



## Welcome

Welcome to the SAT Writing portion of the Prep Expert Course! Many students are under the impression that SAT Writing is no longer a part of the New SAT. This false assumption stems from the fact that when the SAT was out of 1600 points previously (prior to 2005), it only had Math and Reading, but no Writing. However, on the redesigned 1600-version of the SAT, the Reading and Writing sections of the exam have been combined into one 800-point score. In addition, many students and parents are under the impression that the SAT Essay reflects your SAT Writing score. However, this is not true. In fact, your SAT Essay does not affect your SAT Writing score at all.

Here are the basics of what you need to know for the SAT Writing portion of the SAT.

### Grammar

The SAT Writing portion of the exam primarily tests grammar. This means you need to know how to properly use pronouns, conjunctions, punctuation, etc. We will cover all of the grammar rules you need to know for the SAT. Most of the grammar rules have not changed all that much from the previous 2400-version of the SAT.

### Clarity

The SAT Writing portion of the exam now has a greater emphasis on clarity. More than ever, it is important to understand the meaning of the Writing passages. You should determine whether the author is conveying her message in the clearest way possible. Clarity has to do with the author's development, organization, and communication of ideas.

## Effective Strategies

Our goal with this section of the Prep Expert course is to give you effective strategies to tackle the SAT Writing section. After you learn all 20 Writing Expert Strategies, you should be well-prepared to tackle any grammar or clarity issue on the SAT Writing section.



# SAT WRITING

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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WHAT IS THE FORMAT?

1

WHAT'S DIFFERENT?

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HOW IS SAT WRITING SCORED?

3

IS SAT WRITING EASIER?

4

WHY BE LITERAL?

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WHY IS SAT WRITING NOW GROUPED WITH  
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WHAT IS THE BIGGEST MISTAKE STUDENTS  
MAKE ON THE SAT WRITING SECTION?

7

# What Is The Format? 1

SAT Writing Format	
Time	35 Minutes
Questions	44 Questions
> Expression of Ideas	> 24 Questions
> Standard English Conventions	> 20 Questions
Passages	4 Passages (400-450 Words Per Passage)
	> 1 History/Social Studies Passage
	> 1 Humanities Passage
	> 1 Science Passage
	> 1 Career Passage

The second section of every New SAT will be a 35-minute Writing section with 44 questions.

## Time

You have more time than ever on the SAT Writing multiple-choice portion of the exam. However, you also have more to read. Previous SAT writing multiple-choice questions were single, unrelated sentences. Now, you must make grammar and clarity corrections within the context of passages. Making sure you understand these passages will likely take more time.

## Questions

Luckily, there are fewer SAT writing multiple-choice questions than ever. However, most of these questions (24) are related to Expression of Ideas, or clarity. Clarity refers to how well an author develops, organizes, and conveys ideas. Many of the Reading Expert Strategies will be helpful in answering the Expression of Ideas Writing questions. There are still 20 Standard English Convention questions, or grammar questions. We will teach all of the grammar rules you need to know to ace the SAT Writing section.

## Passages

There will be one of each of the following passages on the SAT Writing portion of the exam: history/social studies, humanities, science, and career. This does not mean that you will need to answer a science or history question. Instead, your passage may be related to a science or historical topic, and you will be expected to correct any clarity or grammatical issues related to it.

## What's Different? 2

There are some key differences between the new SAT Writing portion of the 1600-version of the SAT and the SAT Writing section on the 2400-version of the SAT.

2400 SAT Writing	New SAT Writing
800 Points	400 Points
Essay = 1/3 of Score	Essay Not Included in Score
Isolated Sentences	Passages
Identifying Sentence Errors & Improving Sentences	Standard English Conventions
Improving Paragraphs	Expression of Ideas

You might think that the SAT Writing section is less important than it used to be since it only accounts for 400 points on the New SAT (compared to 800 on the old SAT). However, the multiple-choice portion of the SAT Writing section actually makes up a larger percentage of your score than ever:  $400/1600 = 25\%$ . 25% of your entire SAT score is due solely to writing multiple-choice questions. On the previous 2400-version of the SAT, the writing multiple-choice section only made up 22% of your entire SAT score. Because the SAT Essay accounted for 1/3 of your SAT Writing score out of 800, the multiple-choice portion of the Writing section was only worth 530 points. 530 points out of 2400 is 22%. Therefore, answering questions correctly on the SAT writing multiple-choice portion of the exam is now more important than ever.

One of the ways that you will be able to answer questions on the SAT Writing correctly is to improve your ability to comprehend passages. We will teach you how to do this in the SAT Reading section. Unlike the 2400-version of the SAT in which almost all of the Writing questions were isolated sentences, the new format of the exam requires that students be able to correct sentences within



passages. Without fully understanding passages, students will have a hard time correcting the grammar and clarity issues related to sentences. It is more important than ever that students perfect the art of reading passages.

Finally, there were two main types of questions on the 2400-version of the SAT: Improving Sentences and Identifying Sentence Errors. These were isolated questions that essentially had students correct grammar issues. On the new 1600-version of the SAT, these grammar questions are categorized as “Standard English Convention” questions. However, these questions will be mixed in with “Expression of Ideas” questions, which focus on clarity issues. These questions are similar to what the Improving Paragraphs section of the previous version of the SAT had. Nevertheless, the content of the SAT Writing has remained largely the same.

## How Is SAT Writing Scored? 3

You will receive many different scores on your score report related to SAT Writing.

However, I would not pay attention to most of them, except your Evidenced-Based Reading & Writing Section Score out of 800 and your Total SAT Score out of 1600. But for the sake of completeness, I will review what each of the scores means here.

### Subscores (1-15)

Standard English Conventions

This subscore indicates how well you performed on grammar questions.

Expression of Ideas

This subscore indicates how well you performed on clarity questions.

### Test Score (10-40)

Writing

This subscore indicates how well you performed on all SAT Writing and Language questions.

### Cross-Test Score (10-40)

Analysis in Science

This cross-test score indicates how well you performed on science passages and questions across the SAT Writing, SAT Reading, and SAT Math sections.

### Analysis in History/Social Science

This cross-test score indicates how well you performed on history/social science passages and questions across the SAT Writing, SAT Reading, and SAT Math sections.

### Section Score (200-800)

#### Evidenced-Based Reading & Writing

This section score indicates how well you performed on both the SAT Writing and SAT Reading sections together.

### Total Score (400-1600)

#### Reading & Writing + Mathematics

This is your SAT score out of 1600 that you will remember for the rest of your life.

## Is SAT Writing Easier? 4

The New SAT Writing section is easier than the SAT Writing section on the 2400-version of the exam. There are two primary reasons for this: less content and more time. On the new SAT, there is less content a student has to know in order to do well. There are fewer grammar rules that you need to master. You also have about 5 extra seconds per question. While 5 seconds may not sound like a lot of time, if you multiply that over 44 questions, you have a few extra minutes of time. In addition, there are only 4 answer choices per question (rather than 5 on the 2400-version of the SAT) leaving you with even more time.

The only aspect of the SAT Writing section that is now more difficult is that you have to read passages throughout the section. Previously, students could get away with not fully understanding the meaning of a sentence because that question would be isolated. However, not understanding a sentence (or worse, a paragraph) on the SAT Writing section can now be detrimental to your score. It's imperative that students master Reading Expert Strategies in order to ace the SAT Writing section as well.

## Why Be Literal? 5

On the SAT Writing, it is crucial that you take everything literally. This means that you must not read into anything the SAT has stated. Cut the SAT Writing section no slack. Whatever the text says is what it means. Nothing more, nothing less. Learning how to interpret passages literally is one of the best ways to improve your SAT Writing score.

The problem is that we have very bad habits of not taking things literally. In everyday language, we are accustomed to not taking what a friend says literally. We do this because we know what our friend means. This cannot happen on the SAT. Assume that you have no idea about what the SAT Writing passages are trying to say. Instead, you only know what they actually are saying. For example, take a look at the following sentence:

Do you remember that time where Jason hiked to the top of the mountain?

Now, if your friend said the above sentence to you, you probably wouldn't blink an eye. Sounds like a fine sentence. However, on the SAT Writing section, there should be all kinds of alarms going off in your head! "Where" is a relative pronoun that can only refer to geographic locations. You cannot use "where" when referring to time. Instead, you need to use the relative pronoun "when." We will learn more about this rule later. But for now, realize that SAT Writing errors are much easier to spot when your mind is thinking literally.

Let's try another example:

It is amazing how colorful the sky is.

Again, in everyday language this sentence sounds fine. However, on the SAT Writing section, you need to think literally. What is the “it” referring to? Unclear. The sentence may be improved by clearly stating that “The colorful sky is amazing.”

Let’s try one last example:

I hope to win the art contest next year like Sarah’s masterpiece did this year.

Once again, if a friend simply said this to you in everyday conversation, you wouldn’t think too much of it. But on the SAT Writing section, the above sentence is absolutely unacceptable. Think about the literal meaning of the sentence. The comparison being made is between “I” and “Sarah’s masterpiece.” Can you compare a person to a work of art? No! We must compare a person to a person or a work of art to a work of art. We will learn more about comparison errors later.

In summation, a literal mindset will be essential to your success on the SAT Writing section. You must be a stickler. Do not cut the SAT any slack. The text means what it says and that’s it. Nothing more and nothing less.

## Why Is SAT Writing Now Grouped With SAT Reading? 6

You might be wondering why the SAT decided to combine the SAT Writing and SAT Reading sections rather than have each as a separate section like on the 2400-version of the SAT. Well, the primary reason is that the SAT wanted to go back to a 1600-point format. In addition, it actually does make sense for the SAT to make this move because of how it has structured the new SAT Writing section.

The SAT Writing section consists of questions that test Standard English Conventions and questions that test Expression of Ideas. Questions that relate to Standard English Conventions test sentence structure, conventions of usage, and conventions of punctuation. These are essentially grammar questions that made up the bulk of the SAT Writing section on the 2400-version of the SAT.

However, questions that relate to Expression of Ideas test development, organization, and effective use of ideas. Because these questions now make up the bulk of the SAT Writing section (55%), it makes sense that SAT Writing is now grouped with SAT Reading.

Clarity questions are more similar to SAT Reading passage comprehension questions than they are to grammar questions. More than ever, mastering SAT Reading strategies will be essential to your success on the SAT Writing section.

## What Is The Biggest Mistake Students Make On The SAT Writing Section? 7

The biggest mistake students make on the SAT Writing section is trusting their ears. You cannot select answer choices based on what sounds correct. Most students who have never studied for the SAT approach this section by choosing what sounds correct. This is a flawed approach. SAT test writers are really good at making answer choices that sound terrible be correct and answer choices that sound good be incorrect. Do not trust your ear when it comes to the SAT Writing section.

