

**Aptitude Advanced**

# **Sentence Correction Rule Book II**

**eBook 02**

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	2.1 Strategy to approach Sentence Correction Questions	

## Chapter 1: Sentence Correction Rules- II (Effective Expression)

**Errors of Expression:**

**It includes**

- a. No superfluous words or unnecessarily complicated expressions.
- b. Use of proper diction
- c. Use of correct idiomatic phrases

### **1.1 Avoid superfluous words or phrases /Redundancy**

Redundancy is a specific error of “wordiness,” that is, the use of excessive or unnecessary words. Wordiness comes in the form of unnecessary words (words that can be deleted to aid the clarity of the sentence), redundancies (words that simply repeat what has already been stated), and clunky phrases that could be easily reduced to single words.

**Incorrect:** At first, I initially was afraid of flying.

**Correct:** Initially I was afraid of flying

**Incorrect:** My first class begins at 11 a.m. in the morning.

**Correct:** My first class begins at 11 a.m.

In the first example, both “at first” and “initially” signify the idea of “at the beginning”. We only need one of these expressions to communicate this idea. To fix the sentence, remove one of the expressions.

In the second example, both “a.m.” and “in the morning” communicate the idea that the class begins before noon. To fix the sentence, remove one of these expressions.

## 1.2 Correct diction:

Diction is about word choice, and how those choices impact the meaning, clarity, and style of a piece of writing.

Here are some typical pairs of words that are often used interchangeably, but which have distinctly different meanings.

### Among/Between

- a. Among is used when there are more than two things: *Among X, Y, and Z, I prefer Z.*
- b. Between is used when there are only two things: *You must choose between the GRE and the GMAT.*

### As/Like

- a. “As” = “in the capacity of.” For example, *Joseph Soandso serves as the appellate judge in the umpteenth district of Narnia.*
- b. “Like” = “similar to.” For example *The CAT is not like any other test you have ever taken.*

### Like/Such as

- A. “Like” = “similar to.” *So, Joe likes sports like hockey, basketball, and soccer* means that Joe likes sports that are similar to hockey, basketball, and soccer.
- B. “Such as” = “for example.” *Joe like sports such as hockey, basketball, and soccer* means that Joe likes hockey, basketball, and soccer. **Their/His or her**
- C. Substituting “their” for his or her is a common mistake that is becoming part of day to day English.

I. Incorrect: Does everyone have their copy of the 13<sup>th</sup> OG?

II. Correct: Does everyone have his or her copy of the 13<sup>th</sup> OG?

### That/Which

- A. “That” introduces a restrictive clause – a clause that is essential to the meaning of a sentence.

B. Example: The car that has voice activated ignition is the Chrysler on the far side of the parking lot.

C. “Which” introduces a non-respective clause – a clause that is not essential to the meaning of a sentence. In this case, the non-restrictive clause is surrounded by commas.

D. Example: The car on the far side of the parking lot, which is a Chrysler, has voice activated ignition.

## Who/Whom

A. “Who” is a subject pronoun, so it will perform the action of the verb. It serves the same function as “he” or “she.”

Example: *Who gave you this book? He gave me this book.*

B. “Whom” is an object pronoun, so it will receive the action of the verb. It serves the same function as “him” or “her.”

Example: *To whom did you give the book? I gave the book to her.*

## 1.3. Correct idiomatic usage

Sentence correction questions that revolve around idioms, usage and style generally test subtle errors in expression.

Idiomatic expressions often have no basis in grammar or even logic but have been accepted into the language. Unfortunately, the only thing to do about this problem is practice, so do as many practice questions as possible and take note of any examples in which two different versions of an idiom are used.

Idioms may be defined as expressions peculiar to a language. Many verbs, when followed by various prepositions, or adverbs, acquire an idiomatic sense. *For example* I must think the matter *over* (i.e. consider it).

An interesting characteristic of the verb in English is that it can combine with **prepositions** and **adverb particles**. Broadly speaking, we call these combinations of **verb + preposition** or **verb + adverb particle** idioms. *For example*

Verb (transitive) + preposition: I *got over* my fit of depression.

Verb (transitive) + particle: We must *bring up* children with lots of love and affection.

