent clause

Correct: While electronic music has become very popular, many people still prefer classic rock.

If a sentence has a dependent clause followed by an independent clause, you must link these with a comma.

Next, we will learn the other 2 types of commas in English and on the ACT:

3. Unnecessary Information

Commas are used to separate unnecessary information from the rest of the sentence. Information is unnecessary if we can remove it without fundamentally changing the meaning of the sentence.

Unnecessary information can be as short as a single word or as long as a lengthy phrase.

Example: Mrs. Ellison, who is known for giving pop quizzes, is my least favorite teacher.

Example: The snowboard in the closet, the one with no stickers on it, needs to be waxed.

Example: The basketball team, though, did not mount a comeback this week.

4. Listing

Commas are used when listing more than two items and with lists of multiple adjectives modifying the same noun.

Example: The group at the picnic table ordered coconut shrimp, hot wings, and onion rings.

Example: The old, limping dog still managed to complete the 3-mile hike.

Unnecessary Information Commas

The most common type of comma in English and on the ACT separates unnecessary information from the rest of the sentence. Information is unnecessary if we can remove the information from the sentence without fundamentally changing the meaning of the sentence. **Unnecessary information can be before a comma, after a comma, or between two commas.**

Sitting behind the table, Mark waited to jump out and surprise his mother.

Dale grabbed his favorite surfboard, the blue and green one, and paddled out.

Buddy the Elf handed his father a bag of spaghetti, his face covered in syrup.

The real winner, however, had yet to be revealed.

In the sentences above, the unnecessary information is underlined. Each of these sentences still works if we ignore unnecessary information. That's how we know it is unnecessary and the commas are correct!

TIP – The “Crossing-Out” Trick

For unnecessary information commas, you must be able to completely remove the unnecessary information from the sentence. After removing the unnecessary information, what remains must still be a complete sentence that can stand by itself.

To test if information is unnecessary, cross out the information and read the sentence without it. If you can cross out the information and the sentence still reads as a complete sentence, the information is unnecessary and needs to be set apart by a comma or commas. If you cannot cross out the information, it should not be set apart by any commas.

Let's test with the sentence below. All three versions are the same sentence, but the commas are in different locations.

The wooden beam set at an angle, created an optical illusion.

The wooden beam, set at an angle created an optical illusion.

The wooden beam, set at an angle, created an optical illusion.

For the first two sentences, a single comma must set apart the information either before or after it as unnecessary. Let's check if these work.

~~The wooden beam set at an angle~~, created an optical illusion.

The wooden beam set at an angle, ~~created an optical illusion~~.

The wooden beam, ~~set at an angle created an optical illusion~~.

~~The wooden beam~~, set at an angle created an optical illusion.

Well...none of those work for the first two sentences. Let's try the third. A pair of commas can either separate the information between them or the information before and after.

~~The wooden beam~~, set at an angle, ~~created an optical illusion~~.

The wooden beam, ~~set at an angle~~, created an optical illusion. (Yes, it works!)

Using this trick can be very helpful on unnecessary information commas questions.

Unnecessary vs. Necessary Information

At times, we will also need to determine if information is indeed unnecessary or not. These sentences are more challenging, but the trick is to delete the portion that may be unnecessary and see if the sentence loses any critical information. Consider the two sentences below:

Correct: The dresses that need to be hemmed are hanging in the closet.

Correct: Judith, who went to fashion school, designs dresses for a living.

Why do we have no commas in the first sentence and commas for the second? In the first sentence, the information is necessary. If we just say, “the dresses are hanging in the closet,” then we do not know which specific dresses we are talking about. In the second sentence, we already know who designs the dresses, so the information about Judith going to fashion school is unnecessary.

The Names Rule

The ACT loves to ask you how to properly punctuate names. You are almost guaranteed to see at least one commas and names question on test day. You have probably seen names written both with and without commas...so what’s the difference? Both versions below are correct: see if you can figure out why.

Correct: My friend Kelly recently moved to London.

Correct: My best friend, Andrew, is a certified scuba diver.

The names rule has to do with specificity. **If the identifier before the name is not specific to one person (friend, American physicist, Olympic gold medalist, high school principal), the name is necessary, and there is no comma between the identifier and the name.**

If the identifier is specific to one person (best friend, youngest sister, Amazon CEO), the name is unnecessary information, and there are commas around the name.

In the first sentence, Kelly is necessary because without her name we do not know which friend recently moved to London. In the second sentence, Andrew is unnecessary because a person can only have one best friend. We do not need the name Andrew to know who we are talking about.

Names Rule Practice: Determine if the names below need commas or not.

1. Award-winning teacher Mrs. Saunders helped me become a much better writer.
2. Broadway producer Jeffrey Seller is best known for the huge hit Hamilton.
3. Eric’s mother Louisa cheered from the bleachers.
4. Italian cyclist Marco Pantani won the Tour de France in 1998.
5. Famous American entrepreneur Elon Musk is a proponent of bitcoin.
6. The CEO of Tesla Elon Musk has revolutionized the car industry.
7. Grammy winner Arianna Grande is releasing a new album next month.
8. The oldest Hemswroth brother Luke Hemsworth starred in HBO’s Westworld.

“That” vs. “Which” Phrases

Phrases that start with “that” never get commas. Phrases that start with “which” always get commas. “That” phrases are always necessary information to the sentence while “which” phrases are always unnecessary information.

Correct: The dogs that live down the street are always barking.

Correct: My neighbor’s dogs, which are always barking, love to play fetch.

Anytime you see “which,” there must be a comma right in front of it. The exception to this rule is when “which” is part of a prepositional phrase like “on which,” “in which” or “of which.” For any of these or other similar cases, you do not use a comma. Some examples are below:

Correct: The table on which the food was resting tipped over.

Correct: The table, which the food was resting on, tipped over.

“ing” and “ed” Phrases

Phrases that start with “ing” and “ed” may or may not be separated with commas. To determine if these phrases, which are called participle phrases, get commas or not, determine if the information in the phrase is necessary to the sentence or not. **On the ACT, “ing” and “ed” phrases most commonly appear with commas and are unnecessary information.**

Correct: Excited for the car ride, Jane’s bulldog started to jump up and down.

Correct: Jane’s bulldog, excited for the car ride, started to jump up and down.

Correct: Marcus applied for the internship, hoping that he would get the position.

Correct: Judy laid down, exhausted from the long workout.

“ing” and “ed” phrases can also be necessary information when the phrase is helping to specify who or what the noun is. **If the phrase is necessary, there are no commas.**

Correct: The politician waving to the crowd is predicted to win the election.

Correct: The yoga pants advertised on the front page of the website were sold out.

In the first example, “waving to the crowd” is helping to specify which politician is predicted to win the election. In the second example, “advertised on the front page of the website” is specifying which yoga pants are sold out. Without these phrases, we would not know which specific politician or yoga pants are being referred to.

Phrases with “Who” or “Whom”

When talking about a person, you must always use “who” or “whom” to start the phrase. You can never use “that” to describe a person. “Who” or “whom” can act like a “that” or a “which” phrase, so these ones are a bit trickier with commas. We will cover “who vs. whom” later in the pronouns chapter.

Incorrect: The children that were playing soccer did not notice the ice cream truck.

Correct: The children who were playing soccer did not notice the ice cream truck.

Correct: Dr. Roberts, who was my childhood doctor, waved to me at the supermarket.

Prepositional Phrases

Prepositional phrases are phrases consisting of a preposition and its object. Some of the most common prepositions on the ACT are listed below:

in	of	to	for	with	on	at
from	by	about	as	into	like	through
after	over	between	during	before	among	around

Prepositional phrases at the front of the sentence are always followed by a comma. We can think of these phrases as unnecessary information that we can cross out.

Correct: On my way to work, I listened to my new favorite podcast.

Correct: After cleaning the garage, Ralph started weeding the garden.

Prepositional phrases in the middle or end of a sentence almost never have commas around them. Most prepositional phrases contain essential information that helps specify the noun that the prepositional phrase is modifying and therefore is necessary.

Correct: The clothing on the bed is for vacation. The clothing on the floor is being donated.

Without the prepositional phrases, we would not know which clothing is for vacation and which is being donated. Here are some more examples:

Correct: The display of affection by Lewis to his prom date made her blush.

Correct: The bouquet of lilies in the vase is going to be displayed on the table.

On the ACT, 99% of prepositional phrases do not have commas like the examples above, so in general you should never put commas around a prepositional phrase.

Prepositional phrases in the middle or end of a sentence only get comma(s) if they contain unnecessary information.

Correct: My mother, with her love of Easter, organized a massive Easter egg hunt.

Incorrect: The magician had a rabbit, in his hat.

Here, the first prepositional phrase is unnecessary because we already know which mother we are talking about. The second prepositional phrase is necessary since it specifies which rabbit we are talking about, so there should be no comma. **Prepositional phrases that are unnecessary almost never come up on the ACT.**

Prepositional Phrases Practice: Underline all prepositional phrases. Add commas if necessary.

1. Before the race began the team did a final check on the sparkplugs in the engine.
2. Donations for the campaign in Georgia broke records during the 2020 election.
3. The luxury dog bed with the ornate frame and supportive memory foam seems a bit excessive to me.
4. During the movie Davonta's mother went to the concession stand for some popcorn.
5. At the corner the host stood with a microphone in her hand.

Punctuation for Transitional Words and Phrases Like “However”

On the ACT, there are certain words and short phrases that often give students trouble on grammar questions. These words are technically called conjunctive adverbs (you do NOT need to know that). We prefer to just think of these as transitional words and phrases like “however.” Below is a list of the most commonly tested ones:

However	Though	Therefore
Instead	Likewise	Nevertheless
Regardless	Moreover	Subsequently
Furthermore	In addition	As a result
Of course	Otherwise	For example

There are three ways that these transitional words and phrases can appear in a correctly punctuated sentence.

1. At the front of the sentence followed by a comma.

Correct: However, the truth would not be revealed until next week.

Correct: As a result, the student was sent to the principal’s office.

This is another example of unnecessary information. For both of these sentences, we can cross out the transitional word or phrase and are left with a complete sentence.

2. Separated by commas in the middle of a sentence.

Correct: The truth, however, would not be revealed until next week.

Correct: The student, as a result, was sent to the principal’s office.

Again, this is unnecessary information. We can cross out the transitional word or phrase and read the rest of the sentence as one complete sentence.

3. Separated by a semicolon and a comma when between two independent clauses.

Correct: I expected to pay over \$100 for my new hiking boots; however, I found a sale and got them for half of the original price.

Correct: The player demanded his coach for more playing time; in addition, he threatened to quit if he did not get his way.

If there is an independent clause before and after the transitional word or phrase, we need to use a semicolon and a comma for punctuation.

TIP – How to Spot Unnecessary Information Commas Questions

Unnecessary information commas questions always have two defining characteristics:

1. The words in all 4 answer choices are the exact same.
2. The only difference in the answer choices is where commas are located.

On the ACT, unnecessary information commas questions look like this:

Electric vehicles, thousands of them, already on the road in America, are one of the fastest growing industries in the world.

1. Which choice makes the sentence most grammatically acceptable?
- A. NO CHANGE
- B. thousands, of them
- C. thousands of them
- D. thousands of, them

Anytime we see a question like this, we are dealing with an unnecessary information commas question and should use the “crossing-out” trick. **Be sure to read the entire sentence and pay attention to any other commas that are not in the underlined portion!** Any commas that we cannot change are often important clues that we must use to find the correct answer. It is possible the other comma rules are part of a question like this as well, so make sure to read the entire sentence and look out for the sentence structure rules from Chapter 1.

In the example above, the answer is C because the phrase “thousands of them already on the road in America” is unnecessary information and is separated by two commas.

Backup Trick – Pauses and Commas

Read the sentence out loud (or “out loud” in your head on test day) to help identify where commas are necessary. If you need to take a short pause for a breath, then you likely need a comma. Read the example below out loud and put commas where you take a short pause:

Originally from Maine Mr. Johnson who has taught 8th grade biology for five years is not accustomed to winters in San Diego.

Pausing is not one of our 4 commas rules! Many students mistakenly put commas anywhere they pause in sentence. At times, this is a great trick. However, this can also lead to mistakes. **You should only use pausing as a backup trick when you have already used our other commas rules and still cannot tell which answer choice is correct.**

For the example above, the correct version is below:

Correct: Originally from Maine, Mr. Johnson, who has taught 8th grade biology for five years, is not accustomed to winters in San Diego.

Commas Practice: Add commas where necessary. The commas in the sentences below can be any of the first 3 types of commas we have learned so far.

1. Although James demanded pizza for dinner his mother decided to make grilled chicken and broccoli instead.
2. Mr. Alvin a very popular teacher among the students cancelled the final exam.
3. I could not believe that Deadpool was such a popular movie.
4. While my friend Mary thought that dolphins were the fastest animals in water she was surprised to learn it was actually a sailfish.
5. Owls notorious for their amazing night vision have fantastic hearing at night so they can actually hear their prey from hundreds of feet away even if they cannot see it.
6. On second thought the real reason that I did not like Scott was his lack of honesty.
7. Some cultures though enjoy bizarre foods like bugs or snakes.
8. After graduating Darren played for the San Diego Padres where he had a long career as a relief pitcher.
9. Because he was the best in Dallas award-winning head chef Phillip Small owned multiple very successful restaurants.
10. My favorite author is J.K. Rowling who is famous for writing the Harry Potter series.
11. The fisherman carrying their catch walked into the Seattle fish market a place famous for how the vendors throw fish to entertain customers.
12. At first glance the cuttlefish which can change colors to blend into its surroundings looked just like the brain coral behind it and I did not see it in the tank.
13. Last summer the local flooding caused by a breach in the Reynolds Dam caused over ten thousand dollars in damage to the children's park.
14. The basil plant for example needs full sunlight but cilantro grows best in partial sunlight.

Listing Commas

The easiest types of commas on the English Test are listing commas. Listing commas can appear in a multiple item list and between list of multiply adjectives describing the same noun.

Commas and Lists

Listing commas are used to separate the items in a list of 3 or more items.

Correct: I went to the grocery store to pick up chicken, cheese, and bread.

Correct: I went to the grocery store to pick up chicken, cheese and bread.

The final comma in a list of items is called the Oxford comma. Use of the Oxford comma is stylistic, so technically both lists with and without the Oxford comma are correct. As a result, the Oxford comma alone will never make an answer choice correct or incorrect on the ACT. **Most commonly, the ACT includes the Oxford comma** like the top example above.

Lists must have 3 or more items to include commas. **Be sure that you do not use commas in a list of just two items.**

Incorrect: The food was both incredibly savory, and overwhelmingly satisfying.

Correct: The food was both incredibly savory and overwhelmingly satisfying.

Incorrect: Mike cashed out his winnings, and then headed back to his hotel room for a nap.

Correct: Mike cashed out his winnings and then headed back to his hotel room for a nap.

TIP – FANBOYS vs. Lists

Be careful of the FANBOYS (and, but, nor, or) that can be used in a list. It is easy to confuse a two-item list (which does not need a comma) with a comma + FANBOYS between two independent clauses (which does need a comma). For a comma and a FANBOYS, make sure the second half of the sentence is an independent clause.

Incorrect: The debate team took first place in California, and then won the grand prize for the entire nation.

Correct: The debate team took first place in California and then won the grand prize for the entire nation.

Incorrect: Andrew left to get his suit from the tailor but he forgot and just grabbed a cheeseburger at In-n-Out.

Correct: Andrew left to get his suit from the tailor, but he forgot and just grabbed a cheeseburger at In-n-Out

Adjective Lists with and without Commas

Listing commas are also used to separate a list of multiple adjectives modifying the same noun.

Correct: The wet, smelly dog was excited for the car ride home.

Correct: The narrow, winding, treacherous roads through the mountains are difficult to drive.

On more difficult questions, we will need to know when to use commas in lists of adjectives and when commas are not necessary. Take a look at the two correct examples below to learn the difference.

Correct: A cup of delicious, strong coffee is my favorite thing in the morning.

Correct: My mother has lots of bright floral furniture in her living room.

The rule is a simple one: **if you can switch the order of the adjectives without changing the meaning of the sentence, put a comma between the adjectives. If switching the order of the adjectives changes the meaning of the sentence or just makes no sense, there is no comma between the adjectives.** In short, if you can switch the adjectives, put a comma. No switch, no comma.

In the first sentence, the two adjectives “delicious” and “strong” are separated by a comma. Both of these adjectives describe the coffee on their own. We could switch the adjectives around to “strong, delicious coffee” without changing the meaning. Since we can switch the adjectives, we need a comma.

In the second sentence, the two adjectives “bright” and “floral” are not separated by a comma because they build on one another and together modify the noun. If we switch the adjectives to “floral bright furniture,” the meaning of the sentence is changed. Saying “bright floral furniture” makes sense but saying “floral bright furniture” does not. Since we cannot switch the adjectives, we do not add a comma.

TIP – “The Switching Trick”

When you see multiple adjectives modifying a noun, switch the order of the adjectives to test whether or not you need a comma between the adjectives. Let’s use these two sentences as examples:

The sweet cold ice cream was refreshing after a day at the beach.

Elliot had to take off his stainless steel necklace before the swim meet.

To test whether these adjectives need a comma between them, switch the order and see if the sentences still make sense.

The cold sweet ice cream was refreshing after a day at the beach.

Elliot had to take off his steel stainless chain before the swim meet.

In the first sentence, switching “cold” and “sweet” does not change the meaning, so we need a comma. In the second sentence, “steel stainless chain” does not work, so we do not need a comma. The correct versions of both sentences are below:

Correct: The sweet, cold ice cream was refreshing after a day at the beach.

Correct: Elliot had to take off his stainless steel chain before the swim meet.

Adjectives Lists With and Without Commas Practice: Add commas where necessary. Commas may or may not be necessary.

1. Scientists are trying to determine what animal the newly discovered fossilized bones are from.
2. The white fluffy clouds floated quickly by in the crisp evening wind.
3. The big sun bear is known for climbing the fence and swimming in the heated community pool in the spring.
4. The cunning sneaky red foxes got into the chicken coop again last night.
5. The powerful liquid detergent makes my dirty sweaty clothes smell so much better.
6. My car engine made an annoying rattling sound right before breaking down.
7. The local hot air balloon company specializes in making colorful creative designs.
8. Laura placed an order for Italian coffee beans and three expensive ceramic coffee mugs.

Commas Practice: Which answer choices are correct? **Select all that apply.**

1. The diners _____ sat down.
 - a. ordered food and
 - b. ordered food, and
 - c. ordered food, and they

2. _____ will pre-order the tickets to Coachella.
 - a. Claire, Elizabeth or Bella
 - b. Claire, Elizabeth, or Bella
 - c. Claire, Elizabeth, or Bella,

3. The _____ forced the commander to declare war.
 - a. invasion by the rebel forces
 - b. invasion, by the rebel forces
 - c. invasion, by the rebel forces,

4. The _____ was given first prize by the judges.
 - a. bright pink hot air balloon
 - b. bright, pink hot air balloon
 - c. bright, pink, hot air balloon

5. Nancy laid down in the _____.
 - a. hammock and immediately fell asleep.
 - b. hammock, and she immediately fell asleep.
 - c. hammock, and immediately fell asleep.

6. I will need a _____ to drink after the race.
 - a. sweet cold lemonade
 - b. sweet, and cold lemonade
 - c. sweet, cold lemonade

7. It is important to _____ shelter.
 - a. keep calm during an earthquake, and seek
 - b. keep calm, during an earthquake, and seek
 - c. keep calm during an earthquake and seek

Commas, Sentence Structure, and Unnecessary Information

Now that we have learned about sentence structure and commas, let's see the most common ways that a sentence can be structured using commas or when no commas are necessary. We will add on to the 5 rules we already learned in Chapter 1 (page 7).

1. Comma + FANBOYS joining 2 Independent Clauses

The researchers changed their approach, and they created a new medical procedure in the process.

Independent clause Independent clause

2. Independent Clause followed by Unnecessary Information Phrase (comma)

The researchers changed their approach, creating a new medical procedure in the process.

Independent clause Unnecessary information

3. Unnecessary Information Phrase before Independent Clause (comma)

<u>Determined to find a cure,</u>	<u>the researchers changed their approach.</u>
Unnecessary information	Independent clause

4. Dependent Clause followed by Independent Clause (comma)

Since they were determined to find a cure, the researchers changed their approach.

Dependent clause Independent clause

5. Unnecessary Information Phrase, Independent Clause, Unnecessary Information Phrase (2 commas)

<u>Determined to find a cure,</u>	<u>the researchers changed their approach,</u>	<u>creating a new medical</u>
Unnecessary information	Independent clause	Unnecessary
<u>procedure in the process.</u>		
information		

6. Independent Clause with Necessary Information (no comma)

<u>The researchers changed their approach by creating a new medical procedure.</u>	
Independent clause	Necessary information

7. List with 2 items (no comma)

The researchers changed their approach and created a new medical procedure in the process.

*this sentence functions as one big independent clause.

8. Unnecessary Information Phrase, Unnecessary Information Phrase, Independent Clause (2 commas)

Unnecessary information	Unnecessary information
-------------------------	-------------------------

Claire was still disappointed with her Chanel purse.
Independent clause

9. Dependent Clause, Independent Clause, Unnecessary Information (2 commas)

As the curtains closed, the crowd stood and applauded, many with tears in their eyes.

Dependent clause Independent clause Unnecessary information

These 9 sentence structures cover the most common ways that sentences appear on the ACT, but **this is not a complete list**. Unnecessary information can appear in the middle of clauses or other unnecessary information, so **there can be many more possible sentence structures than the 9 listed on the previous page**. However, if you understand the 9 most common sentence structures, you will be very well prepared to deal with even the most difficult sentences on the ACT.

TIP – The “1-Comma” Rule

This brings us to our final sentence structure and commas rule: **when a sentence has only one comma in the middle, there must be an independent clause before or after the comma but not both and not neither. The only exception to this rule is a comma + FANBOYS linking two independent sentences**. If before and after are both independent, we have a comma splice. If neither is independent, we have a sentence fragment.

If the first half of the sentence before the comma is independent, the information after the comma must be unnecessary information (rule 2 on the previous page). If the second half of the sentence after the comma is independent, the first half must be unnecessary information (rule 3) or a dependent clause (rule 4). This rule helps you answer some of the most difficult sentence structure/commas questions correctly!

Chapter 2 Practice:

Before graduating from college William, a
computer science major, dropped out to start his
own company.

1. A. NO CHANGE
B. college, William, a computer science major dropped
C. college William a computer science major, dropped
D. college, William, a computer science major, dropped

Although his research was not finished, Dr. Bates
hoped to prove that his bone cancer treatment
was the next big breakthrough.

2. A. NO CHANGE
B. finished, Dr. Bates hoped to prove, that
C. finished Dr. Bates hoped to prove that
D. finished, Dr. Bates, hoped to prove that

Sandra has big plans for her career in politics,
including running for Mayor serving as state
Governor and getting elected to Congress.

3. A. NO CHANGE
B. running for Mayor, serving as state Governor, and getting elected to Congress.
C. running for Mayor and also serving as state Governor and getting elected to Congress.
D. running for Mayor, to serve as state Governor, and getting elected to Congress.

Claude Monet is known for his incredible
detailed oil paintings of natural landscapes.

4. A. NO CHANGE
B. incredibly and detailed oil
C. incredible, detailed, oil
D. incredible, detailed oil

A group of lions is called a pride, however, my
grandpa insists on calling it a herd instead.

5. A. NO CHANGE
B. pride; however,
C. pride however
D. pride however,

The biology teacher assigned the chapter in the textbook, on photosynthesis, for homework and asked the students to review the basics of genetics.

6. A. NO CHANGE
B. chapter, in the textbook, on photosynthesis for homework,
C. chapter, in the textbook on photosynthesis for homework,
D. chapter in the textbook on photosynthesis for homework

The cover page noted the impressive achievements of scientist William Dubrovsky and the breakthrough in the new radiology techniques that a team from Korea discovered.

7. A. NO CHANGE
B. scientist, William Dubrovsky, and the
C. scientist William Dubrovsky, and the
D. scientist (William Dubrovsky), and the

My youngest sister, Kate, was so determined to win the pinewood derby race that she hid weights inside of her car, so she, consequently, was disqualified.

8. A. NO CHANGE
B. car, so she; consequently, was
C. car; so she, consequently was
D. car, so she consequently, was

United States astronaut Neil Armstrong is best known as the first man to walk on the moon, although some people believe that the moon landing was a hoax.