Instead, the most effective way to approach the SAT Writing section is to identify actual grammatical and clarity issues on each question. When you approach a particular SAT Writing question, you should know exactly what grammar rule or clarity rule is being tested. The only way to know this is to learn all of the writing issues that can appear on the SAT. Luckily, there is only a limited number of grammar and clarity rules that you need to know for the SAT. And we will teach you all of them.

The way my mind works when I approach SAT Writing questions is by grouping questions into “buckets.” Buckets represent the category of issue that I believe the SAT is testing with a particular question. For example, I might group a question into the parallelism bucket, the tense bucket, the organization bucket, or the idiom bucket depending on what rule I believe the SAT is testing.

Grouping questions into “buckets” not only helps clarify the question for me, but it also increases my confidence that I am answering the question correctly. If you have no idea what bucket a particular question falls into, then you really have no idea whether you are answering that question correctly. Group each question into a targeted bucket rather than flying blind.



## Passage Approach

I have already emphasized how important the ability to read and understand passages is to the SAT Writing section. Therefore, I have dedicated this entire section to teaching the Prep Expert approach to passages. The problem with passage-based questions is that no one ever teaches you the best way to read and comprehend a passage on a standardized exam. Yet, standardized exams are full of passage-based questions. For example, here are just a few of the major standardized exams that I have taken in my life that have had passage-based questions on them.

- SAT
- PSAT
- AP Exams
- SAT Subject Exams
- MCAT
- GMAT
- USMLE Step 1 & Step 2 (United States Medical Licensing Exams)

Fortunately, I came up with an effective strategy to tackle passage-based questions early on in my high school career. This strategy served me well for many of the above exams. Many students are not so lucky. They simply do not have a strategy to tackle passage-based questions. Let's examine some of the possible approaches students try on passage-based reading.

## Possible Passage-Based Approaches

### (1) Questions-Only

My biggest issue with passage-based questions in high school was that I never had enough time. I was a slow reader and often couldn't finish the section in time. So one of the first passage-based approaches I tried was to read only the questions associated with a passage and skip reading the passage altogether. This would save a tremendous amount of time because I would only read parts of the passage that were related to particular questions. This strategy is particularly appealing for the New SAT Writing section because many of the questions are asking about isolated issues in particular sentences, rather than asking about the passage overall. Many students will choose this passage-based approach for the New SAT Writing section. The problem with this strategy is that students will not have a comprehensive understanding of the passage, which will be detrimental to answering the Expression of Ideas questions that make up the majority of the New SAT Writing section.

### (2) Questions-First

Another approach that many students will take with respect to the New SAT Writing section is to read all of the questions first, then read the passage. The theory behind this approach is that you will know what to focus on while you are reading the passage since you have already read the questions. There are 11 questions associated with each SAT Writing passage. So a student would read 11 questions, read the passage, then answer the questions.

The biggest problem with this approach is lack of time. You are essentially reading every question twice. This will take a significant amount of time that you simply do not have during a test like the SAT. In addition, trying to remember what 11 questions were about at once is no easy task. As you take the SAT, you can think of your mind being split into active memory and thinking power. The more items you try to stuff into your active memory, the less thinking power you have. Trying to remember 11

questions will use up a lot of active memory and decrease your thinking power, resulting in answering many questions incorrectly.

### (3) Passage-First

Another common approach that many students will use to tackle the New SAT Writing section is to read the entire passage first, then answer the questions. The theory behind this strategy is that if you have a good understanding of the passage first, then answering the questions will be easier. This approach is probably the most common approach to tackling passage-based questions in general among high school students. It makes sense: read the passage first; read the questions second.

However, the major pitfall with this strategy is once again time. This approach requires extra reading. You read the passage once, but when you get to the questions, you will often have to reread the parts of the passage that the question is referring to. In addition, you are trying to remember that entire passage that you just read. Your mindset is “I just read that entire passage, so I’m not going to let myself forget it.” Once again, doing this takes up space in your active memory during the exam, which results in decreased thinking power, and increased incorrect questions.

So if none of the above passage approaches works, what does? Finally, I figured out the best approach for me in high school, and I think it will also be the best approach for you.

## Chunk Approach

The chunk approach allows us to both save time and understand passages better. I know...it sounds too good to be true. But before I explain the Chunk Approach, I will warn you that it is going to be something you probably haven't done before. Therefore, it will not be comfortable to implement. Breaking old habits is never easy. You will likely have some resistance to using the Chunk Approach at first. You will want to answer passage-based questions using the strategy you have always used. But remember that if you want to change your score, you have to change the way you take the test. So please give the Chunk Approach a try.

Here is how the Chunk Approach works for the SAT Writing section:

- (1) Find PKP
- (2) Answer Questions Associated with Paragraph 1
- (3) Read Paragraph 2
- (4) Answer Questions Associated with Paragraph 2
- (5) Read Paragraph 3
- (6) Answer Questions Associated with Paragraph 3
- (7) Repeat Until You Have Answered All Questions

Essentially, the Chunk Approach has you reading bite-sized pieces of the passage. On the New SAT Writing section, these pieces are 1 paragraph long. After reading each paragraph, you then answer the question(s) associated with that particular paragraph. In other words, the Chunk Approach with

respect to the New SAT Writing section is really just a Paragraph Approach. This will change slightly for the SAT Reading section, but the concept behind the Chunk Approach will remain the same.

The biggest benefit of using the Chunk Approach is that it reduces the amount of information your brain has to process at once. One of the biggest challenges I ran into when I was trying to ace passage-based questions in high school was the amount of information I had to absorb at once. I would often be overwhelmed with the amount of reading I had to do. With the Chunk Approach, your reading has been chopped down into discrete paragraphs. This is advantageous because you can focus on the ideas presented in a single paragraph. With respect to SAT Writing, you can also focus on the particular questions associated with a single paragraph. This is much less overwhelming than trying to store an entire passage at once in your active memory, which would leave almost no thinking power for you to answer questions.

The Chunk Approach also prevents a lot of rereading. Imagine the opposite “Passage-First” Approach. In the Passage-First Approach, you read the passage once in the beginning and then reread parts of the passage that you already read as you answer questions because you probably forgot what particular parts of a passage were about. With the Chunk Approach, the amount of rereading that you need to do is significantly reduced. Because you are so focused on a particular paragraph’s ideas, you don’t need to reacquaint yourself with the context of the passage when you are answering a question.

If you are concerned that the Chunk Approach won’t be effective when you have to answer more general questions such as those that relate to the main topic of a paragraph or conclusion of the passage, there is no need to worry. Even when you have to answer general questions that are not necessarily attached to a specific sentence, the Chunk Approach is useful. For example, let’s say that a question asks you about the conclusion of the SAT Writing passage. The Chunk Approach fully equips you to answer this kind of question because you just read the entire passage paragraph-by-paragraph. Your understanding of the overall passage should be solid enough to answer the question related to the conclusion.

Use the Chunk Approach on every SAT Writing passage that you come across from now on. There are four writing passages on the SAT, each with 11 associated questions. And you should break down every one of those passages into manageable paragraphs that you can easily analyze.

The only exception to the rule of reading 1 paragraph at a time is when you are answering a question that asks about the last sentence of a paragraph. When dealing with the last sentence of a paragraph, you should always read the beginning of the next paragraph. The SAT will want you to transition between paragraphs appropriately. If you haven't read the next paragraph, it will be difficult to transition between the two paragraphs.

As you may know, I really believe in teaching through examples. So below is an SAT Writing passage that we will apply the Chunk Approach to throughout this section of the course.

### Expert Example SAT Writing Passage

#### Occupational Injuries

Counting of occupational injuries and illnesses **1** are complex; potential issues includes employee fear about reporting, lack of employer awareness of reporting requirements, complex definitions of workplace injuries, difficulty determining whether an injury actually occurred at work or is otherwise work related, **2** having disputes over responsibility, measurement issues, and more. The Bureau of Labor Statistics provides the nation's official statistics on workplace injuries and illnesses, including estimates of the number and rate of nonfatal injuries and illnesses by industry and state and, for selected cases, details about the worker involved and the circumstances of the incident. These data are based on Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) guidelines, **3** set of definitions and explanations used by employers nationwide, and to maintain workplace safety records for their establishment. The Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 (the OSH Act) requires employers selected by BLS to maintain these records, which are used by employers to complete the annual

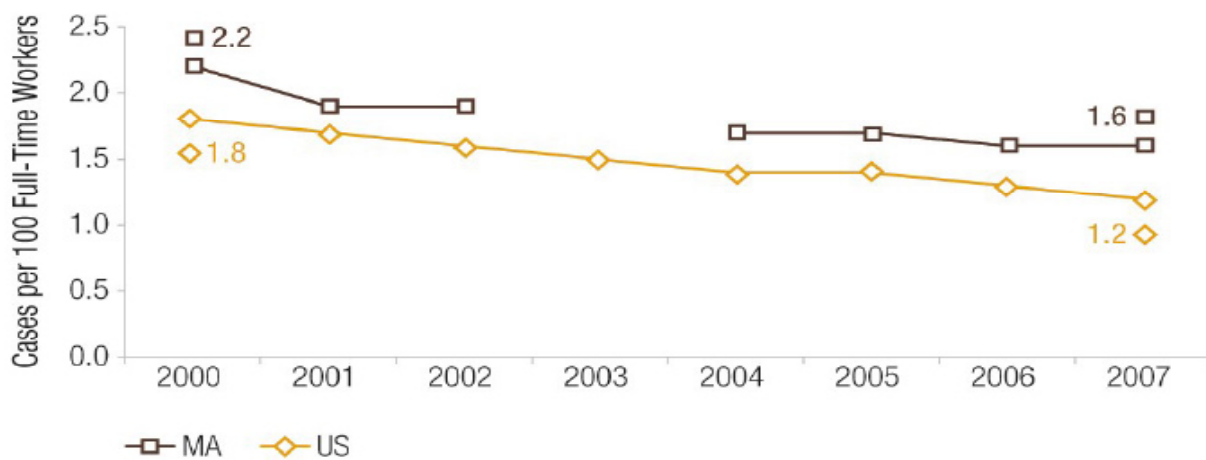
Survey of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses (SOII). From time to time, the completeness of the SOII estimates has been examined, most recently through a series of BLS-sponsored research projects. The goals and results of that research are **4** this articles subject.

More than once since its inception in the early 1970s, **5** the BLS occupational safety and health statistics program has been the subject of scrutiny, often leading to program changes. **6** Next, concern in the late 1980s that a sample survey could not provide a complete count of workplace fatalities led to the development of the BLS Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries (CFOI), which has provided a comprehensive count of fatal work injuries annually since 1992. Also in 1992, BLS expanded the SOII to include “case and demographic” details. **7** These data elaborate on the worker involved (including occupation, age, and gender) and the circumstances surrounding the incident (including nature of injury and part of body affected). Since 1992, case and demographic data have only been available for cases that result in at least 1 day away from work, although BLS recently began publishing the results of pilot tests of **8** it **9** for: cases that result in no days away from work but lead to a job transfer or restricted work.

