

The PSAT – An Overview

5 Sections

- Two 25 minute Critical Reading sections
- Two 25 minute Math sections
- One 30 minute Writing section

Total Time 2 hours, 10 minutes

Critical Reading:

Two 25 minute critical reading sections = 48 questions

- 13 sentence completions (a.k.a. “vocabulary”)
- 35 Critical Reading questions

Writing:

One 30 minute Writing section = 39 questions

- Identifying sentence errors
- Improving sentences
- Improving paragraphs

Math:

- 28 Multiple Choice
- 10 Student Responses or Grid-ins

4 Math Categories:

- Numbers and Operations
- Algebra and Functions
- Geometry and Measurement
- Data Analysis, Statistics and Probability

Rdg. Comp.
 $5\checkmark + 5 \text{skipped} = \text{😊}$
 $5\checkmark + 5x = \text{😞}$

Timing: Move steadily through each section. Do not stress over a difficult question. Move on. Come back to it if you finish the section with time to spare. Do NOT go back to a previous section once you've moved on.

Guessing: When you can eliminate at least 2 of the 5 choices. Do not guess when you cannot eliminate any of the choices. You are penalized .25 for an incorrect answer; therefore, you should not guess blindly.

Visit the website below and sign up for the SAT question of the day, or just answer some practice questions.

<http://www.collegeboard.com/student/testing/psat/prep.html>

Raw:
 $\# \checkmark - 1/4 \#x$
Score:

benevolent / malevolent

Sentence Completion

- Try to fill in missing word(s) **before** looking at choices

- * Look for positive/negative connotations

- Look for context clues

- Watch for introductory or connecting words and phrases like "but," "not," "because," etc.

- In sentences with two blanks, make sure the words for **both** blanks make sense in the sentence.

- * Use process of elimination (POE)

- Before you mark your answer, read the complete sentence with your choice filled in.

TIPS:

- Avoid spending more than 30 seconds per sentence completion.
- It's the only part of the Critical Reading that goes from easiest to most difficult
- If there are fewer sentence completions, you know there's more reading to following and vice versa

SAMPLES OF SENTENCE COMPLETIONS:

Here are some general hints for answering Sentence Completion questions.

Each sentence below has one or two blanks, each blank indicating that something has been omitted. Beneath the sentence are five words or sets of words labeled A through E. Choose the word or set of words that, when inserted in the sentence, best fits the meaning of the sentence as a whole.

1. A discerning publishing agent can ----- promising material from a mass of submissions, separating the good from the bad.

- (A) supplant
- (B) dramatize
- (C) winnow
- (D) winnow
- (E) overhaul

context clue

2. The practice of storytelling for entertainment and instruction was at one time so widespread that it was virtually -- _____ -- .

- (A) rigorous
- (B) universal
- (C) elevating
- (D) uncommon
- (E) unknown

3. Although some think the terms "bug" and "insect" are ---- , the former term actually refers to ---- group of insects.

- (A) parallel . . an identical
- (B) precise . . an exact
- (C) interchangeable . . a particular
- (D) exclusive . . a separate
- (E) useful . . a useless

4. The advertised property, which ---- vast and unspoiled stretches, will undoubtedly ---- potential buyers who yearn for seclusion.

- (A) spans . . interfere with
- (B) abuts . . appeal to
- (C) overlooks . . infuriate
- (D) precludes . . assemble
- (E) erodes . . inspire

5. The novel's protagonist, a pearl diver, naively expects that the buyers will compete among themselves to pay him the best price for his pearl, but instead they ---- to ---- him.

- (A) venture . . reward
- (B) pretend . . praise
- (C) conspire . . reimburse
- (D) refuse . . cheat
- (E) collude . . swindle

6. The addition of descriptive details to the basic information serves to ---- the book by producing a fuller account.

- (A) invalidate
- (B) objectify
- (C) incite
- (D) celebrate
- (E) enrich

CRITICAL READING

REMEMBER: Certain questions are easier and/or faster to answer. Instead of answering the questions sequentially, consider which questions you're more likely to answer quickly and correctly.

Go to Qs! 😊

Plug in answers

"Friends"

-**Vocabulary in Context** : (in line __, the word "__" most nearly means..) – if you are short on time, these can be answered without reading the whole passage

-**Pinpointable** (gives you the line # where the answer is) – go back and pinpoint your answer to ensure accuracy

-**Fact questions** ("according to the passage" or "according to the author")

-**Main Idea/Author's Purpose** – Read the italics, topic sentences, and last sentence in the passage. This can be done quickly if time is short, so these are "go to" questions.