9. A. NO CHANGE
B. astronaut, Neil Armstrong
C. astronaut, Neil Armstrong,
D. astronaut Neil Armstrong,

10. A. NO CHANGE
B. moon, but
C. moon, although,
D. moon but

Claire chose to attend Cedar Brook University, which has a unique curriculum that does not assign letter grades but instead emphasizes the academic growth of its students.

11. A. NO CHANGE
B. University, with a unique curriculum,
C. University which has a unique, curriculum
D. University which has a unique curriculum,

English architect Andrew Rollins, and Swiss engineer Melissa Voss worked together to design the new ten-story luxury apartment building that will be completed by the end of next summer.

12. A. NO CHANGE
B. English architect, Andrew Rollins, and Swiss engineer, Melissa Voss, worked
C. English architect Andrew Rollins and Swiss Engineer Melissa Voss worked
D. English architect Andrew Rollins and Swiss engineer Melissa Voss, worked

13. A. NO CHANGE
B. new, ten-story luxury apartment,
C. new, ten-story, luxury, apartment
D. new ten-story, luxury apartment,

After making the diving touchdown catch,
14

Keenan Allan jumped into the stands to celebrate
14
with the fans, injured his ankle.

14. A. NO CHANGE
B. catch, Keenan Allan, jumped
C. catch, Keenan Allan jumping
D. catch, Keenan Allan, jumping

For the kite surfing competition, twenty identical
kites were brought to the beach tested to ensure
15
that they all worked properly, and given out to
each competitor.

15. A. NO CHANGE
B. beach, testing them
C. beach, tested
D. beach to test them

It was a long-held belief that the first hamburger
was invented 100 years ago when a Danish
16
immigrant dropped a meat patty accidentally
16
onto a slice of bread, had a brilliant idea.

16. A. NO CHANGE
B. Danish immigrant, dropped
C. Danish immigrant, dropping
D. Danish immigrant was dropping

The key to retaining information properly,
17
psychologists believe is, to study for recall rather
17
than recognition.

17. A. NO CHANGE
B. properly psychologists believe is
C. properly, psychologists believe is
D. properly, psychologists believe, is

When the Gravitron, which debuted in 1983,
18
fairgoers across the country were offered a thrill
ride that they had never experienced before.

18. A. NO CHANGE
B. Gravitron debuted
C. Gravitron that debuted
D. Gravitron, debuting

There are thousands of new bacteria identified
19
each year, the vast majority are found in
agricultural fields.

19. A. NO CHANGE
B. Scientists say there are thousands of
new bacteria
C. Of the thousands of new bacteria
D. Bacteria in the thousands are

In order to survive, the Remora, also called a
suckerfish, starts a symbiotic relationship with
the shark, latching onto the shark for free rides
20
across the ocean.

20. A. NO CHANGE
B. shark; latching
C. shark. Latching
D. shark and latching

The personal trainer, organizing the 5K run²¹ decided to put an advertisement for his business at the finish line.

21. A. NO CHANGE
B. trainer organizing the 5K run
C. trainer, organizing the 5K run
D. trainer, organizing the 5K run,

Creole cuisine has many distinctive qualities; however, professional chefs say the cuisine's real identifying quality, the²² blend of West African, French, and Southern foods.

22. A. NO CHANGE
B. quality, that is the
C. quality is the
D. quality, which is the

The infamous graffiti artist, Josh Bridgewater,²³ who in 2017 completed a full mural with his signature caricatures of the city's most prominent individuals, is always finding new ways to attract attention to issues that he cares about.

23. A. NO CHANGE
B. artist (Josh Bridgewater),
C. artist Josh Bridgewater
D. artist Josh Bridgewater,

Sun exposure plays an important role in snakes' abilities to regulate their body temperatures; in²⁴ effect, helping²⁴ snakes survive in both warmer and cooler climates.

24. A. NO CHANGE
B. temperatures, this helps
C. temperatures; therefore, helping
D. temperatures, helping

In rare instances, however²⁵ the 16th seed can advance during March Madness.

25. A. NO CHANGE
B. instances; however,
C. instances, however,
D. instances however

For example, one species of falcon, the peregrine²⁶ which²⁶ is among the best hunters in the world.

26. A. NO CHANGE
B. falcon, the peregrine, which
C. falcon, the peregrine,
D. falcon the peregrine that

The construction crew finished the bridge²⁷ enabling²⁷ runners to pass over the river and use the path on the other side as well.

27. A. NO CHANGE
B. bridge; enabling
C. bridge and this enabled
D. bridge; this enabled

Chapter 3: Semicolons, Colons, Dashes, Apostrophes, and Quotation Marks

Semicolons

Semicolons are used to separate two independent clauses. On the ACT, just remember that:

Semicolon = period

If we can replace a semicolon with a period, then it is used correctly! In other words, everything before the semicolon must stand as a complete sentence on its own, and everything after the semicolon must stand as a complete sentence on its own.

Incorrect: My boss called me; asking that I pick up coffee for him.

(2nd half of the sentence is not an independent clause)

Incorrect: After my boss called me; he asked that I pick up coffee for him.

(1st half of sentence is not an independent clause)

Incorrect: My boss called me, he asked that I pick up coffee for him.

(comma splice – cannot connect two independent clauses with a comma)

Correct: My boss called me; he asked that I pick up coffee for him.

(two independent clauses separated by a semicolon)

Semicolons Practice:

1. Exposure to sunlight is important for the human body (, / ;) sunlight stimulates the production of vitamin D.
2. Although the President refused to negotiate directly with the Chinese government (, / ;) the deal was still completed before the deadline.
3. The dining room table was hand-crafted by Terry (, / ;) so he was able to sell it for over four thousand dollars.
4. Known best for his role in Forrest Gump (, / ;) Tom Hanks has been in many other famous movies (, / ;) including Cast Away and Toy Story.
5. Completing a marathon is (, / ;) according to my friend Joe (, / ;) an incredible feat (, / ;) he could not even finish the half-marathon.
6. Strawberries are supposed to be easy to grow (, / ;) however (, / ;) the ones in my garden die every year.

Colons

A colon can be used to introduce a list of multiple items, a list of one item, an example, an explanation, a clarification, or a definition. Examples of all of these types are below:

Correct: I went to the grocery store to pick up some items for dinner: chicken, cheese, and onions.

Correct: I went to the market to get lunch: a turkey sandwich.

Correct: He got what he deserved: a one-week suspension without pay.

Correct: Chocolate milk is a great recovery drink after a hard workout: it has the carbohydrates and proteins that muscles need to recover.

In order for a colon to be correct, we must follow three basic rules:

- 1. The part of the sentence before a colon must be an independent clause.** If the part of the sentence before the colon cannot stand as a complete sentence by itself, it is always incorrect.

Incorrect: The slide showing the most popular car colors in 2018: white, gray, and black.

Correct: The slide shows the most popular car colors in 2018: white, gray, and black.

Incorrect: The hairstylist excelled in: cuts, coloring, and highlights.

Correct: The hairstylist excelled in cuts, coloring, and highlights.

- 2. Everything after a colon must consist of only the items in the list, an example, an explanation, a clarification, or a definition.** The sentence cannot continue to other topics.

Incorrect: Will brought his lunch to the beach: a roast beef sandwich, and he brought his friend Joey a turkey club.

Correct: Will brought his lunch to the beach: a roast beef sandwich. He brought his friend Joey a turkey club.

- 3. Colons are NEVER used with “including,” “such as,” and “for example.”** If you ever see a colon before or after any of these, it is always incorrect!

Incorrect: I went to the grocery store to pick up some items for dinner, including: chicken, cheese, and onions.

Incorrect: I went to the grocery store to pick up some items for dinner: including chicken, cheese, and onions.

Incorrect: Certain plants grow well in winter: for example garlic, leeks, radishes, and potatoes.

Incorrect: My favorite dishes to cook: such as chicken parmesan, cheesesteaks, and mac-and-cheese, always include cheese.

Incorrect: The study relied on techniques such as: direct observation and surveying.

If a list is introduced by “including” or “for example,” use a comma. This works because the list now is unnecessary information. **For “such as,” we can use a comma or have no comma depending on the sentence.**

Correct: I went to the grocery store to pick up some items for dinner, including chicken, cheese, and onions.

Correct: Certain plants grow very well in winter, for example garlic, leeks, radishes, and potatoes.

Correct: My favorite dishes to cook, such as chicken parmesan, cheesesteaks, and mac-and-cheese, always include cheese.

Correct: The study relied on techniques such as direct observation and surveying.

TIP – Colons and Clauses

A colon can join two independent clauses if the second clause after the colon acts as a definition, an example, an explanation, or a clarification of the first clause. This is an advanced grammar rule that rarely appears on the ACT.

Correct: Buddy got what he worked for: he really deserved that promotion.

Correct: My father gave me one rule to live by: honesty is always the best policy.

Since we are connecting two independent clauses, the examples above also would be correct with a semicolon, a period, or a comma + FANBOYS. However, sometimes the colon is the only correct option given in the answer choices.

Semicolons, Colons, and Commas Practice: Select which punctuation is correct. Some questions may have multiple correct answers.

1. James knew exactly how to make spaghetti (, / ; / :) boil water, add salt, and then add the pasta.
2. There’s only one way to truly get a dog’s attention (, / ; / :) food.
3. On her college application, Leann listed some of her extracurricular activities (, / ; / :) such as horseback riding, debate team, and volunteer work.
4. Honda’s new compact cars are known for being fuel efficient (, / ; / :) each one gets more than 25 miles per gallon.
5. The order was requested six weeks ago (, / ; / :) we expected the sofa, chairs, and table to have arrived by now.
6. The Italian flag has three colors (, / ; / :) green, white, and red.
7. The directions were clear (, / ; / :) place cookie dough onto the tray, place in the oven, and cook for ten minutes.
8. In order to examine how old the artifacts were (, / ; / :) the scientists turned to the most reliable dating method (, / ; / :) carbon dating (, / ; / :) which uses the properties of radiocarbon to determine the precise age of an object containing organic material.
9. The harmonica is an easy instrument to play (, / ; / :) but it is notoriously hard to master (, / ; / :) only true experts know how to hit all of notes on a harmonica.

Dashes

Dashes can function like unnecessary information commas, parentheses, or colons.

Most commonly on the ACT, 2 dashes function like unnecessary information commas or parentheses to separate unnecessary information in the middle of a sentence.

Correct: Residents of Washington D.C. – the capital of the United States – are still trying to get representation in Congress.

Correct: Glazed donuts – even if they are unhealthy – are my favorite.

Keep an eye out for pairs of dashes setting apart unnecessary information. A pair of dashes sets apart unnecessary information in the same way that a pair of commas does. It is important to remember that you cannot mix punctuation! It must be a pair of commas, a pair of dashes, or a pair of parentheses.

Incorrect: Deep-dish pizza – a famous meal in Chicago, does not exist in Italy.

Correct: Deep-dish pizza, a famous meal in Chicago, does not exist in Italy.

Correct: Deep-dish pizza – a famous meal in Chicago – does not exist in Italy.

Correct: Deep-dish pizza (a famous meal in Chicago) does not exist in Italy.

On more difficult questions, a single dash can act as a colon introducing a list of multiple items, a list of one item, an example, an explanation, a definition, or a clarification. When acting as a colon, a dash must follow the same 3 colon rules we just covered on page 30.

Correct: You will need the following ingredients – milk, butter, flour, and eggs.

Correct: In order to establish his dominance, the male lion relied on one thing – his thunderous roar.

Correct: The study declared that the results were conclusive – mice will complete the maze faster if they are given soda instead of water.

Challenge – Single Dash Acting Like Parentheses

A single dash in the middle of the sentence can also separate information at the end of the sentence just like a pair of parentheses would.

Correct: After three weeks, the patient was fed up with his doctor’s plan (or lack of a plan).

Correct: After three weeks, the patient was fed up with his doctor’s plan – or lack of a plan.

This rule has been very rarely tested on the ACT English Test in the past, but it may start to appear on future ACTs more often.

Dashes Practice:

All of Tommy's favorite toys, his toy cars, his marbles, and his Legos – were¹ lost during the move.¹

1. A. NO CHANGE
B. toys – his toy cars, his marbles, and his Legos were
C. toys – his toy cars, his marbles, and his Legos – were
D. toys: his toy cars, his marbles, and his Legos were

Thailand is famous for its tourist attractions:² including beautiful beaches, fantastic food, and crystal-clear water.²

2. A. NO CHANGE
B. attractions including beautiful
C. attractions including: beautiful
D. attractions – beautiful

Known best for the amazing ability to change its colors to blend into its surroundings, the cuttlefish – one of evolution's great mysteries (scientists still have no idea how the cuttlefish can perfectly match its body pattern to its background)³ is also famous for having three hearts.

3. A. NO CHANGE
B. background – is
C. background) – is
D. background), is

The true breakthrough occurred when,⁴ surprisingly enough to the researchers, the⁴ capuchin monkeys actually learned that the silver discs had value and could be used to buy food.

4. A. NO CHANGE
B. when, surprisingly enough to the researchers the
C. when – surprisingly enough – to the researchers, the
D. when – (surprisingly enough to the researchers) –

Umami: an⁵ incredible complexity of flavor – is often cited as why certain dishes are so delicious.

5. A. NO CHANGE
B. Umami, an
C. Umami – an
D. Umami which is an

Apostrophes

Apostrophes on the ACT have two functions: possession and contractions.

Possession Rules

Apostrophes are most commonly used to show possession. **For singular nouns, add an apostrophe and the letter “s” to the end of the word to show possession.**

Correct: Terrence’s bike is much faster than my brother’s roller blades.

For singular words that end in the letter “s,” such as “bus,” we can add an apostrophe and the letter “s” or just add an apostrophe. Both are technically correct. The ACT has not tested this specific rule yet, but it is good to know just in case.

Correct: The bus’s driver asked us to sit down.

Correct: The bus’ driver asked us to sit down.

For plural nouns that end in “s,” add the apostrophe after the “s” to show possession.

Correct: The boys’ jerseys were all covered in mud after the game.

Some plural nouns do not end in the letter “s.” For these, add an apostrophe and the letter “s” to the end of the word to show possession.

Correct: Our women’s basketball team won the championship last year.

TIP – Possessive vs. Plural

The ACT asks you to pick between singular possessive, plural possessive, and non-possessive, plural words. The challenge is that the words sound very similar, as you can see here:

Correct: I accidentally stepped on the dog’s bone. (singular possessive)

Correct: The dogs’ collars are in the basket by the door. (plural possessive)

Correct: I watched as the dogs played in the yard. (non-possessive plural)

Before adding an apostrophe, make sure the next word is actually being possessed by the noun. In the first example, the dog is possessing the bone. In the second example, the dogs are possessing the collars. In the third example, the dogs are not possessing the played, so there is no possession.

Apostrophes Practice:

1. The (witch’s/witches’/witches) magic broom allowed her to fly.
2. Mary had three children, and all of the (kid’s/ kids’/kids) heights were marked on the garage door.
3. The earthquake knocked all the (door’s/doors’/doors) off their hinges.
4. The lawyer demanded that his (client’s/clients’/clients) testimony be removed from the record.
5. It should be illegal to steal (eagle’s/eagles’/eagles) eggs from their nests.

Possessive Pronouns

Possessive pronouns (his, hers, its, theirs, ours, yours) end in an “s” and do not use an apostrophe to show possession. The difficulty is that words like “yours” and “ours” may look like they may need an apostrophe.

The correct and incorrect versions of possessive pronouns are shown below:

Correct	Incorrect	
Its	It's	Its'
Hers	Her's	Hers'
Yours	Your's	Yours'
Ours	Our's	Ours'
Theirs	Their's	Theirs'

Contractions

For a contraction, add an apostrophe. For example, “it’s” is a contraction for “it is” and “they’re” is a contraction for “they are.”

TIP – Possessive Pronouns vs. Contractions

If you need to pick between a conjunction and a possessive pronoun, plug in the complete phrase and see if it works.

The cat loves playing with (its/it's) new toy. (plug in “it is”)

The cat loves playing with it is new toy. (well that is wrong)

So the answer is:

Correct: The cat loves playing with its new toy.

Let's practice with the most commonly featured contractions on the ACT:

“its” (possessive) vs. “it’s” (it is)

I cannot believe that (its/it's) not butter!

The dog keeps chasing (its/it's) tail.

“your” (possessive) vs. “you’re” (you are)

Please keep (your/you're) feelings to yourself.

(Your/you're) not going to believe what happened on Game of Thrones!

“their” (possessive) vs. “they’re” (they are)

The gold medal winners all held up (their/they're) medals for the picture.

(Their/They're) going to the opera despite the bad reviews.

“whose” (possessive) vs. “who’s” (who is)

I do not know (whose/who's) socks these are.

Honestly, (whose/who's) going to pay fifteen dollars for a burrito?

Quotation Marks

Quotation marks are most commonly used for direct quotes.

Direct quotes that are spoken are offset by a comma. Anytime the quote is actually being spoken in some way (said, yelled, whispered, exclaimed, etc.), there is a comma before or after the quotation.

Correct: Abigail said, "I will not pay until the painting is completed."

Correct: "The thunderstorm last night woke me up," Paul whispered.

Direct quotes that are not spoken have no commas. If the quote is not being spoken and is just a phrase or part of the sentence, there is no punctuation.

Incorrect: My grandfather described the shells as, "beautiful souvenirs from a past life."

Correct: My grandfather described the shells as "beautiful souvenirs from a past life."

Here, the quotation marks show "beautiful souvenirs from a past life" are the grandfather's words and not the writer's words. Since the words are not actually being spoken by the grandfather, there is no comma before the quotation marks.

Quotation marks can be used to show a word is being used as a technical term, used in an unusual or slang way, or used as another expression that varies from standard usage.

Correct: Having defined the term "contact variance," Dr. Chen continued his lecture.

Correct: Sven refers to himself as a "professional" influencer.

Correct: This "revolutionary" program has left thousands of children without a basic education.

Correct: Allie could smell the "fresh" fish from across the room.

Quotation Marks Practice:

The approaching hurricane was so powerful and was forecast to bring such an unprecedented amount of rain that, The Miami Tribune told
1 readers "who haven't evacuated yet to do so immediately or face dire consequences."

1. A. NO CHANGE
B. that The Miami Tribune told readers,
C. that, The Miami Tribune told readers,
D. that The Miami Tribune told readers

When the children were playing a game of tag in the park, the oak tree was a "home base"
2 a safe space to avoid being tagged.

2. A. NO CHANGE
B. was a, "home base"
C. was a, "home base,"
D. was a "home base,"

After the teacher saw the two boys quarreling for the second time that day, she asked,
3 "what is going on with you two?"

3. A. NO CHANGE
B. day she asked,
C. day, she asked
D. day she asked

Chapter 3 Practice:

I have always found surfing difficult, but it can be broken down into three simple steps paddle hard, stand-up, and the ride the wave.
1

1. A. NO CHANGE
B. steps: paddle hard, stand up,
C. steps, including: paddle hard, stand up
D. steps paddle hard stand up,

At the board meeting, the owner and CEO Maria Gonzales finally unveiled the plan for the new manufacturing facility; a ten-thousand square foot building that will be completed in 2024 and will create 950 new jobs.
2 3

2. A. NO CHANGE
B. plan; for
C. plan: for
D. plan, for
3. A. NO CHANGE
B. facility – a
C. facility. A
D. facility (a

After another fantastic performance at the 2012 Summer Olympics, Michael Phelps – having won 22 Olympic medals – became the world's most popular mens swimmer.
4 5

4. A. NO CHANGE
B. Olympics, Michael Phelps,
C. Olympics, Michael Phelps
D. Olympics, Michael Phelps, having
5. A. NO CHANGE
B. world's most popular men's
C. worlds' most popular men's
D. worlds most popular mens'

The 4th of July fireworks display down at the harbor was revolutionary, fireworks were launched from 10 different ships while an orchestra played the Star-Spangled Banner.
6

6. A. NO CHANGE
B. revolutionary, with fireworks
C. revolutionary: fireworks
D. revolutionary; and fireworks

Everyone knew that Arya Stark was still alive, but the fate of John Snow – though would not be revealed until the next season.
7

7. A. NO CHANGE
B. alive, but the fate of John Snow – though –
C. alive – but the fate of John Snow though –
D. alive but the fate of John Snow, though,

Hammocks are fantastic for relaxing on a sunny day, they combine the comfort of a couch with the swaying of a swing.
8

8. A. NO CHANGE
B. day: because they combine
C. day; they combine
D. day; combining

Jerry's cafe is famous for its breakfast dishes: eggs benedict, blueberry pancakes, and French toast.
9

9. A. NO CHANGE
B. dishes – eggs benedict –
C. dishes, including: eggs benedict
D. dishes, my favorites are eggs benedict

As a young boy, Raheem became enthralled with pro soccer player's and their signature moves.
10

10. A. NO CHANGE
B. players' and their
C. players
D. players'

The few words remaining on the antique signs
11
Coffe Haus...Main Street Bakery...Menagerie – were barely legible.

11. A. NO CHANGE
B. signs –
C. signs,
D. signs:

19th century plays would only include women for very menial roles, such as, the baker who only
12
has two minutes of stage time, and has no
13
spoken lines.

12. A. NO CHANGE
B. roles: such as
C. roles: such as,
D. roles, such as

13. A. NO CHANGE
B. time: and
C. time and
D. time; having

At the science fair, Jimmy's project proved that Coca-Cola breaks down teeth faster than either sugar water – or lemon juice – does alone.
14

14. A. NO CHANGE
B. water, or lemon juice,
C. water, or lemon juice
D. water or lemon juice

After a long journey, we could finally see the mountains peaks at the hike's final rest stop.
15

15. A. NO CHANGE
B. mountains' peaks at the hike's
C. mountain's peaks at the hike's
D. mountains peaks at the hikes

The Turing test is used to assess how, "human"
16
an artificial intelligence program is.

16. A. NO CHANGE
B. how "human"
C. how "human,"
D. how, "human,"

The English curriculum went beyond the basics
17
it highlighted some of the most advanced rules that were rarely taught.

17. A. NO CHANGE
B. basics and
C. basics:
D. basics,

Although many experts believed that cryptocurrency would be the future, Dhruv believed the opposite, it would quickly die out.
18

18. A. NO CHANGE
B. opposite; because
C. opposite –
D. opposite

New York City residents consider pigeons as little more than, “rats with wings” and they ruin¹⁹ many days in Central Park by trying to steal snacks.

19. A. NO CHANGE
B. than, “rats with wings,” ruining
C. than “rats with wings,” ruining
D. than “rats with wings.” Ruining

The committee tasked with decreasing the budget is using some uncommon tactics, such as pressuring local businesses to provide discounted good and services, to achieve its’ goal.²⁰

20. A. NO CHANGE
B. their
C. it’s
D. its

As the driver approached, the crossing guard said to herself, “who would buy a purple car?”²¹

21. A. NO CHANGE
B. herself, “who would buy a purple car.”
C. herself “who would buy a purple car?”
D. herself “who would buy a purple car.”

After showing up late to field hockey practice and being benched for the game, Victoria had to wash all of her teammates jerseys.²²

22. A. NO CHANGE
B. teammates’ jerseys.
C. teammate’s jerseys.
D. teammates’ jersey’s.

Samantha convinced the hostess that the phone found by the waiter was hers²³ by stating it had a “pink and white case with her initials scratched on the side.”

23. A. NO CHANGE
B. hers’
C. her’s
D. theirs

The whale shark – so big that it is commonly confused for a whale²⁴, is best known for: its²⁵ huge size, gentle nature, and long migrations.

24. A. NO CHANGE
B. whale:
C. whale –
D. whale
25. A. NO CHANGE
B. for: it’s
C. for its
D. for it’s

Chapters 1 – 3 Problem Set

Many questions include sentence structure and punctuation rules. In this problem set, you will need to apply rules from chapters 1, 2, and 3.

The hanging plants, which were overflowing with
flowers, swayed back, and forth in the wind.

1

1. A. NO CHANGE
B. flowers, swayed back and forth
C. flowers, which swayed back and forth
D. flowers swayed back, and forth

In the first ancient civilizations, it was much
more difficult to move heavy rocks from place to
place; but the invention of the wheel quickly
solved that problem.

2

2. A. NO CHANGE
B. place but the invention
C. place; the invention
D. place, however, the invention

Spelunking, commonly known as caving, is one
of Drew's favorite hobbies.