Concerned about BLS workplace injury and illness data in the mid-2000s, **10** individual cases were attempted to be combated by researchers from the SOII in selected states with case data from state workers’ compensation records. The results varied, with estimates of an undercount ranging from 20 percent to 70 percent of cases depending upon the research methodology and state studied. Other research and analysis concluded that the size of the undercount is small. On the heels of this research, and media reports of unsafe work places, Congress held hearings on the subject and later identified funding for BLS to follow up and expand on the previous research so as to understand the nature and magnitude of any undercount and attempt to identify solutions. At the same time, Congress provided funding to OSHA and to the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health to conduct complementary research into issues surrounding the completeness of work injury data.

BLS staff, several state agencies, and one university researcher conducted this initial round of research over 3 years. At that time, BLS convened to hear presentations on research results and to develop consensus recommendations for moving forward. Interestingly, **11** Massachusetts (MA) reported results lower than the national average.

Figure 9.3 **Nonfatal Occupational Injuries and Illnesses Resulting in Lost Workdays**



Source: US Dept. of Labor Bureau of Labor Statistics, Survey of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses.  
\*The MA rate decreased over time but was significantly higher than the US rate ( $p < 0.05$ ).



## Find PKP

As you may remember from the SAT Essay section, PKP stands for the Passage's Key Point. On the SAT Writing section, it's crucial that we start attacking each passage by finding the PKP. Clarifying the main idea of the passage at the beginning will make life so much easier as we tackle the associated questions. Remember that you can typically come up with a good PKP after reading the first paragraph of a passage. If you are unable to synthesize a PKP after reading the first paragraph, you should either continue reading into the second paragraph until the PKP becomes apparent or restart from the top in case you zoned out.

There are two benefits to physically writing down a PKP for the passage. First, comprehension of the passage increases because you will have a central theme to focus around. Second, answering questions will become easier because many of the Expression of Ideas questions are related to the main idea of the passage.

Let's practice finding the PKP on our Expert Example SAT Writing passage.

Counting of occupational injuries and illnesses **1** are complex; potential issues includes employee fear about reporting, lack of employer awareness of reporting requirements, complex definitions of workplace injuries, difficulty determining whether an injury actually occurred at work or is otherwise work related, **2** having disputes over responsibility, measurement issues, and more. The Bureau of Labor Statistics provides the nation's official statistics on workplace injuries and illnesses, including estimates of the number and rate of nonfatal injuries and illnesses by industry and state and, for selected cases, details about the worker involved and the circumstances of the incident. These data are based on Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) guidelines, **3** set of definitions and explanations used by employers nationwide, and to maintain workplace safety records for their establishment. The Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 (the OSH Act) requires employers

selected by BLS to maintain these records, which are used by employers to complete the annual Survey of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses (SOII). From time to time, the completeness of the SOII estimates has been examined, most recently through a series of BLS-sponsored research projects. The goals and results of that research are [4 this articles subject](#).

PKP: Workplace injury research

## BOSS

The next concept that is crucial to share before we dive into the Expert Writing Strategies is BOSS: Build (Your) Own Simple Solution. BOSS means that you should come up with your own solution prior to looking at the answer choices. This strategy is the key that unlocked the SAT Reading section for me when I was in high school. SAT Reading used to be my worst subject before I learned how to appropriately use BOSS. However, on the SAT Writing section, BOSS is now necessary as well because SAT Writing has become so similar to SAT Reading.

In order to use BOSS on the SAT Writing section, you should be owlshly alert as you are reading each paragraph of the passage using the Chunk Approach. As you come across underlined portions of sentences, your mind should be going through its Rolodex of possible grammar and clarity rules that might be violated. If you spot an error, you should immediately correct it on the passage itself. Fixing the issue prior to looking at the answer choices means that you are appropriately using BOSS on the SAT Writing section. By doing so, you do not give the answer choices a chance to trick you with different possibilities.

While you might think that BOSS will take longer because you have to spend time writing down possible corrections on the passage, this strategy actually saves time overall. While you might spend a little bit more time on the frontend coming up with a solution, you save a tremendous amount of time on the backend. You save time because you no longer have to read all of the answer choices in a question. You immediately know what the answer is. In addition, the SAT doesn't have a chance to distract you with wrong, but enticing answer choices. SAT test writers are really good at making incorrect answer choices look appealing. But if you already know what you're looking for, then you won't get distracted. This is particularly great because you won't get frustrated during the exam debating between answer choices.

I compare SAT questions to a treasure hunt. Imagine going on a treasure hunt without knowing what

the treasure looks like. If you don't know that the treasure you are looking for is a gold coin, then you might pick up a silver coin, a bronze coin, or even a wood coin and call it a day. But if you have a picture that shows you what the gold coin looks like, then you won't stop your treasure hunt until you find that gold coin. Your BOSS is your photo of the gold coin. Knowing exactly what answer you are looking for before you look at the answer choices is like having a picture of the gold coin before you go on your treasure hunt.

BOSS is pretty simple to use on the SAT Reading question. Read a question, anticipate the answer by creating a BOSS, and find the answer choice closest to your BOSS. But how do you use BOSS on the SAT Writing section? There are two ways. First, you can use BOSS during the reading of the passage. When there is a glaring grammatical error in the passage, go ahead and correct it directly on the passage. Second, you can use BOSS after you've read the question associated with a particular underlined portion of the passage. Sometimes a sentence will not have a glaring error as you are reading it. Typically, these will be Expression of Ideas questions that deal more with the clarity of sentences. In these cases, you can come up with a BOSS solution after you've read the question and know what the SAT is asking for.

Let's take another look at the first paragraph of our Expert Example SAT Writing passage and examine how we would use BOSS as we are reading.

Counting of occupational injuries and illnesses **1** are complex; potential issues includes employee fear about reporting, lack of employer awareness of reporting requirements, complex definitions of workplace injuries, difficulty determining whether an injury actually occurred at work or is otherwise work related, **2** having disputes over responsibility, measurement issues, and more. The Bureau of Labor Statistics provides the nation's official statistics on workplace injuries and illnesses, including estimates of the number and rate of nonfatal injuries and illnesses by industry and state and, for selected cases, details about the worker involved and the circumstances of the incident. These data are based on Occupational

Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) guidelines, **3** set of definitions and explanations used by employers nationwide, and to maintain workplace safety records for their establishment. The Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 (the OSH Act) requires employers selected by BLS to maintain these records, which are used by employers to complete the annual Survey of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses (SOII). From time to time, the completeness of the SOII estimates has been examined, most recently through a series of BLS-sponsored research projects. The goals and results of that research are **4** this articles subject.

As I read the first paragraph of this passage, I would make the following BOSS corrections.

- (1) The sentence should read "Counting...is complex"
- (2) I am not sure, but I think there is a parallelism error here.
- (3) It's odd that this phrase is set off as an appositive, but I'm not sure how to correct it.
- (4) The sentence should read "article's subject"



# SAT WRITING

## EXPERT STRATEGIES

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CROSS OUT PREPOSITIONS (COP)

1

AVOID SINGULAR-PLURAL MISMATCHES

2

PRESERVE PARALLELISM

3

REMOVE NONESSENTIAL APPOSITIVES

4

PROVE POSSESSIVES

5

ELIMINATE EXCESS

6

USE LOGICAL TRANSITIONS

7

IMPROVE PARAGRAPH COHESION

8

CHECK PRONOUN PRECISION

9

PUNCTUATE APPROPRIATELY

10

MODIFY APPROPRIATELY

11

INTERPRET DATA

12

STAY ACTIVE

13

KEEP TENSE AGREEMENT

14

COMPARE CORRECTLY

15

USE PRECISE WORD CHOICE

16

99% WRONG

17

KEEP CONSISTENT STYLE

18

UNDERSTAND THE WRITING GOAL

19

STAY ORGANIZED

20

21

22

23

24

25



## Cross Out Prepositions (COP) 1

### Expert Strategy

The most important strategy for the SAT Writing section is to Cross Out Prepositions (COP). Grammatical writing errors are almost never within a prepositional phrase. If you cross out prepositions, you will be able to quickly identify writing errors. Prepositional phrases are often only there to add unnecessary reading that distracts you from identifying the grammatical writing error in a problem. By focusing on the simplified sentence that does not contain prepositional phrases, you will be able to identify grammatical writing errors more easily.

Before we can practice crossing out prepositions, we need to understand what a preposition is. The formal definition for a preposition is a word governing the relation between other words. I remember what a preposition is by simply thinking of anything that a rabbit can do to a log. For example, a rabbit can go above, under, through, and over a log. Below is a list of 25 common prepositions on the SAT. I have bolded prepositions that a rabbit cannot do to a log.

Common SAT Prepositions				
Above	In	Through	Around	From
Across	Into	Under	At	Of
After	On	Upon	Before	To
Between	Out	About	During	With
By	Over	Among	For	Without

You have two options to cross out prepositional phrases. You can either use your pencil to cross them out or put them in parenthesis. I personally prefer the parenthesis approach because it allows me to

still see the entire sentence in case the error is in fact within the prepositional phrase of a sentence (this only happens approximately 10% of the time). You should also note that COP also applies to non-essential appositives. We will discuss nonessential appositives in Writing Expert Strategy #4, but you should know that they are almost as unnecessary as prepositional phrases.

COP is primarily beneficial for grammatical questions. COP will not be very useful on clarity questions. There are a few types of grammatical errors that crossing out prepositions is especially helpful with:

- Comparison Errors
- Singular-Plural Mismatches
- Idiom Errors
- Parallelism Errors
- Transition Errors
- Pronoun Errors

We will discuss each of the above errors in more depth as we go through this section. But you should simply be aware the COP is more useful for certain types of errors than others. It is no longer necessary to use COP on every single question on the SAT. On the 2400-version of the SAT, we taught that you needed to use COP on every single SAT Writing question. However, with so many questions now related to clarity (Expression of Ideas Questions), this is no longer necessary. With that said, using COP on questions that deal with grammatical issues is still beneficial – especially for the errors listed above.

**Expert Example**

- (1) The sharp teeth, each longer than most people's fingers, of the ferocious lion is a threat to other animals.

**Apply COP**

The sharp teeth(, each longer than most people's fingers,) (of the ferocious lion) is a threat (to other animals.)

The nonessential appositive "each longer than most people's fingers" can be crossed out similarly to how a prepositional phrase would be crossed out. The phrase "to other animals" can be crossed out. I recommend students don't use COP on "to" unless you know that "to" is not being used as an infinitive verb phrase. In this case, "to" is not part of an infinitive verb so you may cross it out.

**Simplified Sentence**

The sharp teeth **is** a threat.

When you Cross Out Prepositions, the simplified sentence reveals the singular-plural mismatch immediately. This incorrect sentence is pairing the plural subject "teeth" with the singular verb "is." The correct sentence should pair the plural subject "teeth" with the plural verb "are." This is a classic SAT strategy. SAT test question writers plug in many prepositional phrases and/or nonessential appositives between the true subject and the true verb in a sentence in order to try to distract students from recognizing that there is singular-plural mismatch.