"Foes"

-**Inferential** ("suggests," "best illustrates," "most likely")

-**Cross-over questions** that compare Passage 1 with Passage 2 (these are often inferential as well – a double whammy!) – for example, "How would the critics in Passage 1 most likely respond to the students mentioned in Line 4-10 of Passage 2?"

-**Triple Statements** – not as common, but time consuming.

-**LEAST/EXCEPT** – time consuming, but you can still find evidence to rule out the other answers.

Read between lines



Name: _____

Grammar-licious!

Grammar Practice

Modifiers:

1. Lecturing at the university, read the poetry of Margaret Atwood was the advice Professor Clark gave her audience.
 - A. Read the poetry of Margaret Atwood was the advice Professor Clark gave her audience
 - B. The poetry of Margaret Atwood was what Professor Clark advised her audience to read
 - C. Her audience was advised by Professor Clark to read the poetry of Margaret Atwood
 - D. Margaret Atwood's poetry, advised Professor Clark, was what her audience should read
 - E. Professor Clark advised her audience to read the poetry of Margaret Atwood (1.10.3)

2. Although criticized by a few for her daredevil aviation escapades, most people viewed Amelia Earhart as a skillful pilot.
 - A. Most people viewed Amelia Earhart as a skillful pilot
 - B. Most people viewed Amelia Earhart to be a skillful pilot
 - C. A skillful pilot was what most people viewed Amelia Earhart as
 - D. Amelia Earhart was viewed by most people as a skillful pilot
 - E. Amelia Earhart, a skillful pilot in the view of most people

3. Of all the states represented at the conference, the governor of Missouri was the only one to present plans for enforcing the new regulations.
 - A. The governor of Missouri was the only one to present
 - B. Making the governor from Missouri the only one to present
 - C. Missouri's governor only presented
 - D. Missouri's governor presented the only
 - E. Missouri was the only one whose governor presented

Subject-Verb Agreement

4. The harmful effects of smoking on the vascular system ^{sub} is increasingly well documented.
 - A. is increasingly well documented
 - B. is more and more documented
 - C. are increasingly well documented
 - D. are increasing in better documentation
 - E. has increased in better documentation

5. The number of awards given this year to biochemists accentuate the significant gains being made in the study of chemistry of living organisms. No error (540)

Subject [] *Propositional phrase* [] *S*

A B C
D E

6. Evidence from surveys and interviews show friendships made in high school tend to last longer than those made in college.

A. Show friendships made in high school tend to last
B. Show high school friendships that tend to last
C. Is showing high school friendships tending to last
D. Shows that friendships made in high school tend to last
E. Shows friendships in high school tend to last

Subject [] *S*

Pronoun-Antecedent Agreement

7. Until it can be replaced by a faster, more efficient, and more economical means of transportation, trucks will carry most of the freight within and through metropolitan areas. No error. (540)

A B C D E

then

8. The reason first novels are so often their writers' best work is that it draws upon all the experiences of childhood.

A. is that it draws upon
B. is that these first efforts draw upon
C. is because of these first efforts drawing from
D. is because of them drawing upon
E. is their drawing from

they

9. Few issues of public policy are as likely to provide widespread interest as that involving possible danger to the health or safety of children. No error.

A B C D E

those

Parallel Structure

10. Walt Disney's first success was his third Mickey Mouse film in which Disney produced a cartoon with sound, and Mickey was made to talk.

- A. sound, and Mickey was made to talk
- B. sound and making Mickey talk
- C. sound, with the result being Mickey talking
- D. sound in where Mickey talks
- E. Sound and made Mickey talk (558)

produced and made

11. The tornado ripped through the central part of town, toppling small buildings, uprooting trees, and power lines were snapped.

- A. power lines were snapped
- B. power lines snapping
- C. snapping power lines
- D. snapped power lines
- E. power lines snapped

Pronoun Case (Objective vs. Nominative):

12. For we students, concern about impending tuition hikes was even more acute than

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| A | B | C |
| D | E | |
- apprehension about final exams. No error

Key:

- | | | |
|------|------|-------|
| 1. E | 5. B | 9. C |
| 2. D | 6. D | 10. E |
| 3. E | 7. A | 11. C |
| 4. C | 8. B | 12. A |

**Subject – Verb Agreement/
Pronoun-Antecedent Agreement**

Singular	Singular OR Plural	Plural
Anyone Anybody No one Nobody One Someone Somebody Everyone Everybody Each If both subjects are singular connected by: Or Nor Either...or Neither...nor	Some Most All Any None *Depends on the prepositional phrase following the subject (Some of the <i>cake</i> was left. – “cake” is singular) (Most of the <i>boys</i> participated in the game. – “boys” is plural) Either...or Neither...nor *The verb agrees with the noun closest to the verb (Neither the teachers nor the <i>student</i> knows where to go) vs. (Neither the student nor the <i>teachers</i> know where to go)	Both Few Many Others Several

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Verb Tense:

***Present Perfect:** *Began in the past and continued into the future
(ex. *I have taught for over thirty years.*)

or

*Expresses action that has been completed at an indefinite time.