3

3. A. NO CHANGE
B. Spelunking, commonly known as caving,
which is
C. Spelunking, commonly known as caving –
is
D. Spelunking: commonly known as caving,
is

Most museums charge for admissions, however,
museums on the National Mall in Washington,
D.C. are all free.

4

4. A. NO CHANGE
B. admissions; however
C. admissions; but
D. admissions, but

To reach the peak, climbers need to utilize two of
the three paths that end at the rock scrambling
portion.

5

5. A. NO CHANGE
B. utilize, two of the three, paths
C. utilize two, of the three, paths
D. utilize, two of the three paths

At the conference board member, Maria Gonzales,
announced that she would be retiring next year.

6

6. A. NO CHANGE
B. conference, board member Maria Gonzales
C. conference, board member, Maria Gonzales,
D. conference board member Maria Gonzales

Extreme patience and attention to detail are two
important skills necessary, for success as a
watchmaker or a botanist.

7

7. A. NO CHANGE
B. necessary for success as a watchmaker, or
a botanist.
C. necessary for success, as a watchmaker or
botanist.
D. necessary for success as a watchmaker or
a botanist.

After falling asleep in the sun, Lydia woke up with
8
 a serious sunburn and some very funny tan lines.

“Tamara Angela Newton” screamed Tamara’s
9
 mom after finding out her daughter lied about
 her report card.

There are over 700 different types of eucalyptus
10
 trees, only 15 types are native to countries
 outside of Australia.

The logging company chopped down the entire
 forest of pine trees and loaded the trucks with over
11
 one million tons of wood.

Chocolate-covered strawberries are a sweetly,
12
delicious summer treat.

Yara transformed the simple bowl of ramen by
 focusing on its most important element, it’s the
13
 tare (the seasoning).

Each groups’ treasure is hidden in it’s own
14
 unique spot.

On the other hand, arborist James Altucher, in
15
arguing that the benefits of eucalyptus trees are
16
 outweighed by their fire risk.

The first time you lay eyes on the famous “boat
17
houses” you are shocked that someone actually
 lives inside.

8. A. NO CHANGE
 B. sun Lydia woke up
 C. sun, Lydia, woke up
 D. sun, Lydia woke up,
9. A. NO CHANGE
 B. “Tamara Angela Newton,” screamed
 C. “Tamara Angela Newton” screamed,
 D. “Tamara Angela Newton,” screamed,
10. A. NO CHANGE
 B. Arborists say there are
 C. There are upwards of
 D. Of the
11. A. NO CHANGE
 B. trees and loads
 C. trees, and loaded
 D. trees loading
12. A. NO CHANGE
 B. sweet, and delicious
 C. sweet, deliciously
 D. sweet, delicious
13. A. NO CHANGE
 B. element; the
 C. element: the
 D. element the
14. A. NO CHANGE
 B. groups treasure is hidden in its
 C. group’s treasure is hidden in it’s
 D. group’s treasure is hidden in its
15. A. NO CHANGE
 B. Altucher argues
 C. Altucher. He argues
 D. Altucher, who argues
16. A. NO CHANGE
 B. benefits, of eucalyptus trees,
 C. benefits – of eucalyptus trees –
 D. benefits of eucalyptus trees,
17. A. NO CHANGE
 B. famous, “boat houses”
 C. famous “boat houses,”
 D. famous, “boat houses”

During her extensive, field, research,¹⁸ Marsha discovered a direct correlation between water pollution and the presence of invasive species in the Sydney Harbor.

18. A. NO CHANGE
B. extensive field research
C. extensive, field research,
D. extensive field research,

Minor inconsistencies in the data, whether on purpose or by accident, ultimately mattered little in the end, for¹⁹ the project was more about learning how to run the experiment than gathering accurate measurements of the tires pressure.²⁰

19. A. NO CHANGE
B. end. For
C. end; for
D. end,

20. A. NO CHANGE
B. tire's pressures.
C. tires' pressures.
D. tire's pressure's.

John's business consultant estimates, that²¹ identifying inefficiencies in the production line.²¹ should increase the business' profits by hundreds of thousands of dollars in the next three years. Significantly²² more than the \$15,000 consultant cost.

21. A. NO CHANGE
B. estimates that identifying inefficiencies in the production line
C. estimates that identifying inefficiencies, in the production line,
D. estimates that, identifying inefficiencies in the production line,

22. A. NO CHANGE
B. years; significantly
C. years – significantly
D. years, this is significantly

One of the most important steps to complete after water damage is to identify moldy,²³ damaged²³ wiring since it poses a serious fire risk.

23. A. NO CHANGE
B. identify, moldy, damaged
C. identify moldy damaged
D. identify, moldy damaged,

While James loves making his own puff pastry.²⁴ The²⁴ head chef told him it was too expensive,²⁵ laborious, and time-intensive²⁵ and to instead purchase puff pastry dough from the local bakery.

24. A. NO CHANGE
B. pastry, the
C. pastry and the
D. pastry; the

25. A. NO CHANGE
B. expensive, laborious, and time intensive,
C. expensive, laborious and time intensive,
D. expensive laborious and time intensive

In the 1990s, Professor Wu's study on²⁶ the effects of cognitive dissonance.

26. A. NO CHANGE
B. while Professor Wu studied
C. Professor Wu to study
D. Professor Wu studied

Taylor ham invented²⁷ in the 1860s so the Continental Army could carry a protein without the meat spoiling, grew in popularity in New Jersey and now has a cult-like following.

Other cured meats, like scrapple, Canadian bacon, and smoked salmon²⁸ became very popular breakfast staples in the 1980s.

Korean-American chef, David Chang²⁹ is known for his rule-breaking ways and has some of the most creative dishes in New York City.

The judges, immensely³⁰ impressed with one Chinese chef's rendition of blood sausage (a northeast Chinese specialty), claim its³¹ the most delicious smoked meat³² they had ever eaten.

Due to the length of time required, 400 days to be exact, Prosciutto Di Parma, once finished³³ is one of the most expensive cured meats.

Many food critics were anxiously waiting their turn to judge the new chefs menus merits³⁴ for themselves.

Breeding of golden retrievers with poodles was done for cosmetic reasons, but it also had an unintended side effect a reduction³⁵ in inherited health issues.

27. A. NO CHANGE
B. ham was invented
C. ham, inventing
D. ham, invented
28. A. NO CHANGE
B. meats, like scrapple, Canadian bacon, and smoked salmon
C. meats like scrapple, Canadian bacon and smoked salmon,
D. meats – like scrapple Canadian bacon, and smoked salmon –
29. A. NO CHANGE
B. chef David Chang,
C. chef David Chang
D. chef, David Chang
30. A. NO CHANGE
B. judges were immensely
C. judges who were immensely
D. judges had been
31. A. NO CHANGE
B. it's
C. its'
D. her's is
32. A. NO CHANGE
B. delicious, smoked, meat
C. delicious, smoked meat
D. delicious, smoked, meat,
33. A. NO CHANGE
B. Prosciutto Di Parma once finished
C. Prosciutto Di Parma, once finished,
D. Prosciutto Di Parma once finished,
34. A. NO CHANGE
B. chef's menus merits
C. chef's menu's merits
D. chefs' menus merits
35. A. NO CHANGE
B. effect. A reduction
C. effect; a reduction
D. effect – a reduction

Chapter 4: Verbs

Verbs questions test you on two major topics – subject-verb agreement and verb tense. The subject-verb agreement questions are trickier, as at times it can be difficult to find the subject and “hear” which verb is correct. You will learn a few methods in this chapter to correctly answer these questions. For the verb tense questions, the approach is much more straightforward: read for context and go with the answer that sounds correct.

Subject-Verb Agreement

Whenever you see a verbs question on the ACT, **your first job is to find the subject**. The subject, which is the person, place, or thing doing the action, is usually at the beginning of the sentence.

The subject of the sentence must agree with the verb. If the subject is singular, the verb must be singular, and if the subject is plural, the verb must be plural. In simple sentences when the subject and verbs are right next to each other, it will be easy to select the right verb:

Cats (loves/love) to sit in empty boxes.

My dog (barks/bark) at the mailman every day.

Easy right? Unfortunately, verbs questions will not be this easy on test day. The ACT increases the difficulty by putting distance between the subject and the verb. The farther away the subject is from the verb, the more likely we are to say the verb incorrectly. Remember, **what sounds right is not always right. You cannot trust your ear on subject-verb agreement questions.**

There are 3 ways the ACT will try to trick you on subject-verb agreement:

1. Unnecessary information phrases between the subject and verb.

Unnecessary information phrases never contain the subject. Cross out any unnecessary information phrases to find the subject.

Tortoises, known to live to over 150 years old, (is/are) sold at the local pet shop.

The committee, composed of two former CEOs, one politician, three lawyers, and two doctors, (vote/votes) to delay the release of the new product until next quarter.

2. Prepositional phrases between the subject and verb (most common).

Prepositional phrases never contain the subject or the verb. Cross out prepositional phrases to find the subject.

The entire group of students (is/are) organizing a bake sale to raise money.

The pod of dolphins (hunts/hunt) as a team.

3. Group nouns that sound plural but are singular.

Group nouns (class, committee, team) are singular even though the group consists of more than one person/thing.

The sheep herd (waits/wait) to be sheared.

The jury (agrees/agree) that the defendant deserves to be put in jail.

TIP – Read the Subject and Verbs Side-by-side

Once you find the subject and verb, read them next to each other and ignore the information in between. This will help you more easily identify which one is correct.

A large percentage of the voters, many of whom are under the age of 30, (prefer/prefers) the new housing proposal.

Cross out any unnecessary information and prepositional phrases.

A large percentage ~~of the voters, many of whom are under the age of 30,~~ (prefer/prefers) the new housing proposal.

The subject is “percentage.” Put the subject and verb next to each other and ignore the rest of the sentence.

Correct: A percentage **prefers** the new housing proposal.

Practice:

1. The entire class of first graders (cheer/cheers) when the ice cream truck arrives.
2. The proposal for planting a new grove of orange trees (requires/require) an approval of 80% to pass.
3. With the budget finally approved, the new system for payroll, scheduling, and human resources that took three years to build (is/are) finally going live next month.

TIP – Plug in “he/she/it” for singular subject and “they” for plural subjects

Sometimes it is difficult to “hear” which verb correctly matches with the subject. For singular words, plug in “he,” “she,” or “it” for the subject. For plural words, plug in “they” for the subject. With this trick, we will be able to easily hear which verb properly agrees with the subject.

The exact time for the meeting with the softball coach and location for the showcase (has/have) not been finalized.

If we read the sentence as is, it is difficult to tell which verb fits. After crossing out the prepositional phrases, the sentence looks like this:

The exact time ~~for the meeting with the softball coach~~ and location ~~for the showcase~~ (has/have) not been finalized.

The subjects are “time” and “location,” so the subject is plural. Replace the subjects with “they.”

They (has/have) not been finalized.

Now it’s easy...we can tell that “have” is correct.

Try this tip with the examples below:

1. Each of the runners who complete the marathon (wins/win) a medal.
2. The complex designs and intricate needlework (makes/make) Julia’s carpets the most popular in the entire art market.

Subject-Verb Agreement Practice:

1. The stable hand hired by the farm owners (groom/grooms) the horses every morning.
2. Both of the apartments (is/are) never vacant during the summer.
3. Ned, the winner of the gold medal in the 200-meter breaststroke, and Claire, the bronze medal winner in the 1000-meter freestyle, (was/were) featured on the cover of the swimming magazine.
4. Gold coins and silver bars, all once thought to be lost forever, (was/were) found in the sunken pirate ship.
5. Each of the girl scouts (sells/sell) delicious Thin Mint cookies.
6. The cast of the award-winning show (takes/take) a bow after the show ends.
7. Killer whales, which are the top predators in the ocean, (have/has) been documented hunting great white sharks.
8. The overall rating from the reviewers of the new restaurant, which is scored on categories including the food quality and the ambiance, (is/are) worse than before the renovation and reopening.
9. To help raise money to save the farm, Janet donates her old clothes, Mike organizes a bake sale, and Chloe and Bill (has/have) a yard sale.
10. One of the recipes for chocolate chip cookies in the cookbooks (call/calls) for brown sugar.
11. Flamingos, famous for their bright pink feathers, actually (get/gets) their color from a diet of shrimp and algae.
12. The entire group of seagulls (is/are) following the child who keeps dropping french fries.
13. One of the symptoms (make/makes) Dr. Smith think that Andy just has the common cold.
14. Freediving, a very unique and uncommon sport, (require/requires) divers to hold their breath for long periods of time.

Verb Tense

For questions on verb tense, trust your ear. As a native English speaker, **you will know what sounds right or wrong in the sentence as long as you read for context.** To find which tense is correct, **read the previous sentence(s) and look for other verbs.** Make sure to match the tense in the rest of the paragraph.

On the ACT, do not pick a complicated tense (has run, had ran, had been running, would have run, etc.) when a simple tense works.

Last year, Margot (designs/designed/will design) a new line of summer dresses.

Before he votes tomorrow, Dale (researches/research/will research) each candidate's positions on the major issues.

The referee stopped the fight after the boxers (refuses/refused/will refuse) to follow the rules.

In English, we use the perfect tense when there are multiple timelines in a sentence. The perfect tense is when we say "has" or "have" or "had" with the verb. If you read for context and read the entire sentence, we should be able to "hear" when we need to use the perfect tense.

Many surfers enjoy paddling out, but few (rode/have ridden) waves over ten feet tall.

While the group of entrepreneurs claimed to all be successful, only a few (will start/have started) their own businesses.

The bison (ate/had been eating) when the lions began their attack.

By the beginning of next year, the doctors (finish/finished/will have finished) their preliminary research on lung cancer.

The conditional tense describes what would or could happen in the future. The kind of verb conjugation that we need depends on how likely the outcome is to actually happen (probable, improbable, impossible). Again, the key here is to trust your ear and go with what sounds right to you.

If I make the free throw, we (will win/would win/would have won) the game.

If I made the free throw, we (will win/would win/would have won) the game.

If I had made the free throw, we (will win/would win/would have won) the game.

The ACT also tests you on irregular verbs. For these verbs, just trust your ear and go with what sounds correct to you.

Before the show (began/begun), the lights were dimmed.

The deliveryman had (rang/rung) the doorbell before dropping off the package.

By the time the meal was over, the boy had (ate/eaten) an entire bag of popcorn and had (drank/drank) a liter of cola.

TIP – Irregular Verbs – “a” vs. “u” versions

For many of the most difficult irregular verbs, there is an “a” version (ex: swam) and a “u” version (ex: swum). We use these verbs incorrectly all of the time, so using your ear and trying to hear which one sounds correct is difficult. All you need to do is remember the simple rules below:

With “has,” “have,” or “had” → Use the “u” version (perfect tense)

Correct: Before you arrived, I had swum some laps.

With no “has,” “have,” or “had” → Use the “a” version (past tense)

Correct: I swam some laps this morning.

The most commonly tested irregular verbs following this pattern are below.

<u>Verb</u>	<u>Past Tense</u>	<u>Perfect Tense</u>
begin	began	has/have/had begun
drink	drank	has/have/had drunk
sink	sank	has/have/had sunk
swim	swam	has/have/had swum
run	ran	has/have/had run
sing	sang	has/have/had sung

Verb Tense Practice:

1. The car accident on the freeway delayed my commute and (causes/caused) me to be late for the job interview.
2. After playing basketball for two hours, Jimmy (devours/devoured) a carnitas burrito and two fish tacos.
3. It is impossible to believe that Andrew (tells/told) his parents what really happened.
4. Before I woke up, Chris had already (swam/swum) twenty laps.
5. If you had ordered the tickets last week, they (would arrive/would have arrived) by now.
6. The sign asked that you (be/are) polite to the waiters and tip well.
7. The dance competition (began/begins) at 10am, and the awards ceremony then starts at 4pm.
8. If I finish all of my homework, I (will get/get/would get) to go to the new Star Wars movie.
9. The local pizza parlor (closes/closed) its doors for good last year.
10. Mary went to the mall and (buys/bought/buyed) a new outfit for her graduation party.
11. The ship had already been (sank/sunk) before the battle was finished.
12. If the rebels had won the war, the world would (of/have) been a very different place.

TIP – How to Spot Subject-Verb Agreement vs. Verb Tense Questions

Spotting verbs questions in general is pretty easy: the answer choices will have different forms of the same verb. Knowing we are dealing with a verbs question is a good start, but to answer the question correctly we need to know if we are being tested on subject-verb agreement or verb tense.

Subject-verb agreement questions always have one defining characteristic:

1. **Verbs in the answer choices have singular and plural versions. Look for “is” vs. “are,” “has” vs. “have,” “was” vs. “were,” and any other verbs with a singular, like “runs,” vs. a plural, like “run.”** Anytime you see verbs that have a singular and plural version in the answer choices, the question is testing you on subject-verb agreement.

The addition of solar panels to the roof of a house in Nevada make the house on average 20% more energy efficient.

1. Which choice makes the sentence most grammatically acceptable?
 - A. NO CHANGE
 - B. makes
 - C. have made
 - D. were making

In this example, B is correct because the subject “addition” is singular. The only verb that matches with “addition” is “makes.” Even though there are different tenses in the answer choices, we only need to use subject-verb agreement to find the correct answer.

Verb tense questions always have two defining characteristics:

1. **Verbs in the answer choices are in different tenses.** For example, if “requires,” “required,” and “will require” are in the answer choices, the question is testing you on tense.
2. **Verbs in the answer choices do NOT have singular and plural versions.** If there are not options for singular and plural versions, subject-verb agreement is not being tested.

The girl scouts are hosting a bake sale tomorrow to raise money. To get ready, Adya would need to bake two trays of blondies and a box of donut holes.

2. Which choice makes the sentence most grammatically acceptable?
 - A. NO CHANGE
 - B. was needing
 - C. needed
 - D. needs

In this example, D is correct because the verb must be present tense. In the previous sentence, the verb “are” is present tense, so we know this sentence should also be in present tense. Answer choices A, B, and C are in the wrong tense.

Chapter 4 Practice:

In-n-Out, known for its animal style burgers, and Five Guys always tops the annual list of best burgers.¹

1. A. NO CHANGE
B. Five Guys, always topping
C. Five Guys always top
D. Five Guys, always top

The first row of the townhouses for sale in my neighborhood has the best view of the beach.²

2. A. NO CHANGE
B. neighborhood, having
C. neighborhood have
D. neighborhood would have

In last night's magic show, there was one rabbit,³ two magician's assistants, and ten doves.

3. A. NO CHANGE
B. there are
C. there were
D. there is

The treehouse construction is almost complete. Anna would just need two more pieces of plywood and a few more screws.⁴

4. A. NO CHANGE
B. just needed
C. just needs
D. is in needing of just

The list of upgrades that the school board promised, new chalkboards, a new swimming pool, and a renovated teacher's lounge, were completed over the summer.⁵

5. A. NO CHANGE
B. lounge, was completed
C. lounge were completed
D. lounge was completed

If I had a nickel for every time that I saw a dog ride a bike, I would of been broke long ago.⁶

6. A. NO CHANGE
B. bike, I have been
C. bike, I would have been
D. bike, I was

Packing up the entire house and moving across the country are such a hassle.⁷

7. A. NO CHANGE
B. country, are
C. country is
D. country, is

The innovative team at Apple, the company that revolutionized the way that we listen to music, are planning to release their newest device next month.⁸

8. A. NO CHANGE
B. music, is planning
C. music, planned
D. music are planning

If Thomas would have finished his part by now,
⁹
we would of been done with the project already.
⁹

9. A. NO CHANGE
 B. finishes his part by now, we would be done
 C. had finished his part by now, we would have been done
 D. finished his part by now, would be done

The pictures on the mantelpiece contain only the photo from the holidays that show the entire
¹⁰
 family together.

10. A. NO CHANGE
 B. showed
 C. had shown
 D. shows

The entire flock of geese stop at the pond in my
¹¹
 backyard during their migration south.

11. A. NO CHANGE
 B. flock of geese, stopping
 C. flock of geese stops
 D. flock of geese, have stopped

Before starting the 100-mile bike ride, the
¹²
triathlon participants already running over
¹²
 twenty miles.

12. A. NO CHANGE
 B. ride, the triathlon participants had already ran
 C. ride, the triathlon participants had already run
 D. ride, the triathlon participants already run

Onion bagels and chive cream cheese is part of
¹³
the daily specials at the Beachside Diner.
¹³

13. A. NO CHANGE
 B. cheese being part of the daily specials
 C. cheese is part of the daily specials,
 D. cheese are part of the daily specials

When my grandfather played poker with us,
¹⁴
 nobody can tell when he is bluffing or when he is telling the truth.

14. A. NO CHANGE
 B. When my grandfather plays poker with us,
 C. Playing poker with us,
 D. When my grandfather was playing poker with us

Photosynthesis, the process by which plants turn sunlight into energy, and cellular respiration, the process by which humans turn sugars into usable energy, has continued to be confusing to
¹⁵
 the 8th grade class.

15. A. NO CHANGE
 B. was confusing
 C. would of been confusing
 D. were confusing

In order to cook a perfect steak, harmony of temperature and time are necessary to master.
¹⁶

16. A. NO CHANGE
 B. have been
 C. were
 D. is

While there are many crucial elements to running a successful business – proper management, effective marketing, and a well-crafted product – the passion and drive of the CEO is the most important.

17

17. A. NO CHANGE
B. was
C. has been
D. are

Incredibly, as one of my food scientist colleagues mention, kombucha has been brewed for thousands of years

18

18. A. NO CHANGE
B. mentions,
C. have mentioned,
D. are mentioning

One hot summer day when I was ten years old, I had did some kitesurfing for the first time.

19

19. A. NO CHANGE
B. tried
C. gone
D. had tried

The encapsulation of the radioactive materials make the surrounding area safe.

20

20. A. NO CHANGE
B. have made
C. are making
D. makes

Of the estimated 7,000 spoken languages in the world, linguists say nearly half are likely to disappear in this century. In fact, they fell out of use at a rate of about one every two weeks.

21

21. A. NO CHANGE
B. would of fallen
C. are falling
D. had fallen

Government officials in Nepal have maintained that the expertise of the Sherpas has protected many hikers from serious injuries or worse on Mount Everest.

22

22. A. NO CHANGE
B. have protected
C. are protecting
D. were protecting

Though many features of the film (such as the color grading) enhances the viewer's experience, the audio is a bit choppy, which makes the film painful to watch from beginning to end.

23

23. A. NO CHANGE
B. has enhanced
C. was enhancing
D. enhance

Chapter 5: Pronouns

Pronouns are words that stand in for a person, place, or thing. On the ACT, you will need to know how to select the proper pronoun based on case (“he” vs. “him” or “who” vs. “whom”), make sure that a pronoun agrees with the word it is replacing, and spot ambiguous pronouns.

Pronoun Case

To start, let’s work on pronoun case. Pronouns have two cases: subject and object. The pronoun’s role in the sentence (subject or object) dictates which type of pronoun is correct.

Subject	
Singular	Plural
I	We
You	You
He/She/It	They
Who	Who

Object	
Singular	Plural
Me	Us
You	You
Him/Her/It	Them
Whom	Whom

For simple pronoun case questions, it will be easy to tell which pronoun is correct. Just trust your ear!

(They/them) went to the street festival on Saturday afternoon.

The man handed (we/us) a stack of flyers.

One type of more advanced pronouns question occurs when the pronoun is in a list. Since we often say pronouns in a list incorrectly, we may no longer be able to simply “hear” which pronoun is correct. For a pronoun in a list, **ignore the other items in the list and just read the pronoun to tell which is correct.**

The policeman asked to speak to my friends and (me/I).

His girlfriend and (he/him) went to the hockey game.

The entire gang and (they/them) are responsible for this.

At times, pronouns are also included in a prepositional phrase. **Pronouns in prepositional phrases always are in the object case.** Remember this rule, as it can be difficult to tell which one is correct by just using your ear.

The bet between Joe and (I/me) was for just five dollars.

To (who/whom) was the award given to?

Jerry claims that a great rivalry exists among Tim, Scott, and (he/him).

Who vs. Whom

You need to know the difference between “who” and “whom,” as it is tested on almost every ACT. Technically, “who” is the subject of the sentence, and “whom” is the object. But knowing that is not very helpful. Here’s the trick you need to memorize:

If you can replace the word with “he,” “she,” or “they,” use “who.”

If you can replace the word with “him,” “her,” or “them,” use “whom.”

You may need to rearrange the sentence a bit, but this trick will work for any who vs. whom question.