### Corrected Sentence

The sharp teeth, each longer than most people's fingers, of the ferocious lion **are** a threat to other animals.

- (2) Until it is managed by a new, more effective, and more understanding administration, the teachers will continue to strike.

### Apply COP

Until it is managed ~~by a new, more effective, and more understanding administration~~, the teachers will continue to strike.

### Simplified Sentence

Until **it** is managed, the teachers will continue to strike.

When you Cross Out Prepositions, the simplified sentence reveals the pronoun error immediately. This incorrect sentence is referring to the plural noun "teachers" with the singular pronoun "it." The correct sentence should refer to the plural noun "teachers" with the plural pronoun "they." On the SAT, you should always be wary of the pronoun "it." If the pronoun "it" is used, then you need to make sure there is one and only logical noun in the sentence that "it" can be referring to.

### Corrected Sentence

Until **they are** managed by a new, more effective, and more understanding administration, the teachers will continue to strike.

- (3) The new library, consisting of a plethora of books in both electronic and paper formats, and is paid for by tax dollars.

Apply COP

The new library(, consisting of a plethora of books in both electronic and paper formats,) and is paid for by tax dollars.

Simplified Sentence

The new library, **and** is paid for by tax dollars.

When you Cross Out Prepositions, the simplified sentence reveals the transition error immediately. The incorrect sentence places “and” after the nonessential appositive, which interrupts the flow of the sentence. The correct sentence would remove this “and” to improve the flow of the sentence.

Corrected Sentence

The new library, consisting of a plethora of books in both electronic and paper formats, is paid for by tax dollars.

### Expert Practice

Counting of occupational injuries and illnesses **1** are complex; potential issues includes employee fear about reporting, lack of employer awareness of reporting requirements, complex definitions of workplace injuries, difficulty determining whether an injury actually occurred at work or is otherwise work related, **2** having disputes over responsibility, measurement issues, and more. The Bureau of Labor Statistics provides the nation’s official statistics on workplace injuries and illnesses, including estimates of the number and rate of

nonfatal injuries and illnesses by industry and state and, for selected cases, details about the worker involved and the circumstances of the incident. These data are based on Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) guidelines, **3** set of definitions and explanations used by employers nationwide, and to maintain workplace safety records for their establishment. The Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 (the OSH Act) requires employers selected by BLS to maintain these records, which are used by employers to complete the annual Survey of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses (SOII). From time to time, the completeness of the SOII estimates has been examined, most recently through a series of BLS-sponsored research projects. The goals and results of that research are **4** this articles subject.

1

- (A) NO CHANGE
- (B) are complex; potential issues include
- (C) is complex; potential issues include
- (D) is complex; potential issues includes

### Solution

#### 1 – Examine Lines Related to Question 1

Counting of occupational injuries and illnesses **1** are complex; potential issues includes employee fear about reporting, lack of employer awareness of reporting requirements, complex ...

## 2 – Apply COP

Counting of ~~occupational injuries and illnesses~~ **1** are complex; potential issues  
includes employee fear about reporting, lack of employer awareness of reporting requirements,  
complex ...

After applying COP, I can see that there is a singular-plural mismatch between “counting” and “are.”

## 3 – Apply BOSS

Counting **1** is complex; potential issues include employee fear, lack, complex ...

In order to fix the singular-plural issue I just identified, I would change “are” to “is” using BOSS. In addition, I would change “includes” to “include” since that fixes a second singular-plural mismatch in the same sentence.

## 4 – Select Answer

Select answer choice C because it perfectly agrees with our BOSS solution. Although you may think that BOSS takes extra time because you have to take the effort to write out a solution on the frontend, you actually save a lot of time on the backend when you can go directly to your answer – in this case, C.

## Avoid Singular-Plural Mismatches 2

### Expert Strategy

Perhaps the most common grammatical error that occurs on the SAT Writing section is singular-plural disagreement between subjects and verbs. On the SAT, a singular-plural mismatch occurs when a singular subject is incorrectly paired with a plural verb or a plural subject is incorrectly paired with a singular verb.

Although singular-plural mismatches are typically easy to spot if the subject and verb are directly next to each other, SAT test question writers are good at disguising these errors with prepositional phrases, nonessential appositives, and other excess language. In fact, the most common error that you will identify after using COP is a singular-plural mismatch.

In addition, SAT test question writers can make this error difficult to spot by using subjects that are difficult to determine singularity/plurality. Perhaps the most difficult singular-plural mismatch to spot on the SAT occurs when the verb comes before the subject (rather than after).

We will show you how to avoid all singular-plural mismatches no matter how tough the SAT test question writers make them.

Be wary whenever you see a subject underlined on the SAT Writing section. Ask yourself, “Should this subject be singular or plural?” In order to answer this question, you can examine the verb that it is paired with. If the verb is not underlined and does not agree with the singularity/plurality of the subject, then you know the subject is incorrect.

In addition, be wary whenever you see a verb underlined on the SAT Writing section. Ask yourself, “Should this verb be singular or plural?” In order to answer this question, you can examine the subject



that it is paired with. If the subject is not underlined and does not agree with the singularity/plurality of the verb, then you know the verb is incorrect.

If a verb ends in *-s*, it is singular. If a verb does not end in *-s*, it is plural. If you can remember this, then you will have no trouble identifying verb singularity/plurality on the SAT. For example, in the sentence “he runs a mile everyday,” “runs” is singular and ends with *-s*. In the sentence “they run a mile everyday,” “run” is plural and does not end with an *-s*. If you are ever unsure as to whether a verb is singular or plural, try using that verb in a different context with a different subject. Doing so should quickly clarify the singularity/plurality of the verb.

The singularity/plurality of nouns is pretty straightforward with a few exceptions. A noun that refers to only one item/person is singular. A noun that refers to multiple items/people is plural.

You should also be aware of some noun forms that are a little tricky. Singular nouns separated by the conjunction “or” should be treated as singular. Singular nouns separated by the conjunction “and” should be treated as plural. Although some nouns may be made up of multiple people (i.e. a country), the actual word itself is still singular. Finally, there are some tricky nouns that sound like they are singular, but are actually plural (i.e. data).

Singular Nouns	Example
One Item / Person	The child <u>plays</u> all day.
Or	Ben or Sally <u>wins</u> every time.
Groups	The high school <u>puts</u> on a play every year.
Countries	The United States of America <u>is</u> beautiful.

Plural Nouns	Example
Multiple Items / People	The children <u>play</u> all day.
And	Ben and Sally <u>win</u> every time.
Both	Both <u>are</u> exceptional players.
Tricky Nouns	The data <u>look</u> good.

### Expert Example

- (1) Despite having studied extensively for the exam, the students always performs poorly because the teacher makes a poor test.

#### Apply COP

Despite having studied extensively (for the exam,) the students always performs poorly because the teacher makes a poor test.

Although COP doesn't identify the singular-plural mismatch for us, it's still a good habit to acquire as you work through the SAT Writing section.

#### Simplified Sentence

Despite having studied extensively, the **students** always **performs** poorly because the teacher makes a poor test.

The singular-plural mismatch stands out pretty clearly. This incorrect sentence is pairing the plural subject "students" with the singular verb "performs." The correct sentence should pair the plural subject "students" with the plural verb "perform."

### Corrected Sentence

Despite having studied extensively for the exam, the students always **perform** poorly because the teacher makes a poor test.

- (2) Pathology, the study of cellular mechanisms causing disease, have made tremendous technological progress over the past decade.

### Apply COP

Pathology, ~~the study of cellular mechanisms causing disease~~, have made tremendous technological progress over the past decade.

Placing a nonessential appositive between the true subject and the true verb of a sentence is a classic example of how the SAT disguises singular-plural mismatches.

### Simplified Sentence

**Pathology have** made tremendous technological progress over the past decade.

After crossing out the nonessential appositive, the singular-plural mismatch is immediately apparent. This incorrect sentence is pairing the singular subject “pathology” with the plural verb “have.” The correct sentence should pair the singular subject “pathology” with the singular verb “has.”

### Corrected Sentence

Pathology, the study of cellular mechanisms causing disease, **has** made tremendous technological progress over the past decade.

- (3) There is a privilege and a responsibility associated with serving as a firefighter.

### Apply COP

There is a privilege and a responsibility associated (with serving as a firefighter.)

Although COP doesn't identify the singular-plural mismatch for us, it's still a good habit to acquire as you work through the SAT Writing section.

### Simplified Sentence

There **is** a privilege and a responsibility associated...

You may still believe that there is no issue with the above sentence. That's because you are used to having the subject come before the verb in a sentence. However, for "to be" verbs, such as "is," the paired subject(s) often comes after the verb. To identify the error in this sentence, you have to start by thinking about what the true subject is. In this case, the subject is "a privilege and a responsibility." If you recall, two singular subjects separated by an "and" conjunction should be treated as plural. Therefore, the "is" should be changed to "are." This is not easy to see on first glance because the order of the subject and the verb has been reversed. To make it easier to spot, ask yourself the following question: Which one of the following sentences makes sense?

"A privilege and a responsibility is associated..."

or

"A privilege and a responsibility are associated..."

Hopefully, you can see that the latter option is correct.

Common “To Be” Verbs
Am
Are
Be
Been
Being
Is
Was
Were

#### Corrected Sentence

There **are** a privilege and a responsibility associated with serving as a firefighter.

#### Expert Practice

Counting of occupational injuries and illnesses **1** are complex; potential issues includes employee fear about reporting, lack of employer awareness of reporting requirements, complex definitions of workplace injuries, difficulty determining whether an injury actually occurred at work or is otherwise work related, **2** having disputes over responsibility, measurement issues, and more. The Bureau of Labor Statistics provides the nation’s official statistics on workplace injuries and illnesses, including estimates of the number and rate of nonfatal injuries and illnesses by industry and state and, for selected cases, details about the worker involved and the circumstances of the incident. These data are based on Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) guidelines, **3** set of definitions and explanations

used by employers nationwide, and to maintain workplace safety records for their establishment. The Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 (the OSH Act) requires employers selected by BLS to maintain these records, which are used by employers to complete the annual Survey of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses (SOII). From time to time, the completeness of the SOII estimates has been examined, most recently through a series of BLS-sponsored research projects. The goals and results of that research are **4** this articles subject.

1

- (A) NO CHANGE
- (B) are complex; potential issues include
- (C) is complex; potential issues include
- (D) is complex; potential issues includes

Note: It is not a mistake that we are repeating the same question we just did with COP. Instead, I wanted to drive home the point that COP and avoiding singular-plural mismatches are interrelated.

### Solution

#### 1 – Examine Lines Related to Question 1

Counting of occupational injuries and illnesses **1** are complex; potential issues  
includes employee fear about reporting, lack of employer awareness of reporting requirements,  
complex ...

