

Name: _____ Date: _____

TEST 1

Comm 1234: Technical Writing Fundamentals Winter 2016

Section 1: Grammar

Each passage below commits a common grammatical error. Identify the error (or explain it, if you can't remember the name), and suggest a way of fixing the passage. If you're proposing a change that is too complex to explain clearly, rewrite the passage instead. (2 marks per question)

1. *On Friday, a team of six scientists entered a small dome on the barren slope of a Hawaiian volcano. Where they will spend the next year in a simulation of life on Mars.*

Type of error: _____

How you would fix it: _____

2. *Conducted by the University of Hawaii, the purpose of the project is to study the social and emotional challenges of living in isolated, cramped quarters for an extended period.*

Type of error: _____

How you would fix it: _____

3. *The dome is just eleven metres across and six metres tall, and trips outside will require a spacesuit, the participants' internet access will be limited, but expect tweets nonetheless.*

Type of error: _____

How you would fix it: _____

4. *A Statistics Canada report confirmed this week that our economy is technically in a recession, however, it's not the word "recession" that matters.*

Type of error: _____

How you would fix it: _____

5. *For Canada to reclaim its once-held position as a leader in global engagement, it would have to double what it spends on defence, foreign aid, diplomacy, and on the environment.*

Type of error: _____

How you would fix it: _____

Section 2: Style

Each passage below commits a common stylistic error. Identify the error (or explain it, if you can't remember the name), and suggest a way of fixing it. If you're proposing a change that is too complex to explain clearly, rewrite the passage instead. (2 marks per question)

6. *Three Canadian ministers were present for the opening of a registration centre in Amman, Jordan. A resettlement program that aims to bring 25,000 refugees to Canada by the end of February will have its hub at this centre.*

Type of error: _____

How you would fix it: _____

7. *The young woman told her mother that she should have been invited to the gala.*

Type of error: _____

How you would fix it: _____

8. *Fifty fertility clinics opened across Ontario in the month of December.*

Type of error: _____

How you would fix it: _____

9. *As long as there are two or more passengers in his car, a motorist may pay to use a high-occupancy vehicle lane.*

Type of error: _____

How you would fix it: _____

10. *Participants were tested under conditions of good to excellent acoustic isolation.*

Type of error: _____

How you would fix it: _____

Section 3: Short Answer

Short is fine—really—as long as you give the right answer, and clearly.

11. Richard Nixon said, “I am not a crook.” Bill Clinton said, “I did not have sexual relations with that woman.” Neither of these statements was particularly effective at putting rumours to rest. How might these politicians have rephrased their statements to inspire more trust? (1 mark)

12. Consider this sentence: *Jones is an honest man*. Now consider this one: *Jones is a very honest man*. Why might the addition of “very” have the counterintuitive effect of weakening the statement? (1 mark)

13. “The more you eat, the fatter you get.” This is a simple idea, but a professional dietician is likely to express it less clearly, perhaps like this: “There is a significant positive correlation between measures of food intake and body mass intake.” Why would somebody who knows *more* about a subject have a tendency to be *less* clear when they try to explain it? (1 mark)