Try with the examples below:

(Who/whom) stole the apple off the teacher's desk?

To (who/whom) should I address this letter?

(Who/whom) do you want to win the Bachelor?

TIP - Who vs. Whom in Phrases

On more difficult questions, who/whom can also be used to introduce a phrase describing a person. Using our normal "he/him" trick does not work if we look at the entire sentence. However, if we just look at the phrase on its own, the trick still works.

The child (who/whom) I invited to the party was very noisy.

The child (who/whom) was running down the street was very noisy.

If we plug in "he" or "him" to the entire sentence, neither sounds correct. **To tell if it is "who" or "whom," only look at the phrase**, which is in the brackets below.

The child [(who/whom) I invited to the party] was very noisy.

The child [(who/whom) was running down the street] was very noisy.

If we just look at the phrase, can we say, "he I invited to the party?" No, but we could say, "I invited him to the party," so the first one must be "whom." If we look at the second example, we can say, "he was running down the street," so "who" is correct.

The second trick involves looking at the next word after "who" or "whom." **If the word right after is a verb, use "who." If the word right after is a noun, use "whom."** In the first example, "I" is a noun, so we use "whom." In the second example, "was" is a verb, so we use "who."

1. On my way to the farmer's market, I ran into my childhood best friend, (who/whom) I had not seen in years.
2. I could not believe how much the florists (who/whom) opened up a shop down the street charge for their roses.
3. After the investigation, the owner fired the employee (who/whom) the private investigator identified as the one responsible for stealing over \$5,000 of company funds.

TIP - Reflexive Pronouns

Reflexive pronouns, which use the "-self" ending (myself, yourself, himself...), can only be used when the pronoun is referring back to a person or thing elsewhere in the sentence or in previous sentences.

Incorrect: I grabbed three donuts and put them in a box for me.

Correct: I grabbed three donuts and put them in a box for myself.

Incorrect: I asked my coworker to put three donuts in a box for myself.

Correct: I asked my coworker to put three donuts in a box for me.

Possessive Pronouns

At times, pronouns will also be used to show possession. It is important that these pronouns still match with the word(s) that are being replaced (we will cover this more on the next page).

Possessive Nouns	
Singular	Plural
Mine	Ours
Yours	Yours
His/Hers/Its	Theirs

Possessive Adjectives	
Singular	Plural
My	Our
Your	Your
His/Her/Its	Their

Incorrect: The entire team went on stage to pick up their trophy.

Correct: The entire team went on stage to pick up its trophy.

The pronoun here is referring back to “team,” which is singular. In order to match correctly, we must use the singular pronoun “its.” Try with the examples below:

Emmanuel and James came back home after forgetting (his/their) phones.

Thousands of tourists travel to Egypt each year to see (its/their) ancient pyramids.

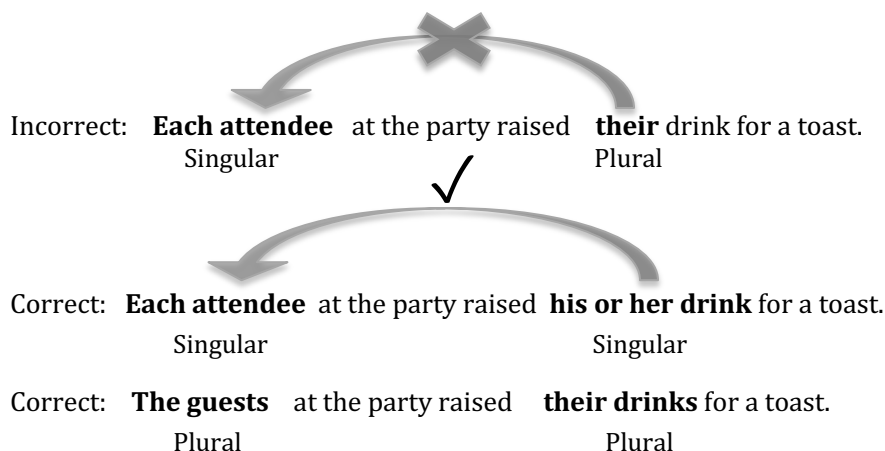
Pronoun Case Practice:

- Before jumping in the pool, please ask (I/me/myself) for permission.
- According to Mary, the three-act play was directed by John and (she/her).
- The restaurant manager asked that an order of spaghetti and meatballs be set aside for (him/himself) after he put some of his favorite cheese on a plate for (him/himself).
- In order to lift the table, my mother asked Eric, Rich, and (me/I) for help.
- (Who/whom) is the best chess player in the world right now?
- People often travel to casinos in Las Vegas to test (their/they're/your) luck at the blackjack tables and to see (its/their) famous skyline.
- After pouring (me/myself) a glass of lemonade, I went out to sit by the pool.
- The painting, which was completed by Rachel and (she/her/herself), was praised by critics for (its/it's/its') shading.
- All we ask is that you return the puppies to (we/us/ourselves) as soon as possible.
- Terry, (who/whom) is the top ranked basketball recruit in the city, always dominates the player (who/whom) he is guarded by.
- The team captain, the coaches, and (they/them) all gathered together for a team photo.
- We were all wondering (who/whom) had pulled the senior class prank and (who/whom) the principal had called to his office.

Pronoun Agreement

Pronouns must agree with the antecedent, which is the noun that the pronoun is replacing. **Whenever you see a pronoun on the ACT, you must find exactly who or what it is referring to.** The antecedent can be in the same sentence as the pronoun or in a preceding sentence. The antecedent can also be anywhere in the sentence (unnecessary information, prepositional phrases, etc).

Pronouns must match the antecedent in terms of plurality and gender. A singular antecedent must have a singular pronoun; a plural antecedent must have a plural pronoun. A male antecedent must have a male pronoun; a female antecedent must have a female pronoun.



Pronouns Agreement Practice:

1. Ben or Tom will give (his/their) presentation to the class today.
2. The popularity of food trucks can be credited to (its/their) convenience and unique menu items.
3. Each member of the women's track team improved (her/their) time.
4. Jane and Sarah, after a long conversation with another group of hikers on the trail, said (she/they) were too tired to go any farther today.
5. Please remind each student to bring in (his or her/their) signed participation form for tomorrow's field trip.
6. The puppy lost (its/it's/its') ball in the ocean.
7. A person (who/whom) is committed to (their/his or her) dreams can achieve (it/them).
8. The writers soon found that all of (his or her/their) writing skills and fantastic stories were useless unless (he or she/they) could get signed by a publishing company.
9. The leaf cutter ant, which is native to Central and South America, is best known for (its/their) methodical cutting and carrying of small pieces of leaves to the nest.
10. If you plan to give a presentation on the importance of accurate data, (one/you) should check (one's/your) facts first.

Ambiguous Pronouns

For a pronoun to be correct, we must know exactly who or what it is referring to. **If we do not know exactly who or what a pronoun is referring to, the pronoun is ambiguous and is always incorrect.**

Incorrect: Stephen smiled at his father as he threw the ball.

We do not know if “he” is referring to Stephen or his father, so “he” is ambiguous and incorrect.

Correct: Stephen smiled at his father as his father threw the ball.

Even though it may seem redundant, replacing “he” with “his father” fixes the ambiguous pronoun error.

Incorrect: Even though the order had not yet shown up, the librarian insisted that she had ordered some.

We have no idea what “some” is referring to in this sentence.

Correct: Even though the order had not yet shown up, the librarian insisted that she had ordered four copies of the new book.

TIP – Spotting Ambiguous Pronouns Questions

Anytime you see a pronoun in the answer choices, check to see if the pronoun is ambiguous. Here are all of the pronouns you should keep an eye out for: **he, him, his, she, her, hers, they, them, their, it, its, this, that, these, those, some, none.**

On the ACT, ambiguous pronouns questions look something like this:

Of the 2020 inductees to the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame, which include Biggie Smalls, Nine Inch Nails and its lead singer Trent Reznor, and the Doobie Brothers, it is widely agreed that he is the most famous.

1. Which choice makes the sentence most grammatically acceptable?
 - A. NO CHANGE
 - B. they are
 - C. Biggie is
 - D. it is

Ted sat down with his dinner: three pulled pork sliders with a side of french fries. James, Ted’s younger brother, immediately asked for one.

2. Which choice makes the sentence most grammatically acceptable?
 - A. NO CHANGE
 - B. a slider.
 - C. one of them.
 - D. some.

In the first example, the answer is C because we need to specify who is the most famous. “He,” “they,” or “it” could be referring to multiple people or things, so answer choices A, B, and D are all ambiguous. The only answer choice that is specific is C.

In the second example, the answer is B since it specifies what James is asking for. If we just say James asked for “one” or “one of them” or “some,” we do not know if James wants a slider or a French fry.

Ambiguous Pronouns Practice:

When the owner of Pizza Port greets a
customer, he always smiles.
1

1. A. NO CHANGE
- B. greets a customer, the owner always smiles.
- C. greets a customer, they always smile.
- D. greets customers, he always smiles.

After the student handed in the overdue
homework assignment to the teacher, she
walked away angrily.
2

2. A. NO CHANGE
- B. the teacher, walking
- C. the teacher, the teacher walks
- D. the teacher, the student walked

Not long after Chris and Andrew got a \$15,000
loan from the bank for their restaurant, it went
bankrupt.
3

3. A. NO CHANGE
- B. he
- C. one
- D. the restaurant

A friend of mine recently had a conversation
with a marine that changed his view on the war.
4

4. A. NO CHANGE
- B. marine that changed my friend's view
- C. marine, who changed their views
- D. marine, changing his view

The human brain is a miracle when it comes to
working through complex problems. It is also
the reason that most people are really bad
investors. Our brains are not good at
calculating probabilities or handling
uncertainty. When we see stocks decreasing in
value compared to other investments in our
portfolio, we want to sell them immediately, but
that is often the wrong decision. In addition, we
are genetically wired for risk aversion. The
humans that took less risk survived and passed
down their genes. These, I believe, are why
many people mismanage their money.
5

5. A. NO CHANGE
 - B. those
 - C. the stocks
 - D. it
6. A. NO CHANGE
 - B. This risk aversion, I believe, is
 - C. Those are, I believe,
 - D. It, I believe, is

Chapter 5 Practice:

Most classic guitars are handmade, molded from mahogany, ash, or maple wood. It is¹ all wood except for the strings, tuning keys, and the bridge.

1. A. NO CHANGE
B. Which are
C. They are
D. One is

One of the books in the library was full of fairy tales, but Andrew could not find them.²

2. A. NO CHANGE
B. those.
C. his own.
D. it.

I was in shock after the vote was over. Who³ selected³ Richard to be the captain of our debate team?

3. A. NO CHANGE
B. over; whom
C. over, who selected
D. over: whom

After she grabbed a stack of menus, the hostess at Jerry's Southern BBQ leads Eli, Billy, and I⁴ to our table.

4. A. NO CHANGE
B. leads Eli, Billy, and me
C. led Eli, Billy, and me
D. led Eli, Billy, and I

During the day, San Diego bustles with visitors, but even after a long day on the town people gather at they're⁵ famous beaches to watch sunset.

5. A. NO CHANGE
B. their
C. it's
D. its

The Iditarod, called "the last great race on Earth" by many Alaskans, is a long, grueling race across nearly 1,000 miles of its⁶ wilderness. Last year's winner Dallas Seavey, whom⁷ has won the race four times, set a new record at 8 days, 11 hours, 20 minutes, and 16 seconds.

6. A. NO CHANGE
B. there
C. the Alaskan
D. DELETE the underlined portion
7. A. NO CHANGE
B. Seavey who
C. Seavey, who
D. Seavey

The new song by Lady Gaga and Ariana Grande is enormously popular; its⁸ lyrics are just so catchy!

8. A. NO CHANGE
B. it's
C. their
D. her

Due to changes in local gravity fields, the accuracy of pendulum clocks, which use harmonic motion to keep time, will depend the altitude at which it is located.

9

9. A. NO CHANGE
B. they are
C. its
D. one is

The chef insists that using gelatin packets is the best way to give the right consistency to his meatloaf slices. He maintains that these are the reason he won first prize at this year's competition.

10

10. A. NO CHANGE
B. her
C. their
D. there

11. A. NO CHANGE
B. this is
C. the gelatin packets are
D. it is

Southern alligator lizards near the coast, where the ground is much sandier, are much lighter – by a large margin – then their inland cousins.

12

12. A. NO CHANGE
B. than its
C. than their
D. than

Today, golden retrievers behave much in the same way as their ancestors did over one hundred years ago.

13

13. A. NO CHANGE
B. its
C. our
D. they're

My friends and I, although, found Elizabeth's explanation hard to believe and questioned her about the details.

14

14. A. NO CHANGE
B. me, although,
C. I although
D. me, although

One of the telltale signs of a black hole is the unusual bending of light around them.

15

15. A. NO CHANGE
B. these.
C. one of those black holes.
D. it.

Its commonly thought that the Great Wall of China was constructed in the early second century BCE.

16

16. A. NO CHANGE
B. Among historians, its
C. It's
D. Its'

The construction workers chased away the children whom often snuck into the construction site and climbed on the scaffolding.

17

17. A. NO CHANGE
B. children; whom
C. children that
D. children who

After seeing the bees and beehive at the farm
and tasting the jars of fresh honey, Aaron
decided to order some for himself.

18

18. A. NO CHANGE
B. some of them
C. those
D. some bees

Since graduating high school and moving to
Prague, Andrea has not seen any of the people
that she went to high school with.

19

19. A. NO CHANGE
B. people who
C. people whom
D. people, where

The melting snow and ice caused a variety of
problems. After re-freezing overnight, it causes
slick roads, many accidents, and huge traffic
jams.

20

20. A. NO CHANGE
B. it caused
C. they caused
D. causing

The struggling bakery finally became popular
when they invented a brand new baked good:
the cronut.

21

21. A. NO CHANGE
B. one
C. themselves
D. it

Ari convinced Mary Kate, a cashier that he hired
to work mornings, to come in on Saturday to
close.

22

22. A. NO CHANGE
B. whom
C. which
D. who

To accomplish this goal, the architect provides a
detailed design to their construction manager.

23

23. A. NO CHANGE
B. his or her
C. their own
D. DELETE the underlined portion.

Chapter 6: Misplaced Modifiers

A misplaced modifier is a word, phrase, or clause that is improperly separated from the noun that it modifies. A misplaced modifier leads to a sentence that has an incorrect or unintended meaning. Misplaced modifiers are hard to spot because we usually know what the sentence is really supposed to be saying.

Incorrect: Consistently erupting, Jack loves taking pictures of the Old Faithful geyser at Yellowstone National Park.

So what's wrong here? The modifier "consistently erupting" is supposed to be modifying the Old Faithful geyser, but instead it is modifying Jack! Let's hope Jack is not consistently erupting. When a sentence begins with a modifying phrase, the phrase must modify the very first noun that follows the comma. There are two ways to fix this error:

Correct: Consistently erupting, the Old Faithful geyser at Yellowstone National Park is one of Jack's favorite things to take pictures of.

Correct: Since it is consistently erupting, Jack loves taking pictures of the Old Faithful geyser at Yellowstone National Park.

In the first correct version, the modifier "consistently erupting" is right next to and correctly modifying the Old Faithful geyser. In the second correct version, we added a pronoun "it" to change the modifier from a phrase to a dependent clause, so we now know that the geyser is erupting. When we get to "Jack," there is no longer any confusion about who or what is erupting.

TIP – "Next-door Neighbor Rule"

For a modifier to be properly placed, it must be right "next-door" to the noun it is describing. Modifiers can be at the beginning, middle, or end of a sentence.

If the modifier is at the beginning of the sentence, the first noun after must be the word being modified.



Running from the police, Eric hopped the fence and hid underneath a car.

If the modifier is in the middle or end of the sentence, it must be modifying the noun directly before it.

Dr. Anderson, a world-renown surgeon, fixed my broken leg.



Front of the Sentence Modifiers with a Comma

On the ACT, **most misplaced modifiers questions have a modifier at the front of the sentence separated by a comma.** For this type of question, consider who or what the modifier is describing and then make sure that person, place, or thing is the first noun in the rest of the sentence.

Incorrect: Not popular since the early 1980s, the documentary about mullets explored the origins of the wildly popular hairstyle.

Correct: Not popular since the early 1980s, mullets were the topic of a recently released documentary.

The modifier is “not popular since the early 1980s,” so the next noun must be whoever or whatever the modifier is describing. In the incorrect version, the next noun “documentaries” is not what we are supposed to be describing. The correct version puts the described word “mullets” right next-door to the modifier at the beginning of the sentence.

Practice:

Addressing the group of reporters gathered outside of the police station, there was no
1
indication that the police chief knew if the suspect
1
was in custody or not.
1

1. A. NO CHANGE
B. the police chief said he did not know if the suspect was in custody or not.
C. no indication of whether or not the suspect was in custody was given by the police chief.
D. the police chief’s report gave no indication of whether the suspect was in custody or not.

A brand new approach to automobile manufacturing, Henry Ford and Ford Motor
2
Company installed the first moving assembly line
2
in 1913.
2

2. A. NO CHANGE
B. the Ford Motor Company, owned by Henry Ford, installed the first moving assembly line in 1913.
C. the first moving assembly line was installed by Henry Ford and Ford Motor Company in 1913.
D. 1913 was the first year that Henry Ford and the Ford Motor Company installed the moving assembly line.

Designed for beauty and symmetry, Laura
3
Saunders created a modern art museum that is an architectural marvel.

3. A. NO CHANGE
B. Both beautiful and symmetric
C. By designing it for beauty and symmetry
D. A design with beauty and symmetry

Middle or the End of the Sentence Modifier with Commas

A modifier in the middle or at the end of the sentence must be directly after whoever or whatever it is modifying.

Incorrect: The research team, which arrived at their nesting grounds early this year, tracked the movements of the blue storks.

Correct: The research team tracked the movements of the blue storks, which arrived at their nesting grounds early this year.

Correct: The research team, which tracked the movement of the blue storks, noted that the birds arrived at their nesting grounds early.

In the incorrect example, the modifier “which arrived at their nesting grounds early this year” was incorrectly modifying the research team. However, this modifier should be modifying the blue storks, so the first correct example moves the modifier to the end of the sentence right “next-door” to the blue storks. We could also fix the incorrect sentence by changing the modifier in the middle as is displayed in the second correct example. The new modifier “which tracked the movement of the blue storks” now properly modifies the research team.

Practice:

There was little doubt that the new technique for deep frying the cod, which uses less oil and a new type of batter, results in a more crispy and less oily breading.

1. A. NO CHANGE
B. which had been caught earlier this morning
C. one that is popular among locals
D. using hotter oil and smaller pieces of fish

Modifiers without Commas

In some questions, the modifier will not be separated by any commas. These are the harder to spot, but the “next-door neighbor” rule still applies. Keep an eye out for phrases starting with “that” or words ending in “-ing” and “-ed.”

Incorrect: A tarantula bit one of my coworkers that had a huge, hairy body.

Correct: A tarantula that had a huge, hairy body bit one of my coworkers.

The incorrect sentence has the modifier “that had a huge, hairy body” describing the coworker and not the tarantula. By moving the modifier right next to the tarantula in the correct sentence, we are describing the tarantula as having a huge, hairy body.

Practice:

Three businessmen talked on the balcony smoking cigars to celebrate the deal.

1. A. NO CHANGE
B. celebrating the deal talked on the balcony smoking cigars.
C. smoking cigars talked to celebrate the deal on the balcony.
D. smoking cigars to celebrate the deal talked on the balcony.

Prepositional Phrases as Modifiers

Prepositional phrases can also act as modifiers and must be placed in the correct position to have the intended meaning. These occur less commonly on the ACT and are often difficult to spot.

Incorrect: Paul and his father talked about the baseball game in the stands.

Correct: In the stands, Paul and his father talked about the baseball game.

In the first sentence, the baseball game is in the stands. We know that's not the case, so we need to move the prepositional phrase "in the stands" to the beginning of the sentence. Now, the phrase is describing Paul and his father as being in the stands.

Practice:

The Subaru dealership sold the new car to the buyer with automatic parallel parking.

1

1. The best placement for the underlined portion would be:
 - A. where it is now.
 - B. after the word *Subaru*.
 - C. after the word *sold*.
 - D. after the word *car*.

Modifiers in Parentheses

Modifiers that are set apart in parentheses must be placed directly "next-door" to whoever or whatever they are modifying. Phrases in parentheses will always be in the middle or end of the sentence, so the word being described must be right before the parentheses. This type of misplaced modifier is very rarely tested on the ACT.

Incorrect: The scientists tried to develop a new method to make their self-pollination study (where pollen from the same plant arrives at the stigma of the flower) completely free of pollen contamination from other plants.

Correct: The scientists tried to develop a new method to study self-pollination (where pollen from the same plant arrives at the stigma of the flower) completely free of pollen contamination from other plants.

The modifier in the parentheses is defining what self-pollination is, so self-pollination must be directly before the parentheses, as it is in the correct sentence. In the incorrect sentence, the word study is directly before the parentheses, so the modifier in parentheses is incorrectly describing the self-pollination study.

Practice:

Plant the roses in a sunny spot in the backyard and be sure to water them every day just after sunrise, the expert gardener recommended (who had been growing and selling his own roses for the past two decades).

1. A. NO CHANGE
- B. recommended the expert gardener
- C. was the expert gardener's recommendation
- D. the gardener, who was an expert, recommended

TIP – How to Spot Misplaced Modifiers Questions

The hardest part about misplaced modifiers questions is spotting them! **Most students think these questions are about phrasing or flow and never realize what they are actually being tested on.**

Misplaced modifiers questions always have at least one and, very often, both of the following defining characteristics:

1. **All 4 answer choices are similar in length, and the answer choices have the same words scrambled in different orders.** Anytime you see 4 long answer choices that are all saying the same general thing in different orders, you are very likely looking at a misplaced modifiers question.
2. **The first word varies in the answer choices.** If the first word or group of words is different in 3 or 4 of the answer choices, the question is most likely testing you on misplaced modifiers.

On the ACT, misplaced modifiers questions will look like this:

- | | |
|---|---|
| Analyzing the ultraviolet camera footage, <u>scientists discovered that fish communicate using UV coloration and signaling.</u> | 1. Which choice makes the sentence most grammatically acceptable?

A. NO CHANGE
B. fish were found to communicate using UV coloration and signaling.
C. it was discovered by scientists that fish communicate using UV coloration and signaling.
D. UV coloration and signaling were discovered as a way fish communicate. |
|---|---|

Whenever you spot a misplaced modifiers question, identify the modifier and ask yourself, “who or what is the modifier describing?” In this example, the modifier is “analyzing the ultraviolet camera footage.” Who or what is analyzing the camera footage? The scientists! Since “the scientists” must be right next-door, the answer is A.

Chapter 6 Practice:

Eric's foot indicated his nervousness during the
interview, which jiggled wildly.
 1

1. A. NO CHANGE
 B. Eric's foot indicated his nervousness during the interview, jiggling wildly.
 C. Eric's foot, which jiggled wildly, indicated his nervousness during the interview.
 D. Jiggling wildly during the interview, Eric showed his nervousness.

Oozing slowly across the ground, Claire watched
her smoothie flow towards the kitchen.
 2

2. A. NO CHANGE
 B. Claire's smoothie flowed towards the kitchen.
 C. there was Claire's smoothie flowing towards the kitchen.
 D. the kitchen was where Claire's smoothie flowed.

Mrs. James will make evening gowns for special customers with sequins if the request is made at
 3
 least three weeks ahead of time.

3. The best placement for the underlined portion would be:
 A. where it is now
 B. after the word *gowns*.
 C. after the word *request*.
 D. after the word *weeks*.

Since they betrayed the country and sold secrets
to the Soviet Union, many American historians
 4
 regard Christopher John Boye as one of the biggest traitors in history.

4. A. NO CHANGE
 B. Since he betrayed his country and sold secrets to the Soviet Union,
 C. Betraying his country and selling secrets to the Soviet Union,
 D. Known for his famous betrayal,

In hot pursuit on a bicycle, the escaped lemurs
were chased by animal control.
 5

5. A. NO CHANGE
 B. the escaped lemurs were running away from animal control.
 C. animal control chased the escaped lemurs.
 D. chasing the lemurs was animal control.

A team of ecologists recently discovered the Strawberry Poison Dart Frog during a taxological study in the Amazon (a type of frog first
discovered by scientists in 2013).
 6

6. A. NO CHANGE
 B. (a study meant to classify new species of animals).
 C. (one of the last true wild and unknown places on the earth).
 D. (and during the study they also discovered five other new species).