## 2 – Apply COP

Counting of ~~occupational injuries and illnesses~~ **1** are complex; potential issues  
includes employee fear ~~about reporting~~, lack of employer awareness of reporting requirements,  
complex ...

After applying COP, I can see that there is a singular-plural mismatch between “counting” and “are.”

## 3 – Apply BOSS

Counting **1** is complex; potential issues include employee fear, lack, complex ...

In order to fix the singular-plural issue I just identified, I would change “are” to “is” using BOSS. In addition, I would change “includes” to “include” since that fixes a second singular-plural mismatch in the same sentence.

## 4 – Select Answer

Select answer choice C because it perfectly agrees with our BOSS solution.

## Preserve Parallelism 3

### Expert Strategy

I never learned about parallelism in my high school English classes. However, parallelism is key to know both for the SAT and for good writing in general. Parallelism requires that words or phrases in a sentence have similar (or parallel) structure.

Maintaining parallel structure is important not only for SAT Writing, but also for the SAT essay. Parallel structure on the SAT Essay will make your composition easier to read for the grader.

You should make sure a sentence has parallel structure in three specific instances.

#### (1) Transitions (e.g. and)

A word/phrase that comes before a transition should have parallel structure to the word/phrase that comes after the transition.

#### (2) Lists

Word/phrases that appear in a list separated by commas should have parallel structure.

#### (3) Sentences

A series of related sentences should have parallel structure or syntax.



**Expert Example**

- (1) The trunk in the attic contained vintage antiques, old photos, and jewelry that was valuable.

Apply COP

The trunk in the attic contained vintage antiques, old photos, and jewelry that was valuable.

Simplified Sentence

The trunk contained vintage antiques, old photos, and **jewelry that was valuable**.

The phrase in the list that does not preserve parallelism is “jewelry that was valuable.” The other items in the list are simple two-word phrases with an adjective preceding the noun. In order to preserve the parallelism in this list, the last phrase should be changed to “valuable jewelry.”

Corrected Sentence

The trunk in the attic contained vintage antiques, old photos, and **valuable jewelry**.

- (2) Technology enthusiasts agree that the utility of smart watches is not only undiscovered but also of necessity in everyday life.

Apply COP

Technology enthusiasts agree that the utility (of smart watches) is not only undiscovered but also (of necessity) (in everyday life.)

Placing a nonessential appositive between the true subject and the true verb of a sentence is a classic example of how the SAT disguises singular-plural mismatches.

### Simplified Sentence

Technology enthusiasts agree that the utility is not only undiscovered but also...

This is a case in which crossing out prepositions can actually deter us from arriving at the correct answer. There is no issue with the above simplified sentence. Before thinking that there is nothing wrong with the sentence though, you must recheck the entire sentence with the prepositional phrases inserted again.

### Reexamine Full Sentence

Technology enthusiasts agree that the utility of smart watches is not only undiscovered but also of necessity in everyday life.

Start by looking at the transition “not only...but also.” Then, ask yourself whether the words across this transitional phrase are parallel. In this case, they are not. In order to be parallel to “undiscovered,” the word after the transition should be the adjective “necessary.” In addition, the appropriate idiom to pair with “necessary” is “for,” not “in.”

### Corrected Sentence

Technology enthusiasts agree that the utility of smart watches is not only undiscovered but also necessary for everyday life.

- (3) A shopping center is established to attract customers. A high-end food court is opened to cater to foodies. In order to attract tourists, an amusement part is built.

#### Apply COP

A shopping center is established to attract customers. A high-end food court is opened to cater to foodies. In order to attract tourists, an amusement part is built.

Typically, I advise students not to cross out the preposition “to” because “to” can sometimes be used as a preposition and sometimes as a part of an infinitive verb. If you cannot tell the difference, don’t worry about crossing out “to.” If you can tell the difference, then make sure to ignore “to” only when it is definitely used as a preposition.

#### Simplified Sentences

A shopping center is established to attract customers. A high-end food court is opened to cater to foodies. In order to attract tourists, an amusement part is built.

Can you tell which sentence in this series is not parallel to the others? The last sentence. The first two sentences start with the subject of the sentence, contain the verb “is,” and end with a reason. The last sentence should follow a similar structure.

#### Corrected Sentences

A shopping center is established to attract customers. A high-end food court is opened to cater to foodies. **An amusement part is built to attract tourists.**

## Expert Practice

Counting of occupational injuries and illnesses **1** are complex; potential issues includes employee fear about reporting, lack of employer awareness of reporting requirements, complex definitions of workplace injuries, difficulty determining whether an injury actually occurred at work or is otherwise work related, **2** having disputes over responsibility, measurement issues, and more. The Bureau of Labor Statistics provides the nation's official statistics on workplace injuries and illnesses, including estimates of the number and rate of nonfatal injuries and illnesses by industry and state and, for selected cases, details about the worker involved and the circumstances of the incident. These data are based on Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) guidelines, **3** set of definitions and explanations used by employers nationwide, and to maintain workplace safety records for their establishment. The Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 (the OSH Act) requires employers selected by BLS to maintain these records, which are used by employers to complete the annual Survey of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses (SOII). From time to time, the completeness of the SOII estimates has been examined, most recently through a series of BLS-sponsored research projects. The goals and results of that research are **4** this articles subject.

2

- (A) NO CHANGE
- (B) disputes
- (C) disputing
- (D) have disputes

**Solution****1 – Examine Lines Related to Question 2**

Counting of occupational injuries and illnesses **1** are complex; potential issues includes employee fear about reporting, lack of employer awareness of reporting requirements, complex definitions of workplace injuries, difficulty determining whether an injury actually occurred at work or is otherwise work related, **2** having disputes over responsibility, measurement issues, and more.

**2 – Apply COP**

Counting of occupational injuries and illnesses **1** are complex; potential issues includes employee fear (about reporting), lack (of employer awareness) (of reporting requirements), complex definitions (of workplace injuries), difficulty determining whether an injury actually occurred (at work) or is otherwise work related, **2** having disputes (over responsibility), measurement issues, and more.

After applying COP, I can see that the items in the list are simple nouns: employee fear, lack, difficulty, and measurement issues. However, the underlined portion of question 2 has the –ing gerund “having.”

**3 – Apply BOSS**

Counting **1** are complex; potential issues includes employee fear, lack, complex definitions, difficulty determining whether an injury actually occurred or is otherwise work related, **2** disputes, measurement issues, and more.

In order to fix this parallelism issue, I would change “having disputes” to “disputes.” This would create a simple noun that would be parallel to the rest of the items in the list.

#### 4 – Select Answer

Select answer choice B because it perfectly agrees with our BOSS solution.

## Examine Nonessential Appositives 4

### Expert Strategy

We have already discussed nonessential appositives in Writing Expert Strategy #1: Cross Out Prepositions. However, we will further clarify nonessential appositives here since this has become a very important topic on the New SAT.

An appositive is a phrase that describes a noun that it is directly next to. An appositive is usually separated from the sentence by commas (or dashes).

Removal of the appositive typically does not detract from the grammatical correctness or message of the sentence. However, sometimes nonessential appositives have grammatical and clarity issues as well.

### Expert Example

- (1) One of the greatest writers of our time, Malcolm Gladwell, was the author of *Outliers*, regularly does television interviews.

Apply COP

One of the greatest writers of our time, ~~Malcolm Gladwell, was the author of *Outliers*,~~ regularly does television interviews.

### Simplified Sentence

One of the greatest writers regularly does television interviews.

The simplified sentence does not have any errors in it. Therefore, we need to go back and examine the two nonessential appositives in this sentence for errors: “Malcolm Gladwell” and “was the author of outliers.”

### Reexamine Full Sentence

One of the greatest writers of our time, Malcolm Gladwell, was the author of Outliers, regularly does television interviews.

In this case, the issue is that the second appositive, “was the author of Outliers” begins with the verb “was.” Typically, appositives do not start with verbs. Instead, they are simple descriptions next to a noun such as “the author of Outliers.”

### Corrected Sentence

One of the greatest writers of our time, Malcolm Gladwell, the author of Outliers, regularly does television interviews.

- (2) Julie Smith was already licensed as a doctor in California, could not practice medicine in New York until she passed the board exam.

### Apply COP

Julie Smith was already licensed as a doctor in California, could not practice medicine (in New York) (until she passed the board exam.)



### Simplified Sentence

Julie Smith was already licensed as a doctor in California, could not practice medicine

This example is a little different because we need to create a nonessential appositive. In order to do this, think about what the essential message of the sentence is. I believe that the sentence is trying to convey, “Julie Smith could not practice medicine in New York.” Given this, we can create a nonessential appositive by removing the “was” and adding a comma.

### Corrected Sentence

Julie Smith, already licensed as a doctor in California, could not practice medicine in New York until she passed the board exam.

- (3) George Washington, the first President of the United States, and recruited an outstanding army during times of war.

### Apply COP

George Washington, ~~the first President of the United States,~~ and recruited an outstanding army ~~during times of war.~~

### Simplified Sentence

George Washington **and** recruited an outstanding army.

After crossing out prepositional phrases and the nonessential appositive in this sentence, the error becomes immediately apparent. There is no need for the conjunction “and” after the appositive. This is a pretty classic error on the SAT that requires knowledge of both non-essential appositives and transitions.

### Corrected Sentences

George Washington, the first President of the United States, recruited an outstanding army during times of war.

### Expert Practice

Counting of occupational injuries and illnesses **1** are complex; potential issues includes employee fear about reporting, lack of employer awareness of reporting requirements, complex definitions of workplace injuries, difficulty determining whether an injury actually occurred at work or is otherwise work related, **2** having disputes over responsibility, measurement issues, and more. The Bureau of Labor Statistics provides the nation's official statistics on workplace injuries and illnesses, including estimates of the number and rate of nonfatal injuries and illnesses by industry and state and, for selected cases, details about the worker involved and the circumstances of the incident. These data are based on Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) guidelines, **3** set of definitions and explanations used by employers nationwide, and to maintain workplace safety records for their establishment. The Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 (the OSH Act) requires employers selected by BLS to maintain these records, which are used by employers to complete the annual Survey of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses (SOII). From time to time, the completeness of the SOII estimates has been examined, most recently through a series of BLS-sponsored research projects. The goals and results of that research are **4** this articles subject.

3

- (A) NO CHANGE
- (B) a set of definitions and explanations used by employers nationwide
- (C) which are a set of definitions and explanations used by employers nationwide,  
and
- (D) a set of definitions and explanations used by employers, with

### Solution

#### 1 – Examine Lines Related to Question 3

These data are based on Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) guidelines, **3** set of definitions and explanations used by employers nationwide, and to maintain workplace safety records for their establishment.

#### 2 – Apply COP

These data are based on Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) guidelines, **3** set of definitions and explanations used by employers nationwide, and to maintain workplace safety records for their establishment.

After applying COP, we can see that the transition “and” is not needed. This becomes much more clear after removing nonessential appositives. However, you should also check the nonessential appositive for any errors that it may contain.