These are some common idioms:

**Bear**

1. Bear down- overthrow or crush by force
2. Bear away- win
3. Bear up- not to despair
4. Bear out- support or confirm
5. Bear with- tolerate

**Break**

1. Break down- fail, collapse
2. Break into- enter by force
3. Break off- stop suddenly
4. Break out- appear suddenly
5. Break with- quarrel with
6. Break up- end, disperse

**Bring**

1. Bring about- cause
2. Bring down- lower
3. Bring forth- produce
4. Bring in- earn, yield as the result of the sale
5. Bring on- cause
6. Bring out- publish, show
7. Bring one round- persuade
8. Bring up- rear and train



## **Call**

1. Call for- demand
2. Call in- summon, send for
3. Call on- pay a brief visit
4. Call off- cancel
5. Call up- recollect

## **Carry**

1. Carry away- bear off
2. Carry on- continue, manage
3. Carry out- execute
4. Carry through- sustain

## **Come**

1. Come about- happen
2. Come by- get
3. Come down- become lower or cheaper
4. Come out- transpired
5. Come to- amount to
6. Come up- raised for discussion
7. Come round- be persuaded/recover/agree

## **Fall**

1. Fall back- retreat
2. Fall back upon- have recourse to

3. Fall flat- fail to produce any effect
4. Fall in- stand in a line
5. Fall off- decrease/deteriorated
6. Fall out- quarrel
7. Fall through- fail

## **Get**

1. Get along- make progress
2. Get at- recover
3. Get down- descend
4. Get off- escape punishment
5. Get on- advance, make progress
6. Get over- overcome
7. Get through- pass

Here are some selected examples of common words and phrases tested.

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From ....to

Between..... and

The same to .....as to

No less .....than

The more ....., the greater

Better served by .....than by

Not only .....but also

Both .....and

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Different from (not “than” or “to”)

Either .....or

Neither .....nor

Whether to do something or not

They do not know x or y (NOT x nor y)

Doubt that

At the urging of somebody

Between is used for (2) vs Among is used for (> 2)

Affect (verb) vs Effect (noun)

Assure (give an assurance) vs Ensure (make sure something happens) vs Insure

Equivalent in number (vs “as many as people”)

A number of (not “numbers of”)

Whether vs If - “I had to decide whether”, not “I had to decide if.”

Whether is typically used to introduce doubt regarding two equal possibilities or two alternatives.

It is preferred to use “whether” over “if” when the word “if” is not used to signal a condition and instead takes the meaning of “whether”.

Using “whether” exclusively avoids the possible confusion between different possible meanings of “if”.

**Incorrect:** I don’t know if I am ready to take the test now and if I will ever be ready in the future.

**Correct:** I don't know whether I am ready to take the test now and whether I will ever be ready in the future.

### Example of idiomatic Prepositions:

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based on

composed by meaning "created by" vs composed of meaning "made up of"

credit with (not a credit to)

depend on

differ with (meaning "disagree with") vs differ from (meaning "be different from")

discourage from doing something/encourage to do something (from is a preposition

here; to is the infinitive here)

prefer to

prevent from

prohibit from

Idiomatic Phrases Involving or Omitting "As"

consider x y (not to be y)

defined as

depicted as

regard x as y

regarded as

think of x as y

view x as y

### Practice Exercise on Wordiness and Redundancy

1. The acid odour (A) of burnt gunpowder (B) filled the room with a bitterly pungent smell (C) after the pistol had been fired. (D) No error. (E)

2. We were all agog (A) at the news that the celebrated movie star (B) was giving up (C) his career when he was so famous, (D) in order to enter a monastery. No error. (E)

3. Shakespeare's reference (A) to clocks in 'Julius Caesar' is an anachronism; (B) it is something misplaced in time (C) as no clocks existed (D) in Caesar's time. No error. (E)

4. Student exchange programs (A) such as the Experiment in International Living were established (B) to promote international (C) amity and friendship. (D) No error. (E)

5. Being diligent, (A) it took Rembrandt weeks of assiduous labour (B) before he was satisfied (C) with his portrait of his son. (D) No error. (E)

6. Although critics bemoaned (A) the serious flaws (B) in the author's novels, each year his latest book topped (C) the best-seller list. (D) No error. (E)

### Answer key

QNo.	Key	Explanation
1.	C	C is redundant as 'with a bitterly pungent smell' means the same as 'acrid odour'.
2.	D	D is redundant as B already mentions that he was a 'celebrated movie star'.
3.	C	C explains in a redundant manner what B states. The sentence becomes too wordy.
4.	D	D is redundant as 'amity' means friendship.
5.	A	A is redundant as B explains again that he was diligent.
6.	E	No error

### Practice Exercise on Faulty Idioms

#### Important Instructions:

The underlined and lettered parts of each sentence below may contain an error in expression (idiom). Read

each sentence carefully and identify which item, if any, contains an error. No sentence contains more than one error. Some sentences may contain no error. In that case, the correct choice will always be E (No error).