All of my teachers and teammates loved the two Siberian Huskies. Highly energetic and intelligent, they are friendly to everyone.
7

The Minnesota Governor honored Charles Lindberg's house by designating it as a state landmark in 1976.
8

In designing a new water filtration system, common elements were combined with revolutionary, new ideas.
9

Covered with license plates from around the world, the walls at Bub's Burgers are always a popular photo op for tourists.
10

Flying south for their winter migration, the researchers determined that the butterflies had an innate sense of direction.
11

Using a piping hot pan with oil glistening, the steak must be carefully laid away from the cook to prevent getting burned.
12

7. A. NO CHANGE
B. Siberian Huskies are friendly to everyone.
C. many owners know that Siberian Huskies are friendly to everyone.
D. everyone is treated as a friend by Siberian Huskies.
8. A. NO CHANGE
B. Designating it as a state landmark in 1976, Charles Lindberg's house was honored by the Governor of Minnesota.
C. By designating it as a state landmark, 1976 was the year Charles Lindberg's house was honored by the Minnesota Governor.
D. Designated as a state landmark in 1976, the Minnesota Governor honored Charles Lindberg's house.
9. A. NO CHANGE
B. revolutionary, new ideas were combined with common elements.
C. engineers' borrowing of common elements were combined with revolutionary, new ideas.
D. engineers combined common elements with new, revolutionary ideas.
10. A. NO CHANGE
B. tourists love to take pictures of the walls at Bub's Burgers.
C. photos in front of the walls at Bub's Burgers are very popular for tourists.
D. Bub's Burgers is a popular photo op for tourists.
11. A. NO CHANGE
B. When the butterflies flew
C. When they flew
D. By flying
12. A. NO CHANGE
B. the cook must carefully lay the steak away from himself to prevent getting burned.
C. the cook's steak must carefully be laid away from the cook to prevent getting burned.
D. prevent getting burned by carefully laying the steak away.

Spending her entire life laying eggs,¹³ the worker ants are responsible for building and maintaining the nest while the bigger queen ant is responsible for the future generations of the colony.

13. A. NO CHANGE
B. Carrying up to fifty times their body weights,
C. Since it can carry up to fifty times its body weight,
D. Studying how the nest functions on a day-to-day basis,

In the 1920s, while swimming hundreds of feet below the fishing boat in the freezing cold waters off Australia, sailors successfully hunted¹⁴ large schools of fish with Old Tom, the orca¹⁴ whale.¹⁴

14. A. NO CHANGE
B. Old Tom, the orca whale, successfully hunted large schools of fish with sailors.
C. it was large schools of fish that were successfully hunted by Old Tom, the orca whale, and sailors.
D. sailors with the help of Old Tom, the orca whale, successfully hunted large schools of fish.

England's transition from a monarchy to a Democratic Republic vastly shifted the power structure of the government. The greatly¹⁵ decreased¹⁵ Queen or King had an amount of power in making decisions for the nation.

15. Which of the following placement of the underlined portion makes it clear that the King or Queen had decreased power?
A. where it is now.
B. before the word *power*.
C. before the word *nation*.
D. before the word *amount* (and change "an" to "a").

In his shop in Encinitas, surfboards are carefully¹⁶ handcrafted by shaper Enzo Rivas.¹⁶

16. A. NO CHANGE
B. shaper Enzo Rivas carefully handcrafts surfboards.
C. there are surfboards being carefully handcrafted by shaper Enzo Rivas.
D. Enzo Riva's surfboards are carefully handcrafted.

The soccer analyst decided that the best player¹⁷ of all time was Pele¹⁷ (who was chosen as the athlete of the century by the International Olympic Committee in 1999).

17. A. NO CHANGE
B. Pele was chosen by the soccer analyst as the best player of all time
C. Pele was named the best player of all time by the soccer analyst
D. The best player of all time was Pele, the soccer analyst decided

In 2014, Peyton Manning won his last game in
18
 Denver 47-14 over the Oakland Raiders.

18. Which placement of the underlined portion makes clear that the game was Payton Manning's last game in 2014 and not his last game ever?
- A. where it is now
 - B. after the word *Manning*.
 - C. after the word *game*.
 - D. after the word *Raiders* (and before the period).

Now in widespread use across many homes, a 60
19
minutes segment featured the Roomba.

19. A. NO CHANGE
 B. the Roomba was featured on 60 minutes.
 C. the Roomba's segment was featured on 60 minutes.
 D. 60 minutes featured the Roomba.

By combining information about the positions of the galaxies and the refraction of light, Dr. Klitzhoff was able to discover a new grouping of planets thousands of light years away.
20

20. The best placement for the underlined portion would be:
- A. where it is now
 - B. before the word *positions*.
 - C. before the word *planets*.
 - D. DELETE the underlined portion.

Chapter 7: Parallel Structure

Parallel structure is the repetition of a chosen grammatical form within a sentence as items are listed or compared. The items in a list can be words, phrases, or clauses. Whenever we see items in a list or a comparison between items, we must make sure the items have parallel structure.

Parallel Structure and Lists

The items in any list must be written with the same grammatical form. Items must be all nouns, all verbs, and so on. When lists are written with proper parallel structure, the sentence flows more smoothly and sounds better. As a result, many students can “hear” which answer choice is the correct without even realizing they are being tested on parallel structure.

Incorrect: To protect her fragile hands, Julia will not rake the leaves, wash the dishes, and has decided she will not take out the trash.

Correct: To protect her fragile hands, Julia will not rake the leaves, wash the dishes, or take out the trash.

Incorrect: Elon Musk is known for self-driving cars and pioneering the SpaceX program.

Correct: Elon Musk is known for self-driving cars and the SpaceX program.

Correct: Elon Musk is known for manufacturing self-driving cars and pioneering the SpaceX program.

Incorrect: After calling in sick to school, Charlie hoped to get excused from class, receiving an extension on his homework assignment, and spend the afternoon watching movies at home.

Correct: After calling in sick to school, Charlie hoped to get excused from class, receive an extension on his homework assignment, and spend the afternoon watching movies at home.

No matter how simple or complex the items in the list are, they must be parallel. Lists of 3 or more items are easier to spot, and you will be able to more obviously “hear” which answer choice is correct or incorrect. Lists of 2, however, are more difficult to spot and can often sound good to us even if they are not parallel. **Be aware of parallel structure anytime you see a list of 2 on the ACT**, as this is a topic that tricks many students when it appears on test day.

Parallel Structure and Lists Practice: Correct the parallel structure errors in the sentences below:

1. Theresa was expecting a visit from her mother, so she made her bed, cleaning the shelves of the refrigerator, and swept the kitchen floor.
2. Attempting to sneak out of the house, Janice grabbed her phone, her purse, and wallet and then was climbing out the back window.
3. Chevy, our golden retriever, chews on the furniture, he barks at the neighbors, and thinks his shadow is real.
4. It's harder to lift the couch by myself than lifting it with some friends.
5. I would rather get free music with commercials than paying for music with no commercials.

Special Cases for Parallel Structure

In addition to lists, there are also certain other special cases for parallel structure. These special cases, which are officially called correlative conjunctions, must have the same grammatical structure for both parts of the conjunctions.

Keep an eye out for these ones on the ACT:

Neither ___ nor ___ Either ___ or ___ Not only ___ but also ___ Both ___ and ___

In all of these special cases, the “blanks” must be parallel. For example:

Incorrect: My mother not only took away my keys but also she locked them in the safe.

Correct: My mother not only took away my keys but also locked them in the safe.

In the incorrect example, “took away my keys” is not parallel with “she locked them in the safe.” Since the “she” is not in the first part, it cannot be in the second part. In the correct version, “took away my keys” is parallel with “locked them in the safe.”

Special Cases for Parallel Structure Practice: Correct the parallel structure errors.

1. Both a scholar and quite athletic, Sylvia got a scholarship to row crew in college.
2. The news report is neither accurate nor written fairly.
3. Neither scolding the child nor attempts to bribe him helped to calm him down.
4. The haunted house not only required participants to sign a waiver before entering but also asking them to turn their phones off for the entire experience.
5. Forms of payment accepted are either cash or sending payment with Venmo.

TIP – How to Spot Parallel Structure and Lists Questions

Parallel structure and lists questions always have the following defining characteristic:

1. **The sentence includes a list of two or more items.** Anytime there is a list, we will need to consider parallel structure. Keep an eye out for list of two, as these can be difficult to notice errors with parallel structure.

On the ACT, parallel structure and lists questions look like this:

The responsibilities of the coffee packer position included packing the coffee beans, which have been roasted, and keeping the work area around the machine clean and orderly.

1. Which choice makes the sentence most grammatically acceptable?
A. NO CHANGE
B. to keep
C. kept
D. having kept

In the example above, the answer is A. The list of two responsibilities, “packing the beans” and “keeping the work area around the machine clean and orderly” must be parallel. “Packing” and “keeping” match and have correct parallel structure.

Parallel Structure and Comparisons

For any comparisons, the items being compared must be parallel. Comparing without proper parallel structure can lead to unintended or incorrect comparisons. In other words, make sure you are comparing apples to apples and not apples to oranges. A common fix to parallel structure mistakes is to add “those of” or “that of” or other similar variations before the second item in the comparison.

If you ever see “those of” or “that of” or a similar variation in a question, the question is likely testing parallel structure.

If you see any commonly used comparison words such as “more,” “less,” “better,” “worse,” and “than,” there is a comparison, and you will need to consider parallel structure.

Incorrect: The fried chicken at Chick-fil-A is much better than Popeyes.

Correct: The fried chicken at Chick-fil-A is better than the fried chicken at Popeyes.

Correct: The fried chicken at Chick-fil-A is better than Popeyes’ fried chicken.

Correct: The fried chicken at Chick-fil-A is better than that at Popeyes.

Parallel Structure and Comparisons Practice: Correct the parallel structure errors.

1. Unlike Mr. Rodriguez, Mr. Allen’s math exams are curved, so everyone gets a better grade.
2. There was no mystery greater than the left shoe thief at my high school.
3. Walter stands by his bold claim that Michael Jordan’s shoes are better than all current NBA players.
4. Unlike the 2014 World Cup in Brazil, the teams at the 2010 World Cup in South Africa had to deal with the constant noise from the vuvuzela horns.

TIP – How to Spot Parallel Structure and Comparisons Questions

Parallel structure and comparison questions always have at least one of the following defining characteristics:

1. **A commonly used comparison word such as “more,” “less,” “better,” “worse,” and “than” is in the answer choices or in the sentence.** Anytime there is a comparison, we need to keep an eye out for parallel structure.
2. **The phrase “that of” or “those of” or a similar variation (“that in,” “those at,” etc.) is in any of the answer choices.**

On the ACT, parallel structure and comparisons questions look like this:

Victoria concluded that the juiciness of fuji apples is a better indicator for the flavor than for a bosc pear.

1. Which choice makes the sentence most grammatically acceptable?
 A. NO CHANGE
 B. than of bosc pears.
 C. than for that of bosc pears.
 D. then bosc pears.

Whenever you see a comparison, make sure you know exactly what is being compared. In this example, the comparison is between “the juiciness of fuji apples” and “the juiciness of bosc pears.” We must compare the juiciness of the fuji apple to the juiciness of the bosc pears and not to the pear itself. The only answer that does this is C, where “that of bosc pears” is short for “the juiciness of bosc pears.”

Chapter 7 Practice:

Studies have shown that the secrets to achieving true happiness are strengthening your closest relationships and take care of yourself mentally and physically.

1. A. NO CHANGE
B. if you take
C. taking
D. to take

At birth, baby birds get all of their nutrients by staying in the nest and they eat directly from their parents' mouths.

2. A. NO CHANGE
B. which they eat
C. and eating
D. that eat

Manny not only overcame his fear of standing in front of large crowds but also became the best public speaker in his entire school.

3. A. NO CHANGE
B. he also became
C. he also had become
D. also becoming

During the field trip to the beach, my classmates ignore the warning signs, climbing over the dunes and exposing themselves to the dangerous polluted water.

4. A. NO CHANGE
B. the exposure to
C. were exposing themselves
D. expose themselves

The orchestra conductor can raise the volume by lifting his arms up higher and lowering the volume by moving his hands closer together.

5. A. NO CHANGE
B. lower
C. lowered
D. has lowered

Ancient artifacts such as the Rosetta Stone should be in the hands of people who know how to properly repair, care for, and permanently protect them.

6. A. NO CHANGE
B. properly repair, while caring for and permanently protecting them.
C. properly repairing, care for, and permanently protect them.
D. to properly repair care for, permanently protecting them.

The doctor was a specialist in cardiovascular surgery and had invented the cardiac stint.

7. A. NO CHANGE
B. the cardiac stint inventor.
C. the inventor of the cardiac stint.
D. invented the cardiac stint.

According to most doctors, exercising the body is just as important as exercise for the mind.

8. A. NO CHANGE
B. giving the body exercise
C. exercise for the body
D. body exercise

I often still find myself struggling to properly season beverages, as their flavor profile is much more nuanced than cooked dishes.

9. A. NO CHANGE
B. than these.
C. then cooked dishes.
D. than that of cooked dishes.

After traveling halfway around the world to Bali, Svetlana was disappointed that the swing at the rice fields was not as exciting a place to visit as the pictures made it seem.

10. A. NO CHANGE
B. an exciting place to visit
C. a place to visit that was exciting
D. excited to visit the place

Lucky visitors to the arctic circle might see the aurora borealis in the sky, an arctic fox in the snow, or a beluga whale.

11. A. NO CHANGE
B. beluga whales.
C. a beluga whale in the sea.
D. a swimming beluga whale.

In his most recent public appearance, Dr. Rodriguez gave a speech about his autobiography, detailing his research in the field of cancer immunotherapy and describing his career achievements.

12. A. NO CHANGE
B. immunotherapy, and describes
C. immunotherapy and described
D. immunotherapy, after which he described

David relied on his own experience rather than on the meat thermometer to tell when the turkey was done.

13. A. NO CHANGE
B. rather than
C. other than
D. rather then on

The hunting habits of killer whales, which hunt together in pods of up to ten whales, are even more advanced than great white sharks

14. A. NO CHANGE
B. than the hunting habit's of great
C. then great
D. than those of great

The goal of observing the dietary habits of the Galapagos tortoises was not only to identify the primary items the tortoises preferred to eat but it¹⁵
was also to examine¹⁵ if there is any correlation between food intake and behavior.

15. A. NO CHANGE
B. eat but also to examine
C. eat, and to examine
D. eat but also examining

Many of the skills required for hockey – hand-eye coordination, strength, and agility – are similar to basketball and lacrosse.¹⁶

16. A. NO CHANGE
B. basketball and lacrosse players
C. the games of basketball and lacrosse
D. those for basketball and lacrosse

By the end of the week, the team had purchased¹⁷ ten new computers that came with two-year protection plans to cover any accidental damage and had ordered a new industrial printer capable of printing 10,000 pages per day.

17. A. NO CHANGE
B. purchasing
C. will purchase
D. purchased

The table, which was built entirely out of redwood, provides a space for my father to complete his puzzle and my hobby of building¹⁸
model airplanes.¹⁸

18. A. NO CHANGE
B. me building model airplanes.
C. for me to build model airplanes.
D. to allow me to build model airplanes.

Chapter 8: Other Miscellaneous Topics

There are a variety of other miscellaneous topics that appear on the English Test. We will cover all of these topics in this chapter.

Commonly Confused Words

The ACT will test you on many commonly confused words. The most common one of these on the English Test is “affect” vs. “effect.”

Affect vs. Effect

“Affect” is a verb, meaning to act on or produce a change in. “Effect” is a noun, meaning the result of a change. As long as you remember this rule, “affect” vs. “effect” questions should be easy!

Correct: Sunshine and palm trees affect my mood positively.

Correct: Sunshine and palms trees have a positive effect on my mood.

Many of the other most commonly confused words that appear on the ACT are below. There are many more beyond the ones listed. If you ever see a word choice question and are unsure, just go with your gut...most of the time you will be correct!

Advice – an opinion or recommendation (noun)	Conscience – sense of right or wrong	Lie – to lie down
Advise – to recommend or give information (verb)	Conscious – awake	Lay – to place
Accept – to receive	Council – a group that advises	Lose – to misplace or not win
Except – to take or leave out	Counsel – to advice	Loose – to not be tight
Allusion – an indirect reference	Complement – something that completes	Indifferent – not caring
Illusion – a false perception of reality	Compliment – to praise	Not different – the same
Allowed – permitted to happen	Desert – dry, sandy region	Passed – to have moved beyond
Aloud – out loud	Dessert – a sweet course at the end of a meal	Past – gone by in time
Ascent - climb	Dual – having two parts	Precede – to come before
Assent - agreement	Duel – a fight between 2 people	Proceed – to go forward
Assure – to remove doubt	Elicit – to draw or bring out	Principle – a rule
Ensure – to make certain a thing will or won’t happen	Illicit – illegal	Principal – head of a school
Insure – to get insurance	Emit – to send out, to throw off	Their – possessive pronoun
Beside – next to	Omit – to leave out	There – indicates location
Besides – in addition	Eminent – famous, respected	They’re – they are
Breath – inhalation/exhalation of air	Immanent – inherent or intrinsic	Through – into or out of, continuing in time
Breathe – to inhale or exhale	Imminent – ready to take place	Threw – past tense of throw
Cite – to quote or document	Farther – refers to physical distance	Thorough – careful or complete
Sight - vision	Further – moreover	Though – however
Site – position or place	Lead – a type of metal	Thru – abbreviated form of through
	Led – past tense of lead	To - toward
		Too – also
		Two – 2

Than vs. Then

“Than” is only used for comparisons. “Then” has multiple meanings: it can be used when dealing with time, to mean “in addition to,” or with “if/then” statements. When you see “then” and “than” on the test, just remember use this quick rule: **for a comparison, use “than.” Otherwise, use “then.”**

Incorrect: I think that chocolate with almonds is much better then ice cream.

Correct: I think that chocolate with almonds is much better than ice cream.

Incorrect: I need to call my mother, and than we can leave.

Correct: I need to call my mother, and then we can leave.

Have vs. Of

Many people often mistakenly use “could of” or “would of.” This is always incorrect! To be correct, we need to use “could have” or “would have.” **The words “could,” “should,” “would,” and “might” should always be followed by “have” not “of.”** The reason we often make this mistake is the contraction “could’ve,” which is short for “could have,” is often pronounced like “could of.”

Incorrect: If we left the show earlier, we could of avoided the traffic in the parking lot.

Correct: If we left the could earlier, we could have avoided the traffic in the parking lot.

Countable vs. Non-countable Adjectives

A countable noun is something that you can count, such as bottles of milk or hours. A noncountable noun is something that cannot be expressed in a plural form, such as time or air. Certain adjectives, shown in the table below, can only be used to modify countable or non-countable nouns.

Countable	Non-Countable
number	amount
many	much
fewer	less
few	little

Correct: The amount of time to make lunch depends on the number of ingredients in the dish.

Correct: I do not place much significance on how many trophies and athlete has won.

Correct: Skim milk has fewer calories than whole milk, so I drink less whole milk than skim milk.

Correct: I can spare only a little time for this. I need to leave in a few minutes.

Active Voice vs. Passive Voice

Active voice means that the subject of the sentence is performing the verbs action. On the other hand, passive voice means that the subject is acted on by the verb. On the ACT, **never select an answer choice that is in passive voice; active voice is always better than passive voice.**

Active Voice: I picked up the pencil.
Passive Voice: The pencil was picked up by me.

Active Voice: The police chief announced the list of suspects.
Passive Voice: The list of suspects was announced by the police chief.

Prepositional Idioms

In the English language, idioms are expressions that are stated in a certain way because it is a widely accepted practice. Certain words must be paired with certain prepositions to be correct.

Incorrect: Bobby was afraid by the dark

Correct: Bobby was afraid of the dark.

These questions do not come up often on the ACT, and you should not study this topic unless you have mastered all other chapters in this course. When prepositional idioms do appear on the ACT, **read the entire sentence and rely on what sounds best to you.** To help you, below is a list of some prepositional idioms that may appear on the ACT.

You should not try memorize this entire this! It is not the best use of your study time. If you do struggle on these, study the list below and hopefully it will help you better know what sounds best if you do face any questions on this on test day.

Anxious about	Aim at	Admire for
Ask about	Arrive at	Advocate for
Be curious about	Effective at	Ask for
Bring about	Succeed at	Blame for
Complain about		Celebrated for
Think about	Accompanied by	Compensate for
Wonder about	Amazed by	Criticize for
Worry about	Assisted by	Endure for
	Confused by	Famous for
Advise against	Encouraged by	Known for
Argue against	Followed by	Last for
Decide against	Impressed by	Look for
Rebel against	Shocked by	Meant for
	Surprised by	Named for/after
Celebrate as	Struck by	Necessary for
Known as/to be	Puzzled by	Prized for
Recognized as		Responsible for
Regard as		Recognize for
See as		Strive for
Serve as		Tolerance for
View as		Strive for
		Wait for
		Watch for

Abstain from
Across from
Defend from/against
Different from
Discourage from
Excuse from
Obvious from
Protect from/against
Refrain from

Adept in/at
Confident in
Engage in/with
Interested in
Involved in
Success in/at
Take pride in

Enter into
Look into
Inquire into
Insight into
Read into

Based on
Depend on
Draw on
Focus on
Impose on
Insist on
Modeled on
Reflect on
Rely on

Accuse of
Appreciation of
Approve of
Capable of
Certain of
Composed of
Comprised of
Consist of
Cure of
Deprive of
Family of
In recognition of
In hope of
(in)capable of
Independent of
Knowledge of
A means of
A model of
Mastery of
A native of
An offer of
Principles of
Proponent of
Remind of
Source of
Take advantage of
Understanding of
Use of
A wealth of

Argue over
Control over
Talk over
Think over

Able to
Accustomed to
Adapt to
Admit to
Agree to
Belong to
Central to
Conform to
Come to
Critical to
Devoted to
Exposed to
Listen to
Native to
Object to
Opposed to
Point to
Prefer __ to __
Recommend __ to __
Relate to
Reluctant to
Reply to
Similar to
Threaten to
Unique to

Biased toward
Have a tendency toward

Agree with
Contrast with
Correlate with
Consistent with
Familiar with
Identify with
Interfere with
Occupied with
Sympathize with
Trust with

Chapter 8 Practice:

Because he is very protective, Ralph stepped in to prevent his brother, who was only 8 years old, at fighting the older students.

1

1. A. NO CHANGE
B. to
C. from
D. with

After stepping onto the porch, the entire family was startled with seeing a bear in the backyard.

2

2. A. NO CHANGE
B. startled by
C. surprised in
D. surprised with

The treatment was administered and then patients were asked to return the next day since the affects of the treatment, if there were any, do not appear for 24 hours.

3

3. A. NO CHANGE
B. affect
C. effect
D. effects

Before the story about the financials became public, Aura System, an electric battery company, would of gone public, but now there is no chance of that happening.

4

4. A. NO CHANGE
B. could of
C. might have
D. possibly to have

Research performed on the hummingbird population indicated that more time spent searching for food correlates with a longer lifespan.

5

5. A. NO CHANGE
B. correlates to
C. points for
D. insists on

The invention of barcodes made cashiers' jobs so much easier, as it substantially reduced the amount of minutes that it took to calculate the total price of a customer's purchase.

6

6. A. NO CHANGE
B. lowered the amount
C. decreased the number
D. deducted the number

After turning in my paper, my teacher reminded me that I needed to sight all of my sources.

7

7. A. NO CHANGE
B. site
C. cite
D. recite

For Donations Unlimited, donated clothing that is in fair to good condition is much easier to resell than⁸ used household items, such as pans, cutlery, or rice cookers.

8. A. NO CHANGE
B. then
C. when compared on
D. contrasted to

Selecting the right marketing team and book sales strategy directly effects⁹ the success – or failure – of the book launch.

9. A. NO CHANGE
B. effect
C. affect
D. affects

Clear glass windows were installed in the house as a means to¹⁰ letting in more natural light.

10. A. NO CHANGE
B. means of
C. virtue of
D. virtue to

Before finalizing her decision to buy, Sarah did through¹¹ research on the property values in the neighborhood to ensure¹² that buying the house was a good financial decision.