### 3 – Apply BOSS

These data are based ... **to** maintain workplace safety records for their establishment.

In order to fix this transition issue, I would remove the “and.” In addition, “set” should be changed “a set” within the nonessential appositive.

### 4 – Select Answer

Select answer choice B because it perfectly agrees with our BOSS solution.

# Prove Possessives 5

## Expert Strategy

You must recognize the difference between a contraction and a possessive. A possessive is a word that indicates ownership often using an apostrophe (but not always). A contraction is a word that contains an apostrophe that takes the place of missing words.

Note that proving possessives will not always have apostrophes. Sometimes a word may be underlined that does not have an apostrophe, but needs one, and you will need to introduce an apostrophe via one of the answer choices.

This is a new error that has been introduced on the 1600-version of the SAT. Although identifying incorrectly used possessives on the SAT is relatively simple, what I call “possessive adjectives” can be tricky. For example, in the phrase the “king’s palace,” is the male person of a king in the sentence? No! The possessive “king’s” acts as a possessive adjective that describes the palace. Therefore, placing a “he” later on in the sentence would not be correct because there is no “king” in the sentence for the “he” to refer to. Watch out for possessive adjectives because they are one of the biggest tricks SAT test question writers use to deceive students.

Possessive	Contraction
Its	It’s
Your	You’re
Their	They’re
Whose	Who’s

**Expert Example**

- (1) A traffic controllers purpose is to assure that cars pass with minimum delay.

Apply COP

A traffic controllers purpose is to assure that cars pass (with minimum delay.)

Simplified Sentence

A traffic **controllers** purpose is to assure that cars pass

The sentence should contain the possessive adjective “controller’s” in order to describe the type of purpose in the sentence. The plural noun “controllers” should be changed to the singular possessive “controller’s.”

Corrected Sentence

A traffic **controller’s** purpose is to assure that cars pass with minimum delay.

- (2) Who’s jacket is this on the coat rack by the entrance of the movie theater?

Apply COP

Who’s jacket is this ~~on the coat rack by the entrance of the movie theater?~~

Simplified Sentence

**Who’s** jacket is this

The sentence should contain the possessive “whose” in order to indicate ownership of the jacket. The contraction “who’s” should be changed to “whose.”

## Corrected Sentence

Whose jacket is this on the coat rack by the entrance of the movie theater?

- (3) Tess's favorite cartoon is played every Saturday morning and she cannot wait to see the new episode each week.

## Apply COP

Tess's favorite cartoon is played (every Saturday morning) and she cannot wait to see the new episode each week.

## Simplified Sentence

Tess's favorite cartoon is played and she cannot wait to see the new episode each week.

Which of the following is the correct possessive form: "Tess's" or "Tess"? Actually, they are both correct according to English grammar. Therefore, the SAT will not ask you to choose between the above two options. But just in case you were wondering how to create a possessive out of a noun that ends in -s, hopefully it is now clear.

## Corrected Sentence

NO CHANGE

## Expert Practice

Counting of occupational injuries and illnesses **1** are complex; potential issues includes employee fear about reporting, lack of employer awareness of reporting requirements, complex definitions of workplace injuries, difficulty determining whether an injury actually occurred at work or is otherwise work related, **2** having disputes over responsibility, measurement issues, and more. The Bureau of Labor Statistics provides the nation's official statistics on workplace injuries and illnesses, including estimates of the number and rate of nonfatal injuries and illnesses by industry and state and, for selected cases, details about the worker involved and the circumstances of the incident. These data are based on Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) guidelines, **3** set of definitions and explanations used by employers nationwide, and to maintain workplace safety records for their establishment. The Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 (the OSH Act) requires employers selected by BLS to maintain these records, which are used by employers to complete the annual Survey of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses (SOII). From time to time, the completeness of the SOII estimates has been examined, most recently through a series of BLS-sponsored research projects. The goals and results of that research are **4** this articles subject.

4

- (A) NO CHANGE
- (B) this article's subject
- (C) the subject of this article's
- (D) this articles' subject



## Solution

### 1 – Examine Lines Related to Question 4

The goals and results of that research are 4 this articles subject.

### 2 – Apply COP

The goals and results (of that research) are 4 this **articles** subject.

### 3 – Apply BOSS

The goals and results are 4 this **article's** subject.

There is clearly an issue with the plural noun “articles” here. The author meant to use the possessive “article’s.” Our BOSS solution should be to simply make this correction for the author.

### 4 – Select Answer

Select answer choice B because it perfectly agrees with our BOSS solution. In addition answer choice C contains what I call a double possessive. You can indicate possessive with the phrase “the subject of this article” or the possessive “article’s.” But “the subject of this article’s” creates an unnecessary double possessive. Answer choice D contains a plural possessive. Essentially, the phrase “articles’ subject” indicates that there are many articles with the same subject. This is not the message the author intended.

## Eliminate Excess 6

### Expert Strategy

Eliminating excess refers to communicating the author's message in the most succinct way possible. Remove any redundancy, unnecessary words, and repetitive ideas. This strategy is not only applicable to SAT Writing, but also the SAT Essay.

There are two types of excess-language errors that appear on the SAT: economy of words and repeated ideas. Economy of words refers to using as few words as possible in order to convey a message. Every word needs to be essential. Repeated ideas refer to the redundancy of messages within paragraphs. For instance, you wouldn't want to repeat the following ideas in the same sentence:

Repeat → Again

May → Possibly

Quickly → Soon

Promptly → Quickly

Eliminating Excess will often be more useful on Expression of Ideas (clarity) questions rather than Standard English Convention (grammar) questions.

**Expert Example**

- (1) The pianist wrote a beautiful musical piece with the intent being to show respect for his father's classic work.

**Apply COP**

The pianist wrote a beautiful musical piece ~~with the intent being~~ to show respect for his father's classic work.

**Simplified Sentence**

The pianist wrote a beautiful musical piece to show respect

There is nothing grammatically wrong with the simplified sentence. But you should take a closer look at the prepositional phrases. You might notice that the prepositional phrase "with the intent being" is actually unnecessary. This is excess verbiage that can be eliminated from the sentence without loss of the core message.

**Corrected Sentence**

The pianist wrote a beautiful musical piece to show respect for his father's classic work.

- (2) Annually, Forbes Magazine recognizes 30 individuals under 30 years old in a special edition magazine called 30 Under 30 each year.

**Apply COP**

Annually, Forbes Magazine recognizes 30 individuals (under 30 years old) (in a special edition magazine) called 30 Under 30 each year.

### Simplified Sentence

Annually, Forbes Magazine recognizes 30 individuals called 30 Under 30 each year.

There is nothing grammatically incorrect with this sentence. However, you should notice the repeated idea of occurring every year. This idea is first expressed with the word “annually” and then again with the phrase “each year.” Therefore, this excess needs to be eliminated.

### Corrected Sentence

Annually, Forbes Magazine recognizes 30 individuals under 30 years old in a special edition magazine called 30 Under 30.

- (3) The SAT exam has never been more easier than after the redesign in 2016.

### Apply COP

The SAT exam has never been more easier than ~~after the redesign in 2016.~~

### Simplified Sentence

The SAT exam has never been more easier than

This is a fairly easy error to spot. The correct sentence should have either “more easy” or “easier.” Most students have no trouble catching this error. However, most students cannot articulate what the error is and simply say that this phrase “sounds wrong.” As a Prep Expert student, I want you to get into the habit of categorizing errors. Therefore, when you see a phrase such as “more easier” on the SAT, you should be able to categorize it as an “excess” or redundancy error. Knowing why questions are incorrect will not only help raise your score, but also increase your confidence that you are answering questions correctly.

## Corrected Sentence

The SAT exam has never been easier than after the redesign in 2016.

## Expert Practice

More than once since its inception in the early 1970s, **5** the BLS occupational safety and health statistics program has been the subject of scrutiny, often leading to program changes. **6** Next, concern in the late 1980s that a sample survey could not provide a complete count of workplace fatalities led to the development of the BLS Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries (CFOI), which has provided a comprehensive count of fatal work injuries annually since 1992. Also in 1992, BLS expanded the SOII to include “case and demographic” details. **7** These data elaborate on the worker involved (including occupation, age, and gender) and the circumstances surrounding the incident (including nature of injury and part of body affected). Since 1992, case and demographic data have only been available for cases that result in at least 1 day away from work, although BLS recently began publishing the results of pilot tests of **8** it **9** for: cases that result in no days away from work but lead to a job transfer or restricted work.

5

- (A) NO CHANGE
- (B) the BLS and also its program regarding occupational safety and health statistics
- (C) the BLS program that includes the two areas of occupational safety and health statistics
- (D) the BLS occupational safety and program of health statistics

## Solution

### 1 – Examine Lines Related to Question 5

More than once since its inception in the early 1970s, **5** the BLS occupational safety and health statistics program has been the subject of scrutiny, often leading to program changes.

### 2 – Apply COP

More than once since its inception (in the early 1970s), **5** the BLS occupational safety and health statistics program has been the subject (of scrutiny), often leading (to program changes.)

### 3 – Apply BOSS

More than once since its inception, **5** the BLS occupational safety and health statistics program has been the subject, often leading

I cannot identify any errors in the simplified sentence above.

### 4 – Select Answer

Select answer choice A because it perfectly agrees with our BOSS solution of no change. Answer choice B contains excess with the phrase “and also its program regarding.” Answer choice C contains excess with the phrase “that includes the two areas of.” Finally, Answer choice D changes the meaning of the sentence. It implies that there are two different programs: one for occupational safety and one for health statistics. However, the author’s intent is to describe just one program.

## Use Logical Transitions 7

### Expert Strategy

Transitions are words or phrases that connect the flow of ideas. On the SAT, transitions will often be used inappropriately. This is more of an Expression of Ideas, or clarity, issue than a grammatical error. Transition errors are more important than ever on the SAT because transitions are essential for the organization of paragraphs. Because SAT Writing is now in paragraph format, you must master how to use logical transitions.

Because Use Logical Transitions relates to the Expression of Ideas type of question on the SAT Writing section, it's essential that you understand the passage. You need to know what the author is trying to convey in order to know whether or not he or she is using the appropriate transition. As you are reading a passage, you should think about whether two ideas that are next to each other are flowing correctly. If there is something off about the transition between two ideas, then you may be dealing with a transition error.

You must also understand when to use certain conjunctions. For example, "because" is used to explain, "furthermore" is used to give additional information, "consequently" is used to indicate repercussions, etc.

There are two types of transitions: within sentences and between sentences. An author may connect ideas within the same sentence, or an author may connect ideas between two different sentences. If a transition occurs within the same sentence, then that transition is almost always made via a conjunction. If a transition occurs between sentences, then that transition can be made via a conjunction, punctuation, or a phrase.

In order to really understand transitions, you also need to understand independent and dependent clauses. Independent clauses can stand-alone and have relatively more importance in a sentence. Dependent clauses cannot stand-alone and have relatively less importance in a sentence.

