

Run-on Sentences/Comma Splices Exercises Answer Key SAT

Choose the correct answer from the following options

1. Enter space commander Henry Roland, he is the mechanical engineer from America who created the standardized high school space curriculum. (Test 6, 19)
 - a. NO CHANGE
 - b. Roland is
 - c. his being
 - d. **DELETE the underlined portion**

Choice D is the best answer because getting rid of “he is” eliminates the comma splice created by the two independent clauses: “Enter space commander Henry Roland” and “he is ...curriculum.” “Enter” is actually an imperative verb (i.e. a command) with an implied subject, “you,” so the original sentence (as well as choice B) is a run on, because the portion before the comma is a complete sentence. Choice C, “his being” is awkward; remember, “being” on the SAT is almost always wrong unless the form creates parallelism.

2. The eight-foot man has become an icon of the little village town, he attracts visitors from all over the country to come see the world’s tallest human being. (Test 6, 14)
 - a. NO CHANGE
 - b. **town, attracting**
 - c. town, his attracting
 - d. town; attracting

Choice B is the best answer. This sentence currently has a comma splice (a comma separating two independent clauses). To fix that, the participle “attracting” is used to introduce the participial phrase that modifies the noun “town.” We use “-ing” word phrases to indicate an action that occurs because of or in tandem with the main verb in the sentence. Choice C is awkward because the word “his” makes “attracting” a noun verbal form (i.e. a gerund) and this noun dangles without any verb. Choice D incorrectly uses a semicolon. See Semicolons section for proper use of semicolons.

3. During the summer of his sophomore year, Jeffery flew his homemade kite in Yosemite National Park, this is one of the 58 National Parks that are preserved and protected in the United States. (Test 6, 1)
 - a. NO CHANGE
 - b. Park. Which is one
 - c. Park. One
 - d. **Park, one**

Choice D is the correct answer because the comma should be used to separate the main independent clause (“During the summer...Yosemite National Park”) from the dependent clause that describes the park. Choice A creates a comma splice error. Choices B and C do not form complete sentences.

4. The chicken cooked quickly, it allowed the chef to provide food catering to hundreds of people. (Test 5, 4)
- a. NO CHANGE
 - b. that
 - c. this
 - d. **which**

Choice D is the best answer because the relative pronoun “which” should follow the independent clause “The chicken cooked quickly.” It explains what the fact that the chicken cooked quickly allowed the chef to do. Choices A, B, and D each results in a comma splice. Note: on the OLD SAT, “which” almost ALWAYS touched a noun it specifically referred to. (i.e. I bought a **hat**, **which** was blue. “Which” refers to the hat, which it touches.) Here, “which” refers not to a noun it touches but instead to the entire concept presented in the first portion of the sentence. This is an ok way to use “which” on the new SAT, and the new exam has used “which” in this manner several times on real questions. Still, the ideas must be clear whenever using a relative pronoun such as “which.” In any case, a run-on is never correct, so this use of “which” is much better.

5. The answer choices may contain a lot of “distractors,” they do not provide the correct answer. (Test 5, 29)
- a. NO CHANGE
 - b. “distractors,” not providing
 - c. **“distractors,” which do not provide**
 - d. “distractors” to not provide

Choice C is the best answer because the pronoun “which” appropriately introduces the dependent clause describing the “distractors.” Choice A contains a comma splice error. Choice B is vague as it is not clear whether it is the “answer choices” or “distractors” that are not providing the answer. Choice D has the phrase “to not provide,” which does not make grammatical sense in the sentence.

6. Antonio was directed to promote the upcoming dog show in his poster, he accordingly drew all the breeds that were to be displayed. (Test 4, 1)
- a. NO CHANGE
 - b. **on which he according drew**
 - c. accordingly he drew
 - d. it was drawn accordingly

Choice B is the best answer. The relative clause begins with the phrase “on which,” which makes sense as the drawing occurred on the poster. Choices A, C, and D create comma splices.

7. Steroids work by helping the body’s muscle produce more protein, they are organic compounds that contains four rings of carbon atoms. (Test 3, 24)
- a. NO CHANGE
 - b. being
 - c. that are

d. DELETE the underlined portion.

Choice D is the best answer because only a comma is necessary to separate “protein” from the defining noun phrase. Choices A, B, and C do not work because each creates a comma splice and adds unnecessary words.

8. It has been discovered that the squirrels living in the trees behind Marc’s house steal the fruits from his fruit trees in his front yard. (Test 2, 23)
- a. **NO CHANGE**
 - b. living in the trees behind Marc’s house, they steal
 - c. that live behind Marc’s house and steal
 - d. that live behind Marc’s house, where they steal

Choice A is the correct answer. It completes the noun phrase that begins with “squirrels,” and directly follows the noun phrase with the verb “steal.” Choice B creates a comma splice. Choices C and D both do not make sense grammatically.

9. The cake and the cookies, keeping consistent with the rest of the cuisine, were baked with ginger and spices, they were extremely strong in flavor. (Test 2, 16)
- a. **NO CHANGE**
 - b. spices, the cake and cookies
 - c. **spices and**
 - d. spices,

Choice C is the best answer because it correctly uses the coordinating conjunction “and” to connect the two verb phrases “were baked” and “were extremely strong.” Choice A, B, and D create a comma splice and all lack the proper connecting conjunction.

10. According to Jacob, a leading marine biologist, fish from as far away as the Arctic Ocean produced baby fish, some of them traveled through the Pacific Ocean and then arrived at Hawaii to reproduce once again. (Test 1, 17)
- a. **NO CHANGE**
 - b. fish
 - c. **of which**
 - d. DELETE the underlined portion.

Choice C is the best answer. The preposition and relative pronoun “of which” create a dependent clause following the comma. Choices A, B, and D all incorrectly join two independent clauses together with only a comma, creating a comma splice.

Fix the Run-on Sentence:

(There are many ways to fix the errors in these sentences. We offer several possible corrections.)

1. Eggs are used in many different types of cuisines, chefs around the world steam them, scramble them, boil them, and incorporate them into their dishes.

- a. Eggs are used in many different types of cuisines; chefs around the world steam them, scramble them, boil them, and incorporate them into their dishes.
OR
 - b. Eggs are used in many different types of cuisines. Chefs around the world steam them, scramble them, boil them, and incorporate them into their dishes.
OR
 - c. Eggs are used in many different types of cuisines, and chefs around the world steam them, scramble them, boil them, and incorporate them into their dishes.
2. Lewis, Clark, and the rest of their expedition started their exploration in Missouri, they faced nearly every hardship imaginable on their journey.
- a. Lewis, Clark, and the rest of their expedition started their exploration in Missouri; they faced nearly every hardship imaginable on their journey.
OR
 - b. Lewis, Clark, and the rest of their expedition started their exploration in Missouri. They faced nearly every hardship imaginable on their journey.
OR
 - c. Lewis, Clark, and the rest of their expedition started their exploration in Missouri, where they faced nearly every hardship imaginable on their journey.
3. In order to retain the integrity of his work, author and cartoonist Bill Watterson refused to monetize *Calvin and Hobbes*, some fans still make merchandise.
- a. In order to retain the integrity of his work, author and cartoonist Bill Watterson refused to monetize *Calvin and Hobbes*. Some fans still make merchandise.
OR
 - b. In order to retain the integrity of his work, author and cartoonist Bill Watterson refused to monetize *Calvin and Hobbes*; however, some fans have still made merchandise.