11. A. NO CHANGE
B. thorough
C. thru
D. though
12. A. NO CHANGE
B. assure
C. insure
D. make an assurance

Chapter 9: Grammar Review

The problem set below will test you on the topics we have learned in Chapters 1-8.

Chapter 9 Practice:

James would care for his sick dog constantly, he
pet him until he could fall asleep.
1

1. A. NO CHANGE
B. constantly; petting
C. constantly. Petting
D. constantly, petting

The pacific coast highway, otherwise known as
the 1, opened in 1936, following the construction
of interstate 5 in 1947.
2

2. A. NO CHANGE
B. followed by
C. and it followed
D. following with

Jamison decided to open a second restaurant. He
hoped to capitalize on the booming success of his
first restaurant by expanding into other cuisines,
he struck a deal with Jamie Carrington, an up-
and-coming chef who had apprenticed at one of
the city's best ramen restaurants.
3

3. A. NO CHANGE
B. He was hoping
C. He had hoped
D. Hoping

Thorough experimentation resulted in the most
efficient means of extracting DNA from hair,
enzymatic laundry powder and PCR buffer.
4

4. A. NO CHANGE
B. hair –
C. hair: being
D. hair

The park features an abstract piece of art, it is a
metal tunnel filled with mirrors placed at
different angles.
5

5. A. NO CHANGE
B. the abstract art is
C. this type of art is
D. DELETE the underlined portion

Pikas maneuver their way through the open
portions of the field that's hiding behind and
under rocks.
6

6. A. NO CHANGE
B. field, which is
C. field by
D. field

Modernist painter Raul Vargas had a unique
vision that combined his southern California
roots and his family's heritage.
7

7. A. NO CHANGE
B. painter, Raul Vargas,
C. painter Raul Vargas,
D. painter, Raul Vargas

Jeff Wilshire, a former soccer player became a⁸ successful restaurateur, founded Sushi Village.

8. A. NO CHANGE
B. turned into a
C. and a
D. developed into a

The recent discoveries of RNA research have resulted in all sorts of new applications including⁹ revolutionary medical treatments.

9. A. NO CHANGE
B. applications which include
C. applications including,
D. applications, including

Crime scenes are riddled with deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) which can allow¹⁰ the police to catch the perpetrators.

10. A. NO CHANGE
B. (DNA), which can allow
C. (DNA): which can allow
D. (DNA) which, can allow,

Within hours, over half of Jamil's bonsai trees had been sold for¹¹ prices from \$60 to \$240.

11. A. NO CHANGE
B. sold; for
C. sold: for
D. sold for:

Matt realized¹² after wandering through the forest for hours, that he was back in the same location, he began to panic.

12. A. NO CHANGE
B. It dawned on Matt
C. It was dawning on Matt
D. When Matt realized

Shandra was drawn back to her legal passions, and, while still working for the district attorney, her talents showcased her as one of the city's top young attorneys.¹³

13. A. NO CHANGE
B. she showcased her talents as one of the city's top young attorneys.
C. showcasing her talents as one of the city's top young attorneys.
D. her talents as one of the city's top young attorneys were showcased.

The starting gun pierces the air, the runners¹⁴ sprint off.

14. A. NO CHANGE
B. air and the runners
C. air; the runners
D. air the runners

Some houses combine architecture with natural beauty. One famous tree house in Brazil is built entirely of bamboo but still feels like a modern home when you step inside. The masterful blend of that and¹⁵ nature is breathtaking.

15. A. NO CHANGE
B. this and
C. design and
D. it and its

The undercarriage of the van featuring metal
 16
 plating and reinforced axles.

16. A. NO CHANGE
 B. van, featuring
 C. van, features
 D. van features

The new lagoon path provides more than 7 miles
 17
 of walkable path, the new lagoon path expands
 on an older and shorter loop.

17. A. NO CHANGE
 B. It provides
 C. The path provides
 D. Providing

While digging for dinosaur bones, modern day
 archaeologists discovered the long-lost city of
Etzanoa in the 14th century.
 18

18. A. NO CHANGE
 B. settled on the 14th century.
 C. Etzanoa, this was formed in the 14th
 century.
 D. Etzanoa, a settlement dating back to the
 14th century.

In 2017, Raul began his first internship prior to
 medical school at the repudiated labs of Dr.
 Holmer in San Diego where, in exchange for a
 19
 modest salary, Raul helps the scientists to find
 applications for their research.

19. A. NO CHANGE
 B. Diego; where,
 C. Diego, where:
 D. Diego, where

Professional chefs are often shown in glamorous
 positions on tv with quick swaps going from the
 beginning to the end of the process in minutes.
 20
however they often work grueling hours not only
 20
 cooking but also handling food purchase and
 detailed revenue estimates.

20. A. NO CHANGE
 B. minutes, however,
 C. minutes; however,
 D. minutes, however:

Monica won the permit raffle and was granted a
 permit to hike any peak inside of Inyo National
 park, which includes the hardest day hike in the
country, granting her the opportunity to test her
 21
 hiking skills and mental endurance.

21. A. NO CHANGE
 B. country. Granting
 C. country, it granted
 D. country and granting

St. Maarten, which had²² a reputation for a world class food scene, was hit hard by hurricane Irma in 2017.

22. A. NO CHANGE
B. Maarten had
C. Maarten which will have
D. Maarten having

The professor split the class into small groups, he²³ assigned²³ at least two groups the same portion of the text to analyze, thereby promoting a lively debate between groups.

23. A. NO CHANGE
B. groups assigning
C. groups, and assigning
D. groups, assigning

Inspiring many directors to rethink the impact of music on their films, the title of musical genius is²⁴ befitting to Hans Zimmer.²⁴

24. A. NO CHANGE
B. Hans Zimmer's musical genius is well known.
C. musical genius is a title deservedly given to Hans Zimmer.
D. Hans Zimmer is deserving of the title of musical genius.

The job of a concert sign language interpreter often includes making what appear to be silly faces, but they are used to convey not only the artists' words²⁵ but also his or her tone.

25. A. NO CHANGE
B. artists' words
C. artist's words'
D. artist's words

Born in the borough of Brooklyn and practically raised on the basketball courts right down the street from his home, Stephon's skills were²⁶ known across New York city by the time he was a²⁶ freshman in high school.²⁶

26. A. NO CHANGE
B. Stephon was known across New York City by the time he was a freshman in high school.
C. New York city knew of Stephon's skills by the time he was a freshman in high school
D. Stephon's skills were known by the time he was a freshman.

The Roomba, the first mainstream robotic vacuum, invented²⁷ in 2002 by Joe Jones, a pioneer in robotics.

27. A. NO CHANGE
B. inventing
C. was invented
D. invents

Having become²⁸ clear that the dogs were lost after not returning for a few hours, panic set in for the dog sitter.

28. A. NO CHANGE
B. It became
C. It was becoming
D. As it became

Accented with Victorian features, including steep gabled roofs, shapely windows, stained glass, and decorative woodwork, the Jacobs family was
²⁹
thrilled with how their home was restored.

29. A. NO CHANGE
 B. the Jacobs' family's architect was thrilled with how the restoration went.
 C. the Jacobs' home left the family thrilled with the results of the restoration.
 D. the Jacobs' home was thrilled with the restoration.

Even though Angel won the state science prize, experts realizing,
³⁰
 corroborate Angel's findings before investing in future experiments.

30. A. NO CHANGE
 B. experts realized,
 C. experts realized that
 D. experts realizing that

The now popular American breakfast of eggs, toast, and breakfast meat, often sausage, bacon, ham, or steak, are seen as excessive and odd to
³¹
 many foreigners.

31. A. NO CHANGE
 B. is
 C. were
 D. have been

Gravlax, commonly known as lox, rests covered in a bed of salt, sugar, citrus, and herbs to flavor and cure the fish, producing a final product that
³²
 is safe to eat and delicious.

32. A. NO CHANGE
 B. this produces
 C. such a treatment produces
 D. it will produce

Some of the fanciest Spanish restaurants' breakfast menus feature Iberico ham, it is a salt-
³³
 cured and air-dried leg of a black Iberian pig with a deep flavor profile.

33. A. NO CHANGE
 B. this type of ham
 C. this ham is
 D. DELETE the underlined portion

After smoked meats gained immense popularity, there was an international smoked meat contest. The only genuine public interest in the very, first
³⁴
smoked meat contest was due to an Italian chef applying pork curing techniques to fish.

34. A. NO CHANGE
 B. very first, smoked meat, contest
 C. very first, smoked meat contest
 D. very first smoked meat contest

He knew about sous vide,³⁵ the process of cooking vacuum sealed food in a water bath at a precise temperature, Keller was able to cook meat and vegetables in a way that would otherwise be impossible.

At the end of 2019, the chief editor of Food & Wine magazine, Hunter Lewis,³⁶ published his list of the top 10 restaurants in the United States.

MSG (monosodium glutamate) is lauded by some as a magic powder and a quick source of umami and criticized by others as a dangerous additive,³⁷ and a source of headaches and other maladies.³⁷

Years later, I would think back to those long hours spent working in some of the city's best restaurants. No matter the conditions I worked³⁸ in,³⁸ remembering the hard work made me realize how much pressure I could handle and still learn at the same time.

Julia knew that sound mixing of multiple different inputs were³⁹ very difficult and required some expertise with specialized software.

Little Saigon had some of the state's best Pho. Offering⁴⁰ authentic tastes that expatriate Vietnamese people missed, conveying a sense of home through the medium of food.

35. A. NO CHANGE
B. Knowledgeable about sous vide,
C. The knowledge he had about sous vide
D. He had advanced knowledge of sous vide,

36. A. NO CHANGE
B. magazine Hunter Lewis
C. magazine Hunter Lewis,
D. magazine, Hunter Lewis

37. A. NO CHANGE
B. additive and a source
C. additive which is a source
D. additive; a source

38. A. NO CHANGE
B. restaurants, no matter the conditions I worked in,
C. restaurants; no matter the conditions I worked in
D. restaurants and no matter the conditions I worked in

39. A. NO CHANGE
B. was
C. have been
D. are

40. A. NO CHANGE
B. The offer of
C. There were
D. This was

Style Questions

The ACT tests your ability to revise and improve sentences in a variety of ways. For simplicity, we will call all of these “style” questions. On these questions, you will need to recognize unnecessary or repetitive information, pick the correct word, and select the proper transition.

Chapter 10: Redundancy, Wordiness, and Irrelevance

On the English Test, wordiness, redundancy, and irrelevance are common errors. **Anytime we see redundancy, wordiness, or irrelevant information in an answer choice, it is always incorrect; the shortest and simplest answer choice is almost always correct.** The goal is for the sentence to express the same information in the shortest grammatically correct way. If anything is wordy, redundant, or irrelevant, get rid of it.

Redundancy

The most common mistake on these types of questions is redundancy. **To check for redundancy, read the sentence itself and the sentence(s) before to check for any repeated information.**

Incorrect: After two years of traveling, Jerome finally returned back home.

Correct: After two years of traveling, Jerome finally returned home.

By definition, if Jerome is returning, he is coming back. Therefore, we do not need the word “back” in the sentence.

Incorrect: In Sweden, there are about 300,000 to 400,000 moose, many of which stand over seven feet tall, roaming freely in the Swedish forests.

Correct: In Sweden, there are about 300,000 to 400,000 moose, many of which stand over 7 feet tall, roaming freely in the forests.

The sentence already specifies the moose are in Sweden, so saying “Swedish” is redundant.

Wordiness

Sentences can also be unnecessarily wordy without redundancy. For these questions, **pick the answer choice that uses the fewest words to express the same idea.**

Incorrect: The ancient Italian sculptures were donated to a cultural institution supporting intellectual endeavors related to renaissance art.

Correct: The ancient Italian sculptures were donated to a museum devoted to renaissance art.

Irrelevance

Incorrect answer choices may include information that is irrelevant to what is being discussed in the passage. **Irrelevant information most often appears as a long and wordy answer choice and is always incorrect.**

Incorrect: To win the game, Ricky needed to make both free throws. Players are not allowed to step in the lane during a free throw attempt. He made the first one. The entire gym was quiet as he stepped to the line for the second.

Correct: To win the game, Ricky needed to make both free throws. He made the first one. The entire gym was quiet as he stepped to the line for the second.

TIP – How to Spot Redundancy, Wordiness, and Irrelevance Questions

The ACT now directly tell you if a question is testing you on redundancy, wordiness, or irrelevance. Redundancy, wordiness, and irrelevance questions will ask you one of the following questions:

1. Which choice is the least redundant in context?
2. Which choice best avoids wordiness and redundancy in context?

On the ACT, redundancy, wordiness, and irrelevance questions look like this:

The July 4th “Walk for Wags” event, a fundraising event for local dog shelters, raised over \$10,000 this year.

1. Which choice is the least redundant in context?
 - A. NO CHANGE
 - B. this year for local dog shelters.
 - C. in July of this year.
 - D. for local dog shelters.

In the example above, the answer is A. The sentence already said the event is for local dog shelters, so B and D are incorrect. The sentence also already states the event is in July, so C is incorrect. As we said at the beginning of this chapter, always pick the **shortest and simplest answers choice, as the shortest answer choice is always correct** for these types of questions.

TIP – Never Use The “Short Answer Is Correct” Trick on Grammar Questions

When you are working on grammar questions, do not always pick the shortest answer! On grammar questions, there are times when the shortest answer is incorrect. Make sure that you are applying the grammar rules. Remember, you are only being tested on redundancy when the ACT directly asks you to pick the least redundant answer choice.

One example of when the shortest answer is not correct is below:

1. **The answer choice is an ambiguous pronoun.** If the answer is so short that we do not know exactly who or what it is referring to, it is incorrect! Keep an eye out for these words: **they, them, it, this, that, these, those, some, none**.

Freddie became so fascinated with coral after watching the documentary about growing coral colonies in home aquariums that he ordered some.

1. Which choice makes the sentence most grammatically acceptable?
 - A. NO CHANGE
 - B. some of them to after finished the documentary.
 - C. a few to his home.
 - D. some coral colonies.

In this example, “some” is an ambiguous pronoun and is incorrect. “Some” could be referring to the coral colonies or the aquariums. The only answer that specifies what Freddie is ordering is D. The question asks which choice is grammatically acceptable, so this is not a redundancy/conciseness questions.

Chapter 10 Practice:

With steep hills and a rocky terrain, the hike up the mountain was a slow and laborious one.

However, the reward at the end of the slow climb
1 was a fantastic view!

1. A. NO CHANGE
B. the climb
C. the slow and steep climb
D. the steep climb up rocky terrain

The recording of the robbery suspect's phone call made him seem guilty to the crime of robbery.
2

2. A. NO CHANGE
B. to be the guilty of robbery.
C. to appear to be guilty.
D. guilty.

To decorate the wall of the classroom, the entire fifth grade class had completed an artistic
3 rendering of paints across the wall that depicts a sunrise.

3. A. NO CHANGE
B. one
C. a mural
D. a painting on the wall

The puppies, after having been born
4 just two weeks ago, were now up for adoption.

4. A. NO CHANGE
B. born
C. which were born
D. after their mother gave birth to them

The city of Atlantis lives in legend. Over the years, Professor Lusk and his team have repeatedly tried to locate
5 it but still have not been able to find any true evidence of its existence.

5. A. NO CHANGE
B. in an effort to find the location of
C. attempts to locate
D. over and over again to locate

Today, there over one thousand professional Roman sculptors that live in the city of Rome
6 and make a living selling original work or refurbishing antique sculptures.

6. A. NO CHANGE
B. currently
C. today in Rome
D. DELETE the underlined portion.

The can of paint, using the fire's heat to heat the
7 can, exploded and shot into the yard.

7. A. NO CHANGE
B. heated by the fire
C. heated by the fire and that warmth
D. heated by the fire that was burning

If you want to see James's incredible bonsai trees and many other miniature plants, you can see them at the annual bonsai competition at the Chicago Botanical Garden, where some of his⁸ bonsai trees are on display for all of June.

8. A. NO CHANGE
B. some
C. in June the bonsai trees
D. each year they

The hidden entrance was below a black granite archway and hidden by a bunch of thick ivy. The best way to spot the entrance is to look for a three missing blocks above the black⁹ archway.

9. A. NO CHANGE
B. black granite
C. granite
D. DELETE the underlined portion

Shortly after its completion in 1999, around that¹⁰ time¹⁰, the Staples Center was one of the most famous landmarks in Los Angeles.

10. A. NO CHANGE
B. and already a famous landmark,
C. the recently completed
D. DELETE the underlined portion.

The analysis is possible because the mixture contains magnetic cobalt, a trace element that is¹¹ easily identified¹¹.

11. A. NO CHANGE
B. a trace element that is easily identified since it is magnetic.
C. an easily identifiable, trace element that makes the analysis possible.
D. a trace element that is easily identified without difficulty.

On the bottom shelf is a bin filled with dog food. Each month, Alicia goes to Alfred's Pet Shop, buys a bag of special weight loss food for her husky, and refills the bin on the bottom shelf.

12. A. NO CHANGE
B. bin.
C. bin with special weight loss food.
D. bin monthly.

The rubber band actually has many more creative uses than simply holding together papers. Of the numerous rubber band uses, of which there are¹³ many¹³, some include a hair tie, a pencil grip, and an eraser.

13. A. NO CHANGE
B. there are over fifty
C. many of which are very creative
D. DELETE the underlined portion

Chapter 11: Word Choice

Word choice questions on the ACT ask you to select which word is correct. For these questions, **read the sentence and sentence(s) before and after for context to tell which word is correct.**

Some word choice questions may test your knowledge of the definitions of words as well. If a question is testing your vocabulary, **do not assume the hardest vocabulary word is correct.** Sometimes, the ACT puts challenging words on the test that you need to know and other times the challenging words are incorrect answers. On test day, **do the best you can with the words that you know.** If you know that a word works, pick that word no matter how easy or hard the word seems. If you do not know a word and have to guess, take your best guess and move on.

Word choice questions will always have 4 words with no punctuation or the same punctuation and will ask you, “which choice is clearest and most precise in context?” An example is below:

Adding solar panels to your house can
emit huge savings on energy bills each
month.

1. Which choice is the clearest and most precise in context?
A. NO CHANGE
B. claim
C. gift
D. result in

The best way to answer these questions is to read for context, plug each word into the sentence, and pick the one that makes the most sense in the context. Here, the correct answer is “D” since “result in” is the only answer choice that works in the context of the sentence.

Chapter 11 Practice:

After reading my paper, my teacher was
adamant¹ that I needed to learn how to properly
cite my sources.

1. A. NO CHANGE
B. ecstatic
C. eminent
D. trivial

When I first moved in, the passing train woke me
up every night. However, I can now just tune it²
out and sleep through the entire night.

2. A. NO CHANGE
B. scorn it
C. snub it
D. overlook it

With the new air travel restriction, the TSA is
now elaborating³ many of their current systems
to make the security process faster and more
efficient.

3. A. NO CHANGE
B. explaining
C. augmenting
D. redistributing

During what can be called⁴ an apprenticeship,
Terrence learned how to blow glass to create
perfectly symmetric bowls.

4. A. NO CHANGE
B. referred
C. summarized
D. claimed

The new iPhone includes a much better camera.
The new camera improved above⁵ the old camera
by allowing users to take sharper photos in
low-light conditions.

5. A. NO CHANGE
B. with
C. on
D. over

After studying the effects⁶ of increasing water
temperatures on coral life span, Dr. Smith
determined that global warming has been a
direct cause of increased coral bleaching.

6. A. NO CHANGE
B. effectors
C. affectiveness
D. affection

The officials must be dispassionate about⁷ the
outcome of the game in order to do their jobs
properly.

7. A. NO CHANGE
B. unbiased with
C. disinterested in
D. without care in regarding

After weeks of buildup and thousands of dollars
spent on intentionally vague advertising, Space X
finally displayed⁸ their plans for the first trip to
Mars to the crowd of awaiting reporters.

8. A. NO CHANGE
B. revealed
C. outlined
D. detailed

The bathroom at the restaurant was definitely a
unique one: all the walls were equipped⁹ with
pictures of cats wearing fancy hats.

9. A. NO CHANGE
B. adorned
C. suited
D. exhibited

The 2010s had 3 more films in the Godzilla
series, so whether¹⁰ the height of original Godzilla
was 393 feet in 2010, many fans ask how tall is
the monster today?

10. A. NO CHANGE
B. when
C. given that
D. in case

Chapter 12: Transitions

The ACT tests your reading comprehension skills by asking you to select the correct transition. All of the answer choices in these questions will be grammatically correct, so you are being tested on your ability to read for context and select the correct transition.

To answer these questions, you should use the following approach:

- 1. Ignore the transition currently in the passage. Cover up the transition word and read the sentence(s) before and after without the transition.**
- 2. Determine the relationship between the sentences.**
- 3. Look at the answer choices and select the transition that correctly relates the ideas.** Some questions have an option with no transition. If no transition is necessary, select the option with no transition.

There are two types of transitions questions:

- 1. All 4 answer choices are transitions.** If all 4 answer choices are a transition, you are only being tested on selecting the correct transition. These questions look like this:

From a distance, the ocean looked pretty calm today even though a storm had arrived last night. Under the circumstances, the scene was much more chaotic with big waves and strong riptides.

1. Which transition word is the most logical in context?
A. NO CHANGE
B. For instance,
C. Up close,
D. For example,

As we can see with the example above, all 4 answer choices are grammatically correct. If we only read the second sentence, there is no way to know which answer choice is correct. Once we read the sentences together, it becomes obvious that C is correct. Since the previous sentence started with “from a distance,” we need to transition to the second sentence of “up close.”

- 2. 3 answer choices are transitions, and 1 has no transition.** If we see a question like this, the ACT is asking us to consider which transition is correct and whether a transition is even necessary. **Most often, the correct answer is the one that takes away the transition entirely.**

Stepping out on the island’s port on Monday, the new couple debuted their own classic take on beach attire. As a result, the actor opted for a classic white tee and board shorts while his model counterpart wore a floral print coverup and strappy sandals.

2. Which transition word, if any, is the most logical in context?
A. NO CHANGE
B. In other words, the
C. Consequently, the
D. The

In this example, there is no transition necessary, so the correct answer is “D.” Whenever faced with whether the transition is necessary or not, ask yourself if the transition properly links the sentences. Again, to do this properly, you must read for context.

Categories of Transitions

Below, we have listed the most common transitions. We have divided these transitions into categories based on the type of relationship between the ideas.

Additive Transitions – providing additional support or evidence:

additionally	further	moreover
again	furthermore	of course
also	in addition	then
as well	indeed	what is more
besides	in fact	

Resulting Transitions – connecting an issue to the consequences:

accordingly	for that reason	therefore
as a result	hence	then
because	in order to	thus
consequently	since	to this/that end

Contrasting Transitions – connecting two things by focusing on their differences:

after all	however	otherwise
although	in contrast	rather
at the same time	in spite of	regardless
besides	instead	still
but	meanwhile	though
by contrast	nevertheless	yet
conversely	nonetheless	whereas
despite this	on the contrary	
even so	on the other hand	

Agreement/Similar Transitions – connecting two things by focusing on their similarities:

also	in fact	likewise
by the same token	indeed	of course
correspondingly	just as	similarly

Summary Transitions – providing a summary of the ideas in the previous sentence(s):

after all	in other words	thus
briefly	in short	to conclude
finally	in sum	to summarize
in conclusion	in the end	ultimately

Example Transitions – linking a general idea to a specific example of this idea:

for example	in this case	specifically
for instance	namely	

Sequential Transitions – connecting sentences based on when events occur:

after	finally	recently
at last	first	so far
before	following	soon
currently	later	subsequently
during	meanwhile	then
earlier	now	today
eventually	next	while

Emphasis Transitions – providing additional emphasis on what the previous sentence(s) said:

above all	in fact	truly
clearly	of course	
indeed	obviously	

Clarification Transitions – providing clarification on what the previous sentence(s) claimed:

especially	particularly	that is
in other words	specifically	

Chapter 12 Practice:

The torrential downpours from last night soaked the soccer fields. However, the tournament was¹ rescheduled for next weekend with hopes that the fields will dry in time.

1. A. NO CHANGE
B. The
C. Alternatively, the
D. Consequently, the

Many species of predatory fish have developed a long, sleek body to cut through the water.

Therefore, many species of eagles can tuck their² wings to become very aerodynamic and dart through the air.

2. A. NO CHANGE
B. For instance,
C. In contrast,
D. Similarly,

Certain tech companies go to extremes to ensure that employees enjoy being at the workplace. At³ the same time, Google provides workers with free meals, a full gym, and access to a bike-sharing system.