### Same-Sentence Transitions

Coordinate Conjunctions	
Definition	Connect two independent clauses. If the coordinating conjunction appears in the middle of a sentence, a comma will come before the coordinating conjunction.
Example	He looks very athletic, yet he does not run fast.
Memory Trick: FANBOYS	For, And, Nor, But, Or, Yet, So
What You Need To Know	You do not need to memorize what the coordinating conjunctions are. I simply think of it as a way to avoid creating a comma splice error. A run-on sentence is created when you have two complete sentences separated by only a comma. To avoid this, use a coordinating conjunction with the comma (or a semicolon/period).



Subordinating Conjunctions	
Definition	Connect one independent clause and one dependent clause. If the subordinating conjunction appears in the beginning of a sentence, a comma will typically come after it.
Example	Because of the rain, the soccer game was cancelled.
Memory Trick: FANBOYS	After/Although/As While, When, Whenever, How, In case, Though, Even though Because, Until, Since
What You Need To Know	I personally don't pay attention to what is an independent and dependent clause. Instead, you should be able to tell when a certain phrase needs a comma or not.

Double Conjunctions	
Definition	This is a term I made up. But I define a "double conjunction" as a term when two conjunctions are placed next to each other.
Example	And So And Thus And Therefore But So But Yet But Therefore
What You Need To Know	When the SAT places two conjunctions next to each other, the sentence is usually incorrect.

Conjunctive Adverbs	
Definition	Similar to coordinate conjunctions, conjunctive adverbs connect two independent clauses.
Example	However, you don't need to memorize every conjunctive adverb.
Memory Trick: NIH FACT	Nevertheless, In Fact, However, Furthermore, As a Result, Consequently, Therefore
What You Need To Know	If a conjunctive adverb starts a sentence, it should have a comma after it. If a conjunctive adverb is the middle of a sentence, it should have a semicolon before and comma after it (or it may have a comma before and after it).

Correlative Conjunctions	
Definition	Correlative conjunctions always go together.
Example	Not only is the SAT a pain to study for, but you also have to study for regular high school classes too.
Common Correlative Conjunctions	Either...or Neither...nor Not only...but also Not just...but also Not only...; Both...and At once...and As...as
What You Need To Know	If a sentence is missing either the first or second part of a correlative conjunction phrase, then the sentence is written incorrectly.

## Between-Sentence Transitions

### Conjunctions

As we just discussed, conjunctions are a common way to transition within the same sentence. However, conjunctions are also a common way to transition between two sentences. Let's examine the following sentences:

Finding experts with specialized knowledge is even more difficult.  
Nevertheless, launching a new biotech firm to develop an orphan  
biopharmaceutical or therapy utilizing an emerging gene therapy  
may prove difficult due to the limited number of experts in the field.

Does the conjunction "nevertheless" make sense to transition between these two sentences? No. The transition "nevertheless" indicates contrast. However, the second sentence is giving additional information as to why it is difficult to find specialized experts. A more appropriate conjunction would be "additionally" or "furthermore."

### Flow of Ideas

Transitioning between two sentences requires that you really understand the flow of ideas. In order to do this, you must pay close attention to the author's message. Let's examine the following sentences:

Most travelers go hiking early in the morning before the sun comes  
out when it is still cool out. For example, some people are just not  
early risers.

Does the phrase “when it is still cool out” make sense to transition between these two sentences? No. The second sentence describes how some people have a hard time waking up. A more appropriate phrase would be “; however, many have difficulty doing this.”

### Expert Example

- (1) Cheryl was exhausted and worn-out at mile 20, and she continued running to finish the marathon.

Apply COP

Cheryl was exhausted and worn out (at mile 20,) and she continued running to finish the marathon.

Simplified Sentence

Cheryl was exhausted and worn-out, **and** she continued running to finish the marathon.

In order to spot this error, you need to understand the flow of ideas between the two clauses of this sentence. The first clause describes how tired Cheryl is. The second clause describes how Cheryl persevered. The flow of ideas between these two clauses is contrasting. We would need a contrasting conjunction such as “but” rather than “and.”

Corrected Sentence

Cheryl was exhausted and worn-out at mile 20, **but** she continued running to finish the marathon.

- (2) Because the motorcycle was traveling at a speed of around 120 miles per hour, this meant almost no car could catch up with the bike.

#### Apply COP

Because the motorcycle was traveling at a speed of around 120 miles per hour, this meant almost no car could catch up with the bike.

#### Simplified Sentence

Because the motorcycle was traveling, **this meant** almost no car could catch up.

This sentence starts with a dependent clause. However, the words after the comma, “this meant,” are unnecessary. Removal of this phrase would improve the flow of ideas in this sentence.

#### Corrected Sentence

Because the motorcycle was traveling at a speed of around 120 miles per hour, almost no car could catch up with the bike.

- (3) Not only was the design of the airplane visually appealing, but it was aerodynamic.

#### Apply COP

Not only was the design (of the airplane) visually appealing, but it was aerodynamic.

### Simplified Sentence

Not only was the design visually appealing, **but** it was aerodynamic.

This sentence starts with the correlative conjunction “not only.” We should look for the phrase that is typically paired with “not only”: “but also.” However, we only encounter a “but” later on in the sentence. We have identified the error in this sentence.

### Corrected Sentence

Not only was the design of the airplane visually appealing, but it was **also** aerodynamic.

### Expert Practice

More than once since its inception in the early 1970s, **5** the BLS occupational safety and health statistics program has been the subject of scrutiny, often leading to program changes. **6** Next, concern in the late 1980s that a sample survey could not provide a complete count of workplace fatalities led to the development of the BLS Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries (CFOI), which has provided a comprehensive count of fatal work injuries annually since 1992. Also in 1992, BLS expanded the SOII to include “case and demographic” details. **7** These data elaborate on the worker involved (including occupation, age, and gender) and the circumstances surrounding the incident (including nature of injury and part of body affected). Since 1992, case and demographic data have only been available for cases that result in at least 1 day away from work, although BLS recently began publishing the results of pilot tests of **8** it **9** for: cases that result in no days away from work but lead to a job transfer or restricted work.

6

- (A) NO CHANGE
- (B) Similarly,
- (C) Therefore,
- (D) For instance,

**Solution****1 – Examine Lines Related to Question 6**

More than once since its inception in the early 1970s, **5** the BLS occupational safety and health statistics program has been the subject of scrutiny, often leading to program changes. **6** Next, concern in the late 1980s that a sample survey could not provide a complete count of workplace fatalities led to the development of the BLS Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries (CFOI), which has provided a comprehensive count of fatal work injuries annually since 1992.

**2 – Apply COP**

More than once since its inception in the early 1970s, **5** the BLS occupational safety and health statistics program has been the subject of scrutiny, often leading to program changes. **6** Next, concern in the late 1980s that a sample survey could not provide a complete count of workplace fatalities led to the development of the BLS Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries (CFOI), which has provided a comprehensive count of fatal work injuries annually since 1992.

Note: I also crossed out the transition “next” here because it is often helpful to ignore the transition that the SAT gives you as you decide for yourself what the transition should be.

### 3 – Apply BOSS

More than once since its inception, **5** the BLS occupational safety and health statistics program has been the subject, often leading. **6** For example, concern that a sample survey could not provide a complete count, which has provided a comprehensive count annually since 1992.

I believe the second sentence is offering an example of how the BLS program has been under scrutiny. Therefore, I do not think that “next” is the correct transition. Instead, I would use a transition such as “for instance.”

### 4 – Select Answer

Select answer choice D because it almost perfectly agrees with our BOSS solution.



# Improve Paragraph Cohesion8

## Expert Strategy

Paragraphs on the SAT Writing section are not always organized and developed in the best way. We must identify when a sentence is out of place, when a sentence should be moved to another part of the passage, or when a sentence should be removed altogether. Similar to the previous strategy, this strategy relates to the Expression of Ideas, or clarity, questions that make up the majority of the SAT Writing section.

One way to improve paragraph cohesion is to create a paragraph summary. Unlike the SAT Essay section, it is not necessary to create a paragraph summary for every paragraph on the SAT Writing section. However, it may be useful to create a paragraph summary when you are dealing with a question that relates to improving paragraph cohesion.

This strategy is particularly relevant when an entire sentence is underlined. Examining the sentence before and the sentence after an underlined sentence is often useful. Doing so will give you a good sense of whether a particular sentence fits within the flow of ideas in a particular paragraph.

Here is a table that summarizes the types of SAT questions that relate to this Expert Strategy.

Improve Paragraph Cohesion Question Types	
Add	The paragraph would best be improved by the addition of...
Remove	The paragraph would best be improved by the deletion of...
Keep	Should the sentence be kept or deleted?
Move	Where should the sentence be placed?

### Expert Example

Perhaps the most significant limiting factor that prevents new entrants from competing in the biotech industry is financial capital. In order to start a biotechnology firm, a significant amount of cash is required for research and development, raw materials, lab equipment, and new technologies. Facilities are expensive. Even if interest rates are low, biotech firms are unlikely to receive debt to fund initial R+D costs due to the high-risk nature of the business. There is no guarantee a biomedical therapeutic will generate enough revenue to pay back initial startup costs. But due to the long-term nature of the research and development phase of most biopharmaceuticals and biomedical therapeutics, investors may become concerned about the lack of return on equity. Therefore, many biotechnology firms must rely on equity financing via the “investment community, federal funding, or strategic partnering” in order to fund ventures. There is always uncertainty of how long finances will be available for a biotech venture before investors siphon off funds into another project.

### Create Paragraph Summary

When reading a long paragraph like this, you may want to create a paragraph summary. My paragraph summary would be: financial capital remains the largest barrier to entry in the biotechnology industry. However, that’s not what I would write in my test booklet. Instead I would write something like:

FC = Barrier

### Improve Cohesion

As you were reading this paragraph, what sentence seemed out of place? I think it was “facilities are expensive.” The sentence prior to this one stated that a significant amount of cash was needed for

“research and development, raw materials, lab equipment, and new technologies.” So why not just add “facilities” to this list? This would improve the cohesion of the paragraph.

### Expert Practice

More than once since its inception in the early 1970s, 5 the BLS occupational safety and health statistics program has been the subject of scrutiny, often leading to program changes. 6 Next, concern in the late 1980s that a sample survey could not provide a complete count of workplace fatalities led to the development of the BLS Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries (CFOI), which has provided a comprehensive count of fatal work injuries annually since 1992. Also in 1992, BLS expanded the SOII to include “case and demographic” details. 7 These data elaborate on the worker involved (including occupation, age, and gender) and the circumstances surrounding the incident (including nature of injury and part of body affected). Since 1992, case and demographic data have only been available for cases that result in at least 1 day away from work, although BLS recently began publishing the results of pilot tests of 8 it 9 for: cases that result in no days away from work but lead to a job transfer or restricted work.

7

The writer is considering deleting the underlined sentence. Should the sentence be kept or deleted?