(ex. *He has finished eating **already.***)

***Past Perfect:** to express action completed before another past action in the sentence.

(ex. *I **had taught** for thirty years when I **retired.***)

Future Perfect: to express action that is completed before another future action.

(ex. *I **will have finished** painting before you **arrive.***)

Infinitive – (is to + the original form of the verb) to express an action that follows another action.

(ex. *John said that he hoped **to arrive** soon.*)

Pronoun Case:

Singular

	Nominative	Objective	Possessive
1st person	I	me	my, mine
2nd person	you	you	your, yours
3rd person	he, she, it, who	him, her, it whom	his, hers, its, whose

Plural

	Nominative	Objective	Possessive
1st person	We	Us	Our, ours
2nd person	You	You	Your, yours
3rd person	they, who	them, whom	their, theirs, whose

- (to) the right
- (on) the right
- (under) the blue dot.
- (above) the green dot
- (on) the SB
- (in) the middle
- (by)

Carlos gave
the ball
to Jack and me I.

object of prep

Objective/Nominative

↓ ↓

Predicate Subject

(verb + everything else)

Sandy and me (I) are looking

S-Verb Agreement for shells.

* Subject.

A box of matches (is) are [on the table.]

prep

Nominative (Subject)

prepositional

Complete Qs in Book ← Grammar Rules Do Now!!

(examples taken from College Board SAT Prep Book)

B. VERB TENSES - He has finished writing his paper an hour ago. (X)

For the past hundred years or more, Yellowstone National Park was a kind of
 A Sociological laboratory in which North Americans have been exploring the
 C meaning of the national-park concept. No Error. (7.3.25)
 D E

Handwritten notes: "has been" and "(it still is)" with a circle around "was".

G. PARALLEL STRUCTURE- When I am sick, I love sitting by the fire, reading a good mystery and eat chicken soup. (X)

Look for a series in a sentence and check for pattern in parts of speech:

The classroom was filled with an exhausted teacher, screaming kids, and the hamster got loose.

Handwritten notes: "ADS N ADS N" above "exhausted" and "screaming"; "N V ADS" above "hamster got loose".

A talented and versatile artist, Twyla Tharp has been a dancer, choreographer, and a collaborator.
 and collaborated on various productions. No Error. (1.7.18)
 D E

Handwritten notes: "ADS N ADS N" above "talented and versatile" and "has been"; "N N" above "dancer, choreographer"; "V prep ADS N" above "and collaborated"; "N N" above "a dancer, choreographer, and a collaborator".

Not Only...But Also – see page 12

A healthy economy can be measured not only by the growth of business but it has a psychological effect on people.

(A) It has a
 (B) As well in the
 (C) Also by the
 (D) Also the
 (E) In the way of having a

Handwritten notes: "correlative conj." with an arrow pointing to "not only...but"; "Not Only → but also" with arrows pointing to "not only" and "but".

H. ADJECTIVE/ADVERB

She ate too quick and then got a stomach ache. (X)

I ran _____ at today's race (good/well).

Because I practice often, I'm a _____ runner (good/well).

I. COMPARISONS ("APPLES TO ORANGES")

The juniors at our school scored much higher on the PSAT than your school. (X)

The novel *Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austen was once more widely read and was more popular in high schools in the United States than Charlotte Bronte. No error

A → the novels of B

C D E

N. MISPLACED MODIFIER - *The designer dress was located by the saleswoman with the beaded sash. (X)*

Burdened with three pieces of luggage and a pair of skis, Sarah's search for a baggage cart was desperate.

(A) Sarah's search for a baggage cart was desperate
 (B) Sarah's desperate search was for a baggage cart
 (C) A baggage cart was what Sarah desperately searched for
 (D) A baggage cart for which Sarah desperately searched
 (E) Sarah searched desperately for a baggage cart

(1.7.2)

A. SUBJECT-VERB AGREEMENT – *Neither of the twins want to play football. (X)*

The governor's aides are convinced that the announcement of the investigation, coming just days before the filing deadline, were calculated to discourage the governor from running for reelection. No error

A was verb. C

B D

(1.7.23)

Other Key Rules:

K. Redundancy

L. Wordiness

M. Double Negative

P. Words Commonly Confused

Q. Who, Which, That

Jane and me/ (I)
^{am}
are looking for
an apt.)