3. A. NO CHANGE
B. For instance,
C. In spite of this,
D. More generally,

Although the⁴ Rocky Mountains, the largest mountain range in North America, are home to an incredible diversity of environments, ranging from snow-capped peaks in Canada to pine forests in Colorado.

4. A. NO CHANGE
B. Because the
C. The
D. While the

I used to think that there were no hummingbirds in New York. When my mother put out a hummingbird feeder, however, I⁵ was immediately proven wrong.

5. A. NO CHANGE
B. as a result, I
C. I, meanwhile,
D. on the other hand, I

Betta fish are known as one of the prettiest and easiest fish to take care of. Indeed,⁶ these fish can breathe oxygen directly from the air above the bowl and can live happily in very small tanks.

6. A. NO CHANGE
B. Next,
C. Lately,
D. DELETE the underlined portion (adjusting the punctuation as necessary).

Outside of a zoo, seeing a leopard is very rare. Occasionally,⁷ humans see leopards in the wild, but these sightings usually last just a few moments.

7. Which of the following alternatives to the underlined portion would NOT be acceptable?
A. Rarely,
B. Once in a while,
C. Sparsely,
D. Now and then,

In an attempt to save the restaurant, Richard launched a new promotion for free samples every Thursday. His goal was to get new customers. Each week,⁸ he would change the free sample theme to keep people coming back.

8. A. NO CHANGE
B. In fact,
C. For a time,
D. Surprisingly,

Application testing simply cannot keep pace with market demand. More specifically,⁹ companies are faced with a dilemma: go to market with abbreviated testing and risk a poor product or complete comprehensive testing and risk being too late to market.

9. A. NO CHANGE
B. In short
C. Thus
D. Despite this

If bugs in the software are found early in the design phase, engineers do not waste time combing through thousands of lines of code looking for the sources of the errors. As a result,¹⁰ they can quickly isolate and fix any existing issues and more consistently meet deadlines for their projects.

10. A. NO CHANGE
B. At last,
C. Further,
D. In spite of this,

Paragraph Modification Questions

The final type of question on the English Test is the question that actually ask you a question. Paragraph modification questions test your rhetorical skills by asking you to read the passage and answer questions based on the context. Question types include which choice, adding or deleting information, sentence placement, and achieving the writer's goal.

Chapter 13: Which Choice

“Which choice” questions ask you to make changes to a sentence or portions of a sentence. The changes that should be made will be detailed in the questions itself. **These questions are very easy to spot: the question will always have the words “which choice” (more common) or “which one” (less common) in the question.**

For “which choice” questions, your job is to **figure out exactly what the question is asking you to do and select the answer choice that does that. Do not worry about grammar, conciseness, or style, as these are never tested on these questions** unless the question specifically asks about grammar, conciseness, or style. **For “which choice” questions, shorter is NOT always better.**

The first type of “which choice” question asks you to make a specific change to the sentence. For these questions, focus on the sentence you are being asked to edit. You should still read the sentences before and after the underlined portion, but you often will not need to rely too much on the context.

The first home refrigerators were patented in the 1920s. Before their invention, Americans kept their food cold in iceboxes, which required ice to be bought and placed into the box each week.

Which choice most specifically describes what was used to build iceboxes?

- A. NO CHANGE
- B. which were only cold enough to keep food cool but not freeze anything.
- C. wooden boxes with tin and insulated with cork and sawdust.
- D. the very first invention that allowed people to keep food cold in their houses.

Notice that all of the answer choices are grammatically correct. Your job here is to pick the answer that “most specifically describes what was used to build iceboxes.” Therefore, the answer must be C since it is the only answer choice that has any information about the materials used to build iceboxes.

Whenever he was at the toy store, Harold always begged his Mom for some of the grow-in-water dinosaurs that sprawl when placed into water.

Which choice most clearly emphasizes how the dinosaurs increase in size?

- A. NO CHANGE
- B. change in size
- C. expand
- D. soak

Again, notice that all four answers choices are grammatically correct. To answer this question, we must focus on which answer choice “emphasizes how the dinosaurs increase in size.” Therefore, the answer choice C is correct, as “expand” highlights how the dinosaurs increase in size.

TIP – Don’t Overthink It. Just Answer the Question!

For “which choice” questions, just answer the question that the ACT is asking. It’s that simple! We cannot stress this enough. As long as you approach these questions correctly, they should be easy.

This is particularly important for the questions about specific details. For example, if the questions asks, “which answer choice best highlights the colors of autumn,” pick the answer choice that has colors in it. For the majority of the “which choice” questions, it’s really that easy!

The second type of “which choice” question asks you to select the correct sentence based on the context in the passage. Most commonly, you need to **select the correct introduction, conclusion, or transition**. For these questions, you will need to read for context. In general, **it is good practice to read the 2 sentences before and the 2 sentences after**, but you may need to read more than that for certain questions. **When first reading for context, ignore the underlined portion.**

Focus on where the question is directing you to read. If the question asks, “which choice best introduces the paragraph,” you need to read the entire paragraph before selecting your answer. The most common mistake students make is answering the question before reading the entire paragraph. If you do that, you do not really know what the paragraph is about yet and can very easily pick the incorrect answer.

Recently, many businesses have been adding color to the workplace to boost employee morale and creativeness. Blue and green help employees feel calm and hopeful, red stimulates employees to be more creative, and yellow inspires good memories. Selecting the right colors can help maximize the profits for shareholders.

Given that all the choices are accurate, which choice provides the best conclusion to the paragraph?

- A. NO CHANGE
- B. Painting the walls or putting up artwork can both successfully bring color to the office.
- C. Orange can help increase employee’s enthusiasm.
- D. It may seem simple but selecting the right colors can really brighten the office.

This example requires you to think about the paragraph as a whole. The first two sentences of the paragraph focus on the relationship between colors and the workplace. In order to properly conclude the paragraph, the answer choice must summarize the discussion about colors and the workplace. The correct answer D is the only one that properly concludes the paragraph.

In the *Mona Lisa*, one of Da Vinci’s best-known paintings, the viewers feel as if the woman is looking directly into their own eyes. The incredible control of color and brushwork makes the woman in the painting seem incredibly lifelike. While Da Vinci completed many incredible paintings in his lifetime, the *Mona Lisa* stands out not only as one of Da Vinci’s best but also as one of the masterpieces from its era. Da Vinci’s attention to detail separates the *Mona Lisa* from all other portraits painted during the Renaissance.

Which of the following true statements, if added here, would draw a conclusion most consistent with the rest of the paragraph?

- A. NO CHANGE
- B. Control of color is also an important element in other Da Vinci paintings.
- C. Landscapes were another interesting type of painting that Da Vinci created.
- D. It feels like the woman in the painting is always watching you.

The correct answer is A. Since we are looking for a sentence to conclude the paragraph, the answer must conclude what the paragraph was discussing, which is about how the *Mona Lisa* is an outstanding painting. A is the only answer choice that correctly concludes this paragraph.

Chapter 13 Practice:

Adam decided to travel to Iceland after his high school graduation. He was extremely excited to enjoy the breathtaking scenery.
1

1. Which choice most specifically describes what Adam would like to do in Iceland?
A. NO CHANGE
B. to explore a new country.
C. to photograph the glaciers, mountains, and waterfalls.
D. to head off to the airport and start his adventure.

After seeing the ducklings in the road, Sherry slammed on the breaks. Luckily, the car came to a stop in time.
2

2. Which choice most clearly emphasizes how quickly the car stopped?
A. NO CHANGE
B. stopped completely
C. swerved around the ducklings
D. screeched to a halt

Roses have become increasingly popular as a gift, especially on holidays such as Valentine's Day or Mother's Day. Prices have increased every year due to the high demand.
3

3. Given that all of the following are true, which one best describes why people buy roses?
A. NO CHANGE
B. As a result, most flower shops run out of red roses first.
C. Roses, especially red ones, are a symbol of love and romance.
D. Many women prefer red roses, but my mother's favorite color is peach.

Butter has so many uses beyond just being a cooking ingredient. Did you know that butter could be used to make a cabinet door stop squeaking? Or to make a pill easier to swallow? Beyond that, butter can be good for your skin and can help remove sticky residues.
4

4. Which choice best introduces the main idea of the paragraph?
A. NO CHANGE
B. I always use butter in my cooking.
C. Butter is one of the most popular ingredients in cooking.
D. Sometimes being very creative can lead to new discoveries.

As the clock ran down in the entree round, Sven delicately added his mango chutney on top of the pork chops.
5

5. Which of the following choices most clearly emphasizes that Sven is in a rush?
A. NO CHANGE
B. precisely
C. hastily
D. calmly

Back in the 1970s, a plane crashed after the engine froze. Incredibly, all of the passengers survived. The plane wreck is still sitting on a beach in Iceland today. It is just two miles from the highway. The rusting shell of the plane is a beautiful and stark contrast to the haunting black sands and sparse surrounding landscape.

Ancient castles that still stand today highlight how malleable stone can be as a building tool.

The newly renovated library offers many new academic resources for students, including a coffee bar, deli, and smoothie shop out front.

The desert dash is a 400-mile race that is completely off-road and traverses some of inland California's harshest landscapes. The winner usually finishes in about 13 hours. Drivers experience such intense shaking during the race that many suffer from whiplash and require medical treatments.

6. Given that all of the following are accurate, which one indicates how the plane is being used today?
 - A. NO CHANGE
 - B. Only the cabin and small parts of the wings remain.
 - C. The plane is now featured in many photo shoots and music videos and is a popular tourist stop.
 - D. It was too expensive to remove, so the government in Iceland decided to leave it.
7. Which choice most clearly emphasizes how long the stone castles have survived?
 - A. NO CHANGE
 - B. durable
 - C. incredible
 - D. timely
8. Which choice provides the most relevant examples for the sentence?
 - A. NO CHANGE
 - B. students, such as on-site tutoring, a robotics laboratory, and a small science laboratory.
 - C. students; the library has high arching ceilings and lots of natural light to make studying there more enjoyable.
 - D. students, including a very modern appearance and many group study rooms.
9. Which choice emphasizes how grueling the race is on the cars?
 - A. NO CHANGE
 - B. Family members are often huddled around monitors worrying about the well-being of the drivers.
 - C. The cars that are entered into the race have some of the most advanced upgrades to handle the bumps and jumps.
 - D. Many participants will not finish the race due to their cars breaking down and failing after repair teams work on them.

John Mayer's guitar techniques are distinctive not only because he broke what are considered standard rules but also because he started playing guitar at the age of 13, which is considered late for many professionals.¹⁰ His unique sound helped him become a hugely popular artist in the 2000s. In one of his biggest hits "Waiting On The World To Change," he helped to convey a generation's desire to help the less fortunate¹¹ as he sang, "now we see everything that's going wrong with the world and those who lead it. We just feel like we don't have the means to rise above and beat it."

Music has been seen in all cultures across the history of humanity.¹² The cotton-top tamarin is known for producing one set of sounds for gatherings that is uplifting in mood and another set that warns of a threat and elicits an anxious response from other tamarins. Further, humpback whales have some of the longest and most complex recorded songs in the animal kingdom, but for some unknown reason they are only performed by the males.

The Ice Marathon held every year in Antarctica is by far the coldest marathon you can take part in. It draws some of the craziest people in the world, including Tommy Little, an Australian comedian. At the 17-mile mark, Tommy could be seen with chattering teeth and icicles hanging from his beard.¹³

10. Which choice best completes the explanation of John Mayer's techniques of playing guitar?
 - A. NO CHANGE
 - B. he has the habit of tapping both of his feet in unison as he plays songs.
 - C. he routinely slaps his thumb against the strings and the guitar itself to create a unique sound that defines many of his songs.
 - D. he has an incredibly distinctive sounding voice that as one music expert defined as "perfectly imperfect."
11. Which choice most effectively characterizes the quotation that follows in the sentence?
 - A. NO CHANGE
 - B. hopelessness in being able to change the world
 - C. inability to identify what changes should be made
 - D. disgust for the current world leaders and their policies
12. Given that all of the following are true, which one most effectively sets up the examples in the following sentences?
 - A. NO CHANGE
 - B. Although it was only recently discovered, many insects produce songs, but they cannot be heard by humans.
 - C. Monkeys have many shared behaviors similar to humans.
 - D. Many species of animals produce sounds that closely resemble the structure of songs.
13. Which choice most effectively conveys that Tommy has a fun-loving personality?
 - A. NO CHANGE
 - B. with his head hanging low and his feet barely shuffling through the snow.
 - C. grinning at the photographers as he broke an icicle off his jacket for a mid-race snack.
 - D. with a new pair of gloves and a facemask to minimize the possibility of his sweat beginning to freeze.

When young children are taught to write the alphabet, they often start with simple block letters, which are all individually written and have distinct starting and stopping points; cursive scripts may not be taught to many young children anymore.
14

Donkeys were employed in moving materials to some of the largest construction projects as the country expanded westward in the 1800s. Some of the terrain was incredibly tough. Workers easily led the donkeys across rivers and up mountains while horses would rear up and refuse to advance.
15

I have always thought of myself as a proponent of organic farming and often talk about how good organic fruits and vegetables taste. Those of us working on the farm put in long hours each day to maintain the fields, pick the crops, and prepare the produce for sale at the market. Going organic also means lots of extra work weeding the fields and dealing with pests. The experience gave me a new respect for organic farmers.
16

One of the major causes of global warming is the accumulation of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. Over time, hundreds of thousands of tons of greenhouse gases, such as carbon dioxide, have been sent into the atmosphere as humans have burned fossil fuels for energy.
17

14. Which choice establishes the clearest contrast to the description of block letters earlier in the sentence?

- A. NO CHANGE
- B. cursive is harder for many teachers to read.
- C. cursive letters blend into each other and a whole word can be written without lifting the pen.
- D. cursive was developed to add more beauty to handwriting.

15. Which choice best sets up the following sentence?

- A. NO CHANGE
- B. The trips were incredibly tough on both the donkeys and the workers.
- C. The donkeys performed commendably.
- D. Some managers didn't like the idea of using donkeys.

16. Which choice best introduces the subject of the paragraph?

- E. NO CHANGE
- F. and believe that an organic diet has significant long-term health benefits.
- G. but it wasn't until I spend a summer working at an organic farm that I understood how much effort went into organic produce.
- H. so every Sunday my friends and I go to the local farmer's market to pick up some fresh produce.

17. Which choice most specifically illustrates how long the greenhouse gases have been emitted into the atmosphere?

- A. NO CHANGE
- B. As time has passed,
- C. Over time in which the average patterns changed drastically,
- D. Since humans began burning fossil fuels for energy in the late 19th Century,

Only small portions of the original 14th century castle remain today, some of which can be seen in the walls of a fast-food restaurant located in Scotland's tourist district. It could be seen as ironic that remnants of a castle that once housed the royal family are now preserved within a simple burger joint.

18

Charles' new news blog, titled "Digging for the Truth," aimed to just report the facts and avoid any political or social influences. However, the first issue's headlining story ended up being incredibly popular among readers.

19

Each fall, tens of thousands of monarch butterflies begin their migration south, leaving their summer homes in Canada and heading to the Sierra Madre Mountains in Mexico. Some butterflies fly over 3,000 miles during their migration. Along the journey, the butterflies must find places to stop and rest.

20 Tom Jones, a retired lawyer, created a butterfly oasis in his backyard several years ago. By planting butterfly attractors with staggered bloom times, Tom has provided the butterflies with a food source throughout the migration season. Additionally, he has plenty of larval host plants between the flowers, where butterflies can lay eggs. All of Tom's work has paid off – the butterflies love it there. His yard gives visitors a chance to see these beautiful butterflies up close.

18. Which choice best completes the irony that is setup in the first part of the sentence?

- A. NO CHANGE
- B. and still recognized as a significant historical artifact.
- C. as important remains of ancient Scotland.
- D. in such pristine condition.

19. Which choice best highlights the fact that the first issue of the blog deviated from its initial aim?

- A. NO CHANGE
- B. examining the data behind the recent dip in the stock market.
- C. featuring an interview with Dr. Mendez, a major investor in the blog.
- D. disappointing some readers, who called the article boring.

20. Which of the following true statements, if added here, would provide the most effective transition from the preceding paragraph to this paragraph?

- A. Tom Jones has not seen the numbers drop, despite the increasing threats to migration routes.
- B. One place where the butterflies recover is Tom Jones's backyard.
- C. Monarch butterflies are one of the only species of butterflies that migrate both north and south.
- D. If food is scarce, a butterfly might guard a patch of flowers that it has found.

Chapter 14: Adding or Deleting Information

Adding or deleting information questions ask you to consider whether information should be included in the passage or not. For these questions, you must read for context. **We recommend reading the entire paragraph in which the question is located.** Depending on the question, you may need to read more than that, so use your best judgment.

To best answer these questions, **read the paragraph twice: once with the information included and once with the information deleted.** Reading the paragraph both with and without the information in the question should make it clear whether the information should be included or deleted.

Adding Information

The first type of adding information question gives you a sentence or portion of a sentence and asks you if the information should or should not be added. The answer choices will always have two parts: (1) should the information be added, “yes” or “no,” and (2) a justification of why the information should or should not be added.

When looking at the second part of the answer choices, **make sure that you are only considering the sentence or portion of a sentence that is or is not being added.** Many students pick a justification that goes far beyond what the sentence or portion of the sentence says or include details that have nothing to do with the sentence itself.

Dr. Paul’s career began in 1965 when he enrolled at Georgetown’s Medical School. He graduated at the top of his class and got hired as a surgeon at the Houston Medical Center. He decided to specialize in heart surgery, quickly becoming known as one of the top young surgeons in Texas.

Prior to accepting his promotion to head heart surgeon, Dr. Paul had spent the last eight years training under Dr. Noah Anderson, one of the best cardiologists in the U.S. 1 During what could be best summarized as an apprenticeship, Dr. Paul assisted in over 1,800 assorted cardiac surgeries, perfecting his ability to conduct open-heart surgery.

1. At this point, the writer is considering adding the following true statement:

As a young man, Noah Anderson attended Yale University, where he played baseball and studied biology, and then enrolled at Stanford’s Medical School.

Should the write make this addition here?

- A. Yes, because it establishes the qualifications of Dr. Paulus’ mentor.
- B. Yes, because it indicates that Dr. Noah Anderson had a top-notch education.
- C. No, because it does not also indicate where Dr. Paul studied.
- D. No, because the information is not relevant to the passage’s discussion of Dr. Paul’s career.

For this question, the correct answer is D. The sentence is not relevant to the passage’s focus, which is on Dr. Paul’s career.

The second type of adding information question will underline a portion of the sentence and ask if you should make a revision.

After months of remote learning, a handful of students are finding a sliver of normal school life through learning pods. The students identified for learning pods include some of the most vulnerable. One such group is special education students who need in-person services and may not tolerate long hours on the computer. English learners are a second group. Others eligible for the pods lack a sustainable study environment at home or face emotional issues worsened by the pandemic. While most students will continue to study online, some small groups will begin returning to campus as soon as next week.

2. At this point, the writer is considering revising the underlined portion to the following:

English learners, who require support in two languages, are a second group.

Should the writer make this revision?

- A. Yes, because it provides examples of who the English learners are.
- B. Yes, because it clarifies who the English learners are.
- C. No, because it distracts from the paragraph's discussion of learning pods.
- D. No, because it does not specify where the English learners will study.

For this question, the answer is B. The term "English learners" is not specifically defined and likely one the reader is not familiar with. The revised version clarified what the term "English learners" means, so the revision should be made.

Deleting Information

The first type of deleting information question is just like the first type of adding information question with one obvious difference: the question will ask if the underlined portion of the sentence should or should not be deleted. **The approach for these questions is identical to the approach for the adding information questions we just covered at the start of this chapter**, so we will not repeat it again here.

Jerry and Eric have joined a growing number of mountain bikers in California who prefer "extreme downhill mountain biking." Rather than following the established trails, they journey to the tops of mountains in central California and find their own trails to ride. "It is just us, the bikes, and the great outdoors. We have to find our own path down, and I love that added level of adventure," says Eric.

The writer is considering deleting the underlined portion. Should the underlined portion be kept or deleted?

- A. Kept, because it highlights how dangerous mountain biking is.
- B. Kept, because it details where Jerry and Eric go for the extreme downhill mountain biking.
- C. Deleted, because it is not important where Jerry and Eric go mountain biking.
- D. Deleted, because it distracts from the main point of the paragraph.

The correct answer here is B. The phrase "the tops of the mountains in" provides a relevant detail about where the "extreme downhill mountain biking" takes place and also help explain why it is called "extreme downhill mountain biking."

The second type of deleting information question asks you to identify what the passage would lose if a certain word, phrase, or sentence were deleted. For these questions, it is all about the context! **A good trick here is to try “deleting” the word, phrase, or sentence: read the paragraph with the word, phrase, or sentence and without it.** Then, ask yourself what the passage loses when the information is deleted.

Some popular ecotourism destinations have been burdened by the presence of travelers.

It's not uncommon for overeager tourists to wander off the designated paths and leave trash behind. Certain destinations like the Galapagos Islands have begun to combat this problem by limiting the number of visitors. 1

If the writer were to delete the preceding sentence, the paragraph would primarily lose:

- A. reasons why there has not been much tourism in certain areas.
- B. examples of ways that ecotourism has helped the local economy.
- C. an example of steps that ecotourism destinations have taken to minimize the impact of tourists.
- D. reasons that tourists travel to remote locations.

The correct answer here is C. The final sentence in this paragraph gives a specific example of how some of the ecotourist destinations have tried to control the damage done by travelers.

TIP – Read for context (as much as you need)

The most common mistake on adding and deleting information questions is to rush and not read enough. For any question that asks you about adding or deleting information, make sure to read for content both before and after. This means reading at least the preceding sentence and the following sentence. At times, you may need to read the entire paragraph to get the context that you need. Take your time...these questions are not particularly difficult as long as you read the paragraph and questions carefully!

TIP – DELETE the underlined portion.

Some questions will have “DELETE the underlined portion” as answer choice D or J. Whenever you see this answer choice, pay extra close attention to what the question is asking you to do: **these questions can be testing grammar (most commonly sentence structure), redundancy, irrelevance, and transitions.** On the new Enhanced ACT, the question will tell you what the question is testing you on!

When you see these questions, you should follow these steps:

- 1. Read the question carefully to identify which type of question you are looking at.** The question will make it clear if you are being tested on grammar, redundancy, or transitions.
- 2. For grammar questions, read the entire sentence as it is written and with the underlined portion deleted.** See if the current sentence or deleting the underlined portion creates a sentence fragment, run-on sentence, or any other sentence structure error.
- 3. For redundancy and transitions questions, read the previous sentence(s).** For redundancy, look to see if any of the answer choices are redundant with information in the sentence itself or the previous sentence(s). For transitions, read for context to see if the transition is necessary.

These questions can appear like the examples below:

Even though the door was locked, the weary traveler tried repeatedly to open it. He swiped his key card over and over before giving up and sleeping on the front porch.

1. Which choice is the least redundant in context?
 - A. NO CHANGE
 - B. multiple times
 - C. hoping the door would open
 - D. DELETE the underlined portion

The first sentence already says the traveler “tried repeatedly to open” the door, so the correct answer is D.

The masked bandit hopped the fence and disappeared into the night. For example, he had successfully evaded all four of police officers that had been chasing him.

2. Which transition word, if any, is the most logical in context?
 - A. NO CHANGE
 - B. Similarly,
 - C. In summary,
 - D. DELETE the underlined portion

For transitions questions with the option to delete the transition, the transition word or words are almost always unnecessary, as in this example. The answer is D.

Nitrogen gas, which is a key nutrient for plants, constitutes 78 percent of the Earth’s air, however plants cannot use nitrogen in the gas form.

3. Which choice make the sentence most grammatically acceptable?
 - A. NO CHANGE
 - B. but
 - C. therefore
 - D. DELETE the underlined portion

This example may look like another transition question, but it is actually testing sentence structure. The answer is B because we need a comma + FANBOYS to link two independent clauses. A and C are incorrect because they are not FANBOYS, and deleting the underlined portion creates a comma splice.

Chapter 14 Practice:

In my opinion, there is nothing worse than being stuck on an airplane. People are far too close to you, the food is terrible, and somebody is always sick. In Chicago, I was once stuck on a runway
¹
for three hours before the plane took off.