1. The new leader has been(A) able to tear down(B)allopposition to establish (C) hisown rule. (D) No error(E)
2. After a market survey, (A) the publishers have (B) recently brought in(C) a cheap edition of(D) their new dictionary. No error.(E)
3. At last the rioters fell back(A) when the Special Squad was called(B) in to tackle(C) the grave situation. (D)No error.(E)
4. Everyone was impressed(A) by the way(B)his son efficiently carried over(C) his business in his(D) absence. No error. (E)
5. All parents(A)think that children will come over(B)to their views(C)and vice versa. (D)No errors. (E)

### Answer key

Q.No	Key	Explanation
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- |    |   |  |
|----|---|--|
| 1. | B | The correct idiom is 'bear down' which means to overthrow or crush by force. |
| 2. | C | The correct idiom is 'brought out' which means to publish.                   |
| 3. | E | Fell back' means to retreat or yield.  |
| 4. | C | The correct idiom is 'carried on' (managed).                                 |
| 5. | B | The correct idiom is 'come round' (agree).                                   |

### Practice Exercise on diction (who / whom)

Directions: Choose the correct answer (who or whom?)

1. To \_\_\_\_ have you offered the flowers?
2. \_\_\_\_\_ wrote that beautiful love poem?
3. I just want to know \_\_\_\_ made this delicious dish.
4. Do you know the man \_\_\_\_\_ is standing there?
5. My parents will accept \_\_\_\_\_ I choose as my husband.
6. For \_\_\_\_\_ are you buying this present?
7. He is a kind of person for \_\_\_\_\_ family is very important.
8. Tell me \_\_\_\_\_ told you this wonderful news?
9. The electrician \_\_\_\_\_ I asked for assistance was helpful.



10. \_\_\_\_\_gave you permission to get into this room?

### Answer key

Q.	Explanation
No	
1.	To whom have you offered the flowers?
2.	Who wrote that beautiful love poem?
3.	I just want to know who made this delicious dish.
4.	Do you know the man who is standing there?
5.	My parents will accept whomever I choose as my husband.
6.	For whom are you buying this present?
7.	He is the kind of person for whom family is very important.
8.	Tell me, who told you this wonderful news?
9.	The electrician whom I asked for assistance was helpful.
10.	Who gave you permission to get into this room?

## **Chapter 2: Strategy to Approach Sentence correction Question**

### **2.1 Strategy to approach Sentence Correction Questions**

**1. Start solving any SC problem by reading the original sentence in its entirety.** Although it is the underlined part that can contain errors and be modified, errors often reveal themselves only when you look at the rest of the sentence.

**2. Look for errors in grammar first.** If nothing jumps out at you, focus on the key elements of the sentence; break it down into parts, and look for a subject, a verb, and perhaps an object.

Making yourself thoroughly familiar with the kinds of errors.

**3. Predict the error type** just by looking at some clues in the structure of a sentence.

- For example, if a sentence begins with a modifying phrase, your first action should be to check whether the modifier refers to the right subject.

- Similarly, whenever you spot such words as like, as, more than, or any other form of comparison, check whether the things compared are logically and structurally parallel.
- Several actions occurring at different times, which may lead to errors in verb tenses;
- A subject separated so from its verb that subject-verb agreement error occurs; or
- The use of it or they, pronouns often used incorrectly.

**A. Be aware of the meaning of the sentence.** Mistakes on SC are not limited to grammar—you must be If the meaning of the original sentence is absolutely clear and does not lend itself to different interpretations, you do not want to change it.

**B. Move on to the answer choices.** Do not read each choice separately! Rather, you need to compare answer choices by scanning them vertically and trying to spot obvious differences. For example, if you notice that three of the choices say *that of* when you need *those of*, eliminate them.

- C. **Compare the answer choices looking for further differences.** Get rid of the grammatically incorrect ones. Thus, you will be left with the right one at the end.
- D. **Check for correct expression.** Conciseness, your last resort might be to go for the shortest choice. Do not, however, start by eliminating longer choices, since the most concise answer is not always the best. Let's say you have two choices left. You have scanned them both for flaws in grammar and meaning and found none. This is the time to go for the shorter one.
- Finally, among choices that seem equally good to you, you can usually eliminate any that contain passive expressions.