The alternative is not much more appealing: a long
²
 ride in the car – and very likely stuck in traffic. The food is better, but only marginally, since all of the food right near the highway is greasy fast food. At least when driving, I know there will be no stranger in my car coughing all over me.

Some artists are so famous that tickets to their shows are almost impossible to get no matter where they perform. Would you believe that last year's Beyoncé concert 3 sold out in less than one minute? The fact that so many tickets were purchased that quickly boggles the mind.

My friend Edward insists that man-buns and long beards are not just a trend. Likewise, I like
⁴
 to remind him that mullets and rat tails were also once cool back in the 1980s.

1. The writer is considering deleting the underlined portion. Should the underlined portion be kept or deleted?
 - A. Kept, because it provides an example of how air travel can sometime be imperfect.
 - B. Kept, because it emphasizes how bad air travel is.
 - C. Deleted, because it makes the narrator seem biased.
 - D. Deleted, because it distracts from the writer's main point.
2. The author is considering revising the underlined portion to the following:
 much longer and only slightly less cramped
 - A. Yes, because it offers a clearer comparison between driving to flying.
 - B. Yes, because it adds information about how much longer driving is.
 - C. No, because it suggests that driving and flying are both undesirable.
 - D. No, because it adds information that is irrelevant at this point in the passage.
3. At this point, the writer is considering adding in the phrase "in Los Angeles's football stadium" here. Should the writer make the addition or not?
 - A. Yes, because it provides a detail showing impressive the sell-out was.
 - B. Yes, because it shows the location where the concert will be.
 - C. No, because it does not matter where the concert is.
 - D. No, because it makes it sound like Beyoncé does not perform outside of the US.
4.
 - A. NO CHANGE
 - B. Similarly,
 - C. On the other hand,
 - D. DELETE the underlined portion

Bottled water has become increasingly popular over the last ten years. Most water companies claim to have some special source for the water, many from exotic locations. But is bottled water really better? Studies have shown that the majority of bottled water is just filtered and bottled tap water. “Scientifically speaking, there is no notable difference between bottled water and filtered tap water; it is just a matter of personal preference,” says Dr. Rebecca Zeratsky. Bottled water is filtered before it is bottled. If you filter water at home, the water itself is essentially the same⁵

After waiting for four months, Sandra finally got her new iPhone. To protect it, she bought an aqua phone case with a black and white picture of a sea turtle. 7

Charles has a serious obsession with mountain climbing. When he is home, Charles drives two hours to the mountains each weekend to go climbing. But even that cannot satisfy him! During vacation last year, he insisted on climbing the highest mountain in Croatia even though the temperature was over 100 degrees. I would never do such a thing.⁸

5. The writer is considering revising the underlined portion to the following:
such as fresh glacial water or alkaline spring water.
Should the writer make this revision?
 - A. Yes, because it provides a better indication of the sources of the water.
 - B. Yes, because it clearly identifies why the water is better from these sources.
 - C. No, because it adds information that is irrelevant to the passage’s discussion of bottled water.
 - D. No, because it suggests that bottled water must be alkaline.
6. If the writer were to delete the underlined portion, the essay would primarily lose a:
 - A. statement revealing the narrator’s belief that filtered water is better than bottled water.
 - B. claim arguing the reason why bottle water is filtered.
 - C. detail supporting the writer’s argument about the similarities of bottled and filtered water.
 - D. comment suggesting that the narrator questions the quality of bottled water.
7. If the writer deleted the words “aqua” and “white and black,” the sentence would primarily lose information that:
 - A. provides details indicating what the phone case looks like.
 - B. indicates the options for different phone case colors.
 - C. emphasizes Sandra’s favorite colors.
 - D. details how patient Sandra has been.
8. The writer is considering deleting the underlined portion. Should the underlined portion be kept or deleted?
 - A. Kept, because it highlights how much Charles enjoys mountain climbing.
 - B. Kept, because it clarifies why Charles went mountain climbing.
 - C. Deleted, because it provides details that are irrelevant at this point in the passage.
 - D. Deleted, because it distracts from the main idea of the paragraph.

After stepping off the plane, John and his fellow instructor Jameis began to get acquainted with both the sled drivers and their dogs. They were here to help two teams optimize everything from the nutrition of the dogs and drivers to the order of the dogs and when to take breaks. The dogs and drivers were preparing for the Iditarod, a 1000-mile race from Alaska to Nome. John won the event years earlier thanks in large part to paying attention to details that many of his competitors hadn't even thought of. Some of his most innovative techniques included creating his own food for his dogs and using monitors on the dogs to manage fatigue. [9] After retiring from racing, John missed the intensity of the race, so he decided to become an Iditarod consultant. After some brief introductions, the first thing he did was start running the dogs through tests while Jameis began working with the sled drivers on racing strategies, techniques, and tips.

To be selected as one of the three black students to integrate West Virginia's graduate schools would be a notable life achievement for most people. However, for Katherine Johnson, it was only the beginning of her shattering norms and helping to change American history. Johnson went on to amaze her professors with her mathematical prowess. After raising her children, Johnson got a job analyzing data from test flights at NASA, but her biggest achievement came after the Soviet Union launched the Sputnik satellite. The United States needed to have a grand success of their own and decided to put a man on the moon. Johnson was a key member of the team that created the calculations that allowed John Glenn to step onto the moon. This was the first time that complex calculations and computers were used for space flight. Many of the astronauts, including John Glenn, were incredibly nervous about putting their lives into the hands of machines, which back then were prone to many bugs and hiccups. [10] The flight ultimately was a success and Johnson went on to be a key member of many other projects at NASA and eventually was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

9. At this point, the writer is considering adding the following sentence.

After winning the race, John went on to become a well-known dog trainer and even starred in a dog training show on a major network.

Should the writer make this revision?

- A. Yes, because it reinforces the paragraph's claim that John was skilled at working with dogs.
- B. Yes, because it provides context for how the two teams knew about John and hired him.
- C. No, because it interrupts the paragraph's discussion of how John was training the dogs.
- D. No, because it does not give background information on Jameis.

10. At this point, the writer is considering adding the following sentence.

John Glenn asked for Johnson to run the calculations by hand to double check them, and if she cleared them, he was good to go.

Should the writer make this revision?

- A. Yes, because it reinforces the paragraph's claim about how impactful Katherine Johnson was to American history.
- B. Yes, because it shows that Katherine Johnson was the only competent member of the team.
- C. No, because it interrupts the paragraph's discussion about putting a man on the moon.
- D. No, because it is not focused on the achievements of Katherine Johnson.

Chapter 15: Logical Placement

Logical placement questions ask you to place a sentence in the paragraph. These questions are all about context. To find the correct answer, **plug the sentence into each potential spot in the answer choices and re-read the paragraph**. When checking the placement, **make sure that you read the sentence(s) before and after the sentence you are placing**. Many students make mistakes by not continuing to read the sentence(s) after where the sentence is being placed. The correct placement should flow smoothly and fit in with the context of the paragraph.

TIP – Notice the Bracketed Numbers [1] or Letters [A]

As you are reading the passages, some paragraphs will have bracketed numbers at the beginning of each sentence. On the ACT, it will look just like this:

[1] Morgan Freeman’s smooth voice is one of the many things that have made him an A-list celebrity. [2] Everyone has probably tried to do a Morgan Freeman impression, but nobody can match the real thing. [3] Still, that has never stopped me from trying to

Bracketed numbers only appear for a logical placement question, so read these paragraphs more carefully. Be aware that the paragraph may currently be out of order, so it may seem confusing when you first read it.

Bracketed letters appear when a logical placement question will be at the end of the passage. When reading the passage, you do not need to pay attention to the letters. Just know there will be a question at the end of the passage asking you where to place a sentence.

Chapter 15 Practice:

[1] Most Americans have never tried truly great chocolate. [2] Sure, we have Hershey’s chocolate bars, which are delicious. [3] But have you ever had chocolate from Switzerland? [4] Take a real Swiss chocolate like Lindt, for example. [5] The higher percentage of cacao, 23 percent in Lindt chocolate in comparison with only 11 percent in Hershey’s, results in a much darker, richer taste, and the lower sugar content brings out the natural bitterness of the chocolate. [6] The Swiss really know how to make chocolate properly. [7] It just melts in your mouth and has such a rich, bold flavor with just the right amount of bitterness. 1

1. For the sake of logic and coherence, Sentence 7 should be placed:
 - A. where it is now
 - B. after sentence 2
 - C. after sentence 4
 - D. after sentence 5

[1] Airline travel has improved so much over the last twenty years. [2] Before the mid 1990s, there was absolutely no in-flight entertainment for passengers. [3] Seats had no screens in the back of each headrest with on-demand movies, music, and games. [4] There were not even those old, clunky TVs that folded down from the ceiling every few rows and played just one movie for the entire plane. [5] Even portable music devices, like the iPod or Walkman, had not been invented yet. [6] All passengers could do was read or sleep. [7] Now, I actually look forward to catching up on the movies that I missed on long flights. [8] It sure makes the time go by much more quickly while flying. 2

2. For the sake of logic and coherence, Sentence 6 should be placed:
- A. where it is now
 - B. after sentence 2
 - C. before sentence 4
 - D. after sentence 7

[1] Cancer occurs when cells undergo a DNA mutation and begin to replicate uncontrollably. [2] Most mutations are “silent” mutations that have no tangible effects. [3] These cancerous cells begin to divide uncontrollably and form dangerous tumors. [4] What most people do not know is that mutations occur in our cells all the time. [5] Only mutations to specific parts of certain genes, like the p-53 gene, can lead to cells becoming cancerous. [6] As a result, most cancer research to date has focused on p-53 and other similar genes. 3

3. For the sake of logic and coherence, Sentence 2 should be placed:
- A. where it is now
 - B. before sentence 1
 - C. after sentence 4
 - D. before sentence 6

[1] Carnivorous pitcher plants have many symbiotic relationships in the animal kingdom. [2] Some have relationships with parasites and fungi. [3] However, only *N. hemsleyana* pitchers have acquired traits to attract bats. [4] They do not eat the bats but rather benefit from the bat’s guano. [5] The bats benefit because the plants provide a perfectly sized shelter to rest in. [6] These tropical pitcher plants have evolved in shape to stand out against a bat’s echolocations. 4

4. For the sake of logic and coherence, Sentence 6 should be placed:
- A. where it is now
 - B. after sentence 1
 - C. after sentence 2
 - D. after sentence 3

[1] When he was born in Hong Kong to poor parents, no one could have imagined Jackie Chan would grow up to be an American movie star. [2] It all started with his passion for Kung Fu and his academic struggles as a child. [3] This ultimately resulted in him joining the China Drama Academy where children were trained to be in Chinese movies. [4] The school was brutal, with daily training lasting 17-19 hours with little room for pleasure. [5] After over ten years in the school, Jackie graduated and, free to take roles of his own choosing, would often select roles that involved doing stunts no other actors dreamed of attempting. [6] After experiencing many failures and injuries, Jackie finally earned his first break as Bruce Lee's stunt double. [7] After Bruce Lee's death, Jackie tried to replicate Lee's onscreen persona but failed and realized he needed to do something different. [8] So, he decided to blend comedy and stunts and his career began to take off. 5

5. The writer wants to add the following sentence to the paragraph.

As a child, he had always loved the slapstick comedy of Buster Keaton and Charlie Chaplin.

The sentence would most logically be placed:

- A. after sentence 1
- B. after sentence 2
- C. after sentence 4
- D. after sentence 7

[1] Snow leopards are one of the most elusive big cats in the world. [2] Sightings of snow leopards are so rare that many years can pass without anyone seeing a snow leopard in person. [3] Due to this challenge, almost all recorded footage of snow leopards is made using motion activated cameras. [4] Even so, motion activated cameras may still only get a very short glimpse, often only a few seconds, of a snow leopard. [5] Due to its curious nature, a snow leopard may sniff the camera before lazily moving on. [6] A single snow leopard often has a territory of a few hundred square kilometers, making it nearly impossible to film. 6

6. For the sake of logic and coherence, Sentence 6 should be placed:

- A. where it is now
- B. after sentence 1
- C. after sentence 2
- D. after sentence 3

[1] The Great Pacific Garbage Patch is a collection of marine debris that litters the North Pacific Ocean, but the name is actually a bit of a misnomer. [2] There are actually two distinct patches. [3] One of the patches is located between California and Hawaii, and the other is located close to Japan. [4] Garbage keeps getting added to these two distinct patches due to the ocean currents. [5] The currents act as a gyre and slowly suck pollution into these two distinct patches where it gets stuck. [6] Further, although one would think that the patches would be visible from a satellite, both are actually enormous accumulations of tiny pieces of plastic that cannot even be seen from a plane. 7

7. For the sake of logic and coherence, Sentence 6 should be placed:

- A. where it is now
- B. after sentence 1
- C. after sentence 2
- D. after sentence 3

[1] The concern that donations to political campaigns secure preferential treatment from policy makers has long perturbed the public. [2] However, the effects of contributions on policy makers' decisions are incredibly difficult to assess. [3] So how could an experiment be run in a controlled manner? [4] To address this challenge, the American Political Science Company decided to run the first controlled experiment. [5] For the experiment, they decided to schedule meetings with 140 congressional offices. [6] The American Political Science Company randomly assigned whether the offices would be told that the caller was a donor or not. [7] When officials in the offices were told that the caller had donated, meetings were five times more likely to be scheduled than when the caller was not a donor. 8

8. For the sake of logic and coherence, Sentence 3 should be placed:

- A. where it is now
- B. after sentence 1
- C. after sentence 4
- D. after sentence 5

Answer Key

Chapter 1: Sentence Structure

Page 5 Exercise:

1. Phrase
2. Independent Clause
3. Independent Clause
4. Dependent Clause
5. Phrase
6. Independent Clause
7. Dependent Clause
8. Phrase
9. Phrase
10. Independent Clause
11. Independent Clause
12. Phrase
13. Dependent Clause
14. Dependent Clause

Page 6 Practice:

1. D
2. B
3. D
4. A
5. B
6. D

Page 8 Practice:

1. B, C
2. A
3. A, B, C
4. A, C
5. B, C
6. A
7. A
8. A

Chapter 1 Practice (pp. 10-11)

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

Chapter 2: Commas – 4 Types of Comas

Page 14 Practice:

1. No additional commas needed
2. No additional commas needed
3. Eric's mother, Louisa, cheered from the bleachers.
4. No additional commas needed
5. No additional commas needed
6. The CEO of Tesla, Elon Musk, has revolutionized the car industry.
7. No additional commas needed
8. The oldest Hemsworth brother, Luke Hemsworth, starred in HBO's Westworld.

Page 16 Practice:

1. Before the race began, the team did a final check on the sparkplugs in the engine.
2. Donations for the campaign in Georgia broke records during the 2020 election.
3. The luxury dog bed with the ornate frame and supportive memory foam seems a bit excessive to me.
4. During the movie, Davonta's mother went to the concession stand for some popcorn.
5. At the corner, the host stood with a microphone in her hand.

Page 19 Practice:

1. Although James demanded pizza for dinner, his mother decided to make grilled chicken and broccoli instead.
2. Mr. Alvin, a very popular teacher among the students, cancelled the final exam.
3. I could not believe that Deadpool was such a popular movie.
4. While my friend Mary thought that dolphins were the fastest animals in water, she was surprised to learn it was actually a sailfish.
5. Owls, notorious for their amazing night vision, have fantastic hearing at night, so they can actually hear their prey from hundreds of feet away even if they cannot see it.
6. On second thought, the real reason that I did not like Scott was his lack of honesty.
7. Some cultures, though, enjoy bizarre foods like bugs or snakes.
8. After graduating, Darren played for the San Diego Padres where he had a long career as a relief pitcher.
9. Because he was the best in Dallas, award-winning head chef Phillip Small owned multiple very successful restaurants.
10. My favorite author is J.K. Rowling, who is famous for writing the Harry Potter series.
11. The fisherman carrying their catch walked into the Seattle fish market, a place famous for how the vendors throw fish to entertain customers.
12. At first glance, the cuttlefish, which can change colors to blend into its surroundings, looked just like the brain coral behind it, and I did not see it in the picture.
13. Last summer, the local flooding caused by a breach in the Reynolds Dam caused over ten thousand dollars in damage to the children's park.
14. The basil plant, for example, needs full sunlight, but cilantro grows best in partial sunlight.

Page 22 Practice:

1. Scientists are trying to determine what animal the newly discovered fossilized bones are from.
2. The white, fluffy clouds floated quickly by in the crisp evening wind.
3. The big sun bear is known for climbing the fence and swimming in the heated community pool in the spring.
4. The cunning, sneaky red foxes got into the chicken coop again last night.
5. The powerful liquid detergent makes my dirty sweaty, clothes smell so much better.
6. My car engine made an annoying rattling sound right before breaking down.
7. The local hot air balloon company specializes in making colorful, creative designs.
8. Laura placed an order for Italian coffee beans and three expensive ceramic coffee mugs.

Pages 23 Practice:

1. A, C
2. A, B
3. A
4. A
5. A, B
6. C
7. C

Chapter 2 Practice (Pages 25-28)

- | | |
|-------|-------|
| 1. D | 15. C |
| 2. A | 16. C |
| 3. B | 17. D |
| 4. D | 18. B |
| 5. B | 19. C |
| 6. D | 20. A |
| 7. A | 21. B |
| 8. A | 22. C |
| 9. A | 23. D |
| 10. B | 24. D |
| 11. A | 25. C |
| 12. C | 26. C |
| 13. A | 27. D |
| 14. D | |

Chapter 3: Semicolons, Colons, Dashes, Apostrophes, and Quotation Marks

Semicolons Practice (Page 29):

1. ;
2. ,
3. ,
4. , ,
5. , , ;
6. ; ,

Semicolons, Colons, and Commas Practice (Page 31):

1. :
2. :
3. ,
4. ; or :
5. ;
6. :
7. :
8. , : ,
9. , : or ;

Dashes Practice (Page 33):

1. C
2. D
3. C
4. A
5. C

Apostrophes Practice (Page 34):

1. witch's
2. kids'
3. doors
4. client's
5. eagles'

Possessive Pronouns and Contractions (Page 35):

- it's
- its
- your
- you're
- their
- they're
- whose
- who's

Quotation Marks Practice (Page 36):

1. D
2. D
3. A

Chapter 3 Practice: (Pages 37-39):

- | | |
|-------|-------|
| 1. B | 14. D |
| 2. A | 15. B |
| 3. B | 16. B |
| 4. A | 17. C |
| 5. B | 18. C |
| 6. C | 19. C |
| 7. B | 20. D |
| 8. C | 21. A |
| 9. A | 22. B |
| 10. D | 23. A |
| 11. B | 24. C |
| 12. D | 25. C |
| 13. C | |

Chapters 1-3 Problem Set:

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

Chapter 4: Verbs

Practice (Page 45):

1. cheers
2. requires
3. is

wins
make

4. were
5. sells
6. takes
7. have
8. is
9. have
10. calls
11. get
12. is
13. makes
14. requires

Subject Verb Agreement Practice (Page 46):

1. grooms
2. are
3. were

Verb Tense Practice (Page 48):

1. caused
2. devoured
3. told
4. swum
5. would have arrived
6. be
7. begins
8. will get
9. closed
10. bought
11. sunk
12. have

5. B
6. C
7. A
8. B
9. C
10. D
11. C
12. C
13. D
14. B
15. D
16. D
17. D
18. B
19. B
20. D
21. C
22. A
23. D

Chapter 4 Practice (Pages 50-52):

1. C
2. A
3. C
4. C

Chapter 5: Pronouns

Pronoun Case Practice (Page 55):

1. me
2. her
3. him himself
4. me
5. who
6. their its
7. myself
8. her its
9. us
10. who whom
11. they
12. who whom

Ambiguous Pronouns Practice (Page 58):

1. B
2. D
3. D
4. B
5. C
6. B

Chapter 5 Practice (Pages 59-61):

1. C
2. D
3. A
4. C
5. D
6. C
7. C
8. A
9. B
10. A
11. C
12. C
13. A
14. A
15. D
16. C
17. D
18. D
19. C
20. C

Pronoun Agreement Practice (Page 56):

1. his
2. their
3. her
4. they
5. his or her
6. its
7. who his or her them
8. their they
9. its
10. you your

21. D
22. B
23. B

Chapter 6 Misplaced Modifiers:

Chapter 6 Practice (Pages 67-70):

- | | |
|-------|-------|
| 1. C | 11. B |
| 2. B | 12. B |
| 3. B | 13. B |
| 4. B | 14. B |
| 5. C | 15. D |
| 6. C | 16. B |
| 7. B | 17. A |
| 8. A | 18. C |
| 9. D | 19. B |
| 10. A | 20. A |

Chapter 7: Parallel Structure

Parallel Structure and Lists Practice (Page 71):

1. Theresa was expecting a visit from her mother, so she made her bed, cleaned the shelves of the refrigerator, and swept the kitchen floor.
2. Attempting to sneak out of the house, Janice grabbed her phone, her purse, and her wallet and then climbed out the back window
3. Chevy, our golden retriever, chews on the furniture, barks at the neighbors, and thinks his shadow is real.
4. It's harder to lift the couch by myself than to lift it with some friends
5. I would rather get free music with commercials than pay for music with no commercials.

Special Cases for Parallel Structure Practice (Page 72):

1. Both a scholar and an athlete, Sylvia got a scholarship to row crew in college.
2. The news report is neither accurate nor fair.
3. Neither scolding the child nor attempting to bribe him helped to calm him down.
4. The haunted house not only required participants to sign a waiver before entering but also asked them to turn their phones off for the entire experience.
5. Forms of payment accepted are either cash or Venmo.

Parallel Structure and Comparisons Practice (Page 73):

1. Unlike those of Mr. Rodriguez, Mr. Allen's math exams are curved, so everyone gets a better grade.
2. There was no mystery greater than that of the left shoe thief at my high school.
3. Walter stands by his bold claim that Michael Jordan's shoes are better than those of all current NBA players.
4. Unlike those at the 2014 World Cup in Brazil, the teams at the 2010 World Cup in South Africa had to deal with the constant noise from the vuvuzela horns.

Chapter 7 Practice (Pages 74-76):

- | | |
|------|-------|
| 1. C | 10. A |
| 2. C | 11. C |
| 3. A | 12. A |
| 4. A | 13. A |
| 5. B | 14. D |
| 6. A | 15. B |
| 7. C | 16. D |
| 8. C | 17. A |
| 9. D | 18. C |

Chapter 8: Other Miscellaneous Topics

Chapter 8 Practice (Pages 81-82):

- | | |
|------|-------|
| 1. C | 7. C |
| 2. B | 8. A |
| 3. D | 9. D |
| 4. C | 10. B |
| 5. A | 11. B |
| 6. C | 12. A |

Chapter 9: Grammar Review

Chapter 9 Practice (Pages 84-88):

- | | |
|-------|-------|
| 1. D | 21. A |
| 2. B | 22. A |
| 3. D | 23. D |
| 4. B | 24. D |
| 5. D | 25. D |
| 6. C | 26. B |
| 7. A | 27. C |
| 8. C | 28. D |
| 9. D | 29. C |
| 10. B | 30. C |
| 11. C | 31. B |
| 12. D | 32. A |
| 13. B | 33. D |
| 14. C | 34. D |
| 15. C | 35. B |
| 16. D | 36. A |
| 17. D | 37. B |
| 18. D | 38. A |
| 19. A | 39. B |
| 20. C | 40. C |

Chapter 10: Redundancy, Wordiness, and Irrelevance

Chapter 10 Practice (Pages 92-93):

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

Chapter 11: Word Choice

Chapter 11 Practice (Pages 94-95):

- | | |
|------|-------|
| 1. A | 6. A |
| 2. A | 7. C |
| 3. C | 8. B |
| 4. A | 9. B |
| 5. C | 10. C |

Chapter 12: Transitions

Chapter 12 Practice (Pages 99-100):

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

Chapter 13: Which Choice

Chapter 13 Practice (Pages 104-108):

- | | |
|-------|-------|
| 1. C | 11. B |
| 2. D | 12. D |
| 3. C | 13. C |
| 4. A | 14. C |
| 5. C | 15. C |
| 6. C | 16. C |
| 7. B | 17. D |
| 8. B | 18. A |
| 9. D | 19. C |
| 10. C | 20. B |

Chapter 14: Adding or Deleting Information

Chapter 14 Practice (Pages 113-115):

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

Chapter 15: Logical Placement

Chapter 15 Practice (Pages 116-119):

1. C
2. A
3. C
4. D
5. D
6. C
7. C
8. D