- (A) Kept, because it gives clear examples of “case and demographic” details.
- (B) Kept, because it explains why details should be included in the report.
- (C) Deleted, because it contains redundant material that is unnecessary.
- (D) Deleted, because it does not transition to information in the following sentence.

**Solution****1 – Examine Lines Related to Question 7**

Also in 1992, BLS expanded the SOII to include “case and demographic” details.

**7** These data elaborate on the worker involved (including occupation, age, and gender) and the circumstances surrounding the incident (including nature of injury and part of body affected). Since 1992, case and demographic data have only been available for cases that result in at least 1 day away from work, although BLS recently began publishing the results of pilot tests of **8** it **9** for: cases that result in no days away from work but lead to a job transfer or restricted work.

**2 – Apply BOSS**

Also in 1992, BLS expanded the SOII to include “case and demographic” details.

**7** These data elaborate on the worker involved (including occupation, age, and gender) and the circumstances surrounding the incident (including nature of injury and part of body affected). Since 1992, case and demographic data have only been available for cases that result in at least 1 day away from work, although BLS recently began publishing the results of pilot tests of **8** it **9** for: cases that result in no days away from work but lead to a job transfer or restricted work.

It’s not necessary to COP on Expression of Ideas questions such as this. COP is more applicable to the Standard English Conventions questions that ask about grammar. We can skip the COP step and go straight to BOSS. In this case, my BOSS would be to keep the sentence because it gives examples of the “case details” introduced in sentence.

### 3 – Select Answer

Select answer choice A because it almost perfectly agrees with our BOSS solution. I would not choose answer choice B because the sentence does not “explain why” the details should be in the report.

## Check Pronoun Precision 9

### Expert Strategy

The last couple of strategies have been focused on the Expression of Ideas questions – questions that ask about the clarity, development, and organization of a passage. Now, let's go back to Standard English Convention questions. Pronoun errors are one of the most common grammar issues on the SAT Writing section. You must master every type of pronoun error the SAT will throw at you.

A pronoun is a noun that substitutes for another noun.

Common SAT Pronouns	
	He
	Her
	Him
	I
	It
	Me
	She
	Them
	Their
	They
	Us
	We
	You

Pronoun errors are often hard to spot for many students because we misuse pronouns in everyday language all the time. For example, we might be talking about the author of a book and later refer to that author as “they.” While doing so may not be a big deal in everyday language, pronoun misuse is a huge mistake on the SAT.

Pronouns must agree with the nouns they are referring to. When you see a pronoun underlined on the SAT Writing section, you must make sure there is one and only one logical noun that it can be referring to.

Singular-Plural Pronouns	
What You Need to Know	The SAT will sometimes refer to a singular noun with a plural pronoun, or vice versa. It will also do this with noun references (see the below example).
Example	Jake and Andre wanted to become a lawyer when they grow up.
Tricky Singular-Plural Pronouns	High School – Their or Its High Schools – Their or Its United States of America – Their or Its States – Their or Its Business Accounts – Their or Its

Lost Pronouns	
What You Need to Know	The SAT will sometimes have a pronoun in the sentence that does not refer to anything.
Example	It was bittersweet to see Courtney graduate.
Common Lost Pronouns	It This/That These/Those

Relative Pronouns	
What You Need to Know	Relative pronouns must be used in specific contexts.
Specific Relative Pronouns	<p>Who/Whom/Whose – Must refer to people.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who – Use when you'd use "he"</li> <li>• Whom – Use when you'd use "him"</li> <li>• Whose – Use to indicate possession</li> </ul> <p>When – Must refer to time.</p> <p>Where – Must refer to geographic locations. (Note: "whereby" means "by which" and does not refer to geographical locations)</p> <p>Which – Must refer to adjacent noun. (usually requires a comma in front of it)</p>
Example	The average student got a perfect SAT score, which was not expected by anyone.



### Subject vs. Object Pronouns

What You Need to Know	Subject pronouns do action. Object pronouns receive an action. Ask yourself whether a pronoun in a sentence is doing or receiving the action of the verb in a sentence. Then use the appropriate subject or object pronoun.
Memory Trick	A subject pronoun is any pronoun that can fly a kite. [Subject Pronoun] can fly a kite. An object pronoun is any pronoun that a kite can be flown by. A kite can be flown by [object pronoun].
Example	Me can fly a kite. (incorrectly used object pronoun)

### Ambiguous Pronouns

What You Need to Know	The SAT will sometimes not be clear as to whom or what a particular pronoun is referring to.
Insight	This is the most common way we misuse pronouns in everyday language.
Example	Mark and Michael were both excited to compete in the basketball tournament, but he was certainly the better player.

**Expert Example**

- (1) Listening to the new album, Mike, Brian, and me were so impressed with the artist's singing ability.

Apply COP

Listening (to the new album), Mike, Brian, and me were so impressed (with the artist's singing ability.)

Simplified Sentence

Listening, Mike, Brian, and **me** were so impressed

You should ask yourself, is the pronoun "me" doing or receiving the action in this sentence?

Clearly, "me" is doing the action of "were." Therefore, we need to use a subject pronoun.

Is "me" a subject or object pronoun? You can say "the flight can flown by me," but not "me can fly the kite." So "me" is an object pronoun. To correct this sentence, the object pronoun "me" should be changed to the subject pronoun "I."

Corrected Sentence

Listening to the new album, Mike, Brian, and I were so impressed with the artist's singing ability.

- (2) The patient suffered extreme grievances. This resulted from a physician's arrogance.

Apply COP

The patient suffered extreme grievances. This resulted ~~from a physician's arrogance.~~

### Simplified Sentence

The patient suffered extreme grievances. **This** resulted

You should ask yourself, “What is the pronoun ‘this’ referring to?” Judging by the previous sentence, perhaps “this” is attempting to refer to “grievances.” However, this would not make sense since “grievances” is plural and “this” is singular. This is technically a lost pronoun error since “this” is not referring to anything. To correct this error, clarify what “this” is referring to.

### Corrected Sentence

The patient suffered extreme grievances. **This misfortune** resulted from a physician’s arrogance.

- (3) Ricardo was an artist that was able to become famous at it.

### Apply COP

Ricardo was an artist that was able to become famous (at it.)

### Simplified Sentence

Ricardo was an artist **that** was able to become famous

In this case, there are actually two pronoun errors. The first is the relative pronoun issue with that “that.” Because “that” is referring a person, the pronoun should be changed to “who.”

There is an additional pronoun issue that has been removed from the sentence due to COP.

In this case, “it” is a lost pronoun. The sentence needs to clarify what “it” is.

### Corrected Sentence

Ricardo was an artist **who** was able to become famous at **painting**.

## Expert Practice

More than once since its inception in the early 1970s, **5** the BLS occupational safety and health statistics program has been the subject of scrutiny, often leading to program changes. **6** Next, concern in the late 1980s that a sample survey could not provide a complete count of workplace fatalities led to the development of the BLS Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries (CFOI), which has provided a comprehensive count of fatal work injuries annually since 1992. Also in 1992, BLS expanded the SOII to include “case and demographic” details. **7** These data elaborate on the worker involved (including occupation, age, and gender) and the circumstances surrounding the incident (including nature of injury and part of body affected). Since 1992, case and demographic data have only been available for cases that result in at least 1 day away from work, although BLS recently began publishing the results of pilot tests of **8** it **9** for: cases that result in no days away from work but lead to a job transfer or restricted work.

8

- (A) NO CHANGE
- (B) its details
- (C) these details
- (D) this

**Solution****1 – Examine Lines Related to Question 8**

Since 1992, case and demographic data have only been available for cases that result in at least 1 day away from work, although BLS recently began publishing the results of pilot tests of **8** it **9** for: cases that result in no days away from work but lead to a job transfer or restricted work.

**2 – Apply COP**

Since 1992, case and demographic data have only been available (for cases that result) (in at least 1 day away) (from work), although BLS recently began publishing the results (of pilot tests) of **8** it **9** for: cases that result (in no days away) (from work) but lead (to a job transfer or restricted work).

Note: In this case, I did not cross out the “of it” because this prepositional phrase contains the underlined portion that I am supposed to examine for this question.

**3 – Apply BOSS**

Since 1992, case and demographic data have only been available, although BLS recently began publishing the results of **8** these data **9** for: cases that result but lead.

Whenever I see “it” in on the SAT Writing section, I ask myself, “what is ‘it’ referring to?” In this case, I believe “it” is referring to “data.” However, “data” is plural and “it” is singular. This is a singular-plural pronoun error or a lost pronoun error (you could argue that the “it” is not referring to anything at all). To correct this error, I would change “it” to “these data.”

#### 4 – Select Answer

Select answer choice C because it almost perfectly agrees with our BOSS solution.

# Punctuate Appropriately<sup>10</sup>

## Expert Strategy

Because SAT Writing is now made up of passages, punctuation has become more important than ever. We have already covered some punctuation rules with respect to transitions, but there are still a few rules left to know. The best way to recognize when the SAT is punctuating sentences incorrectly is to understand how to punctuate sentences correctly.

You should also be particularly aware of fragments and run-ons on the SAT. The most common way the SAT creates a fragment is by changing a verb to the “-ing” form. The most common way the SAT creates a run-on is by separating two complete sentences with only a comma. This will become clear when we go over Expert Examples.

Period (.)	
What You Need to Know	The SAT uses periods to separate complete sentences. A complete sentence contains both a subject and a verb.
Insight	If two complete sentences are separated by only a comma, you have a run-on sentence created by a comma splice error. You may want to correct this issue by placing a period between the two complete sentences.
Example	Mark jumps high. Michael jumps higher.

### Semicolon (;)

What You Need to Know	The SAT uses semicolons to separate complete sentences. A complete sentence contains both a subject and a verb.
Insight	If two complete sentences are separated by only a comma, you have a run-on sentence created by a comma splice error. You may want to correct this issue by placing a semicolon between the two complete sentences.
Example	Mark jumps high; Michael jumps higher.

### Colon (:) or Dash (-)

What You Need to Know	The SAT uses semicolons and dashes for introductions.
Insight	Semicolons and dashes usually introduce lists.
Example	Mom said two get three items from the grocery store: milk, bananas, and cookies.

### Comma (,)

What You Need to Know	The SAT uses commas in a variety of ways.
Insight	The SAT most commonly uses a comma to separate modifiers.
Example	Having studied for the SAT all day, Megan was tired.



**Expert Example**

- (1) The book on ancient Roman history was fascinating; since I was going to visit there in the summer.

**Apply COP**

The book (on ancient Roman history) was fascinating; since I was going to visit there (in the summer.)

**Simplified Sentence**

The book was fascinating; since I was going to visit **there**

Whenever you see a semicolon in a sentence, you should determine whether the clause that comes before it and the clause that comes after it can both stand-alone as complete sentences. “The book was fascinating” is a complete sentence that can stand alone.

However, “since I was going to visit there” is not a complete sentence that can stand-alone.

In order to create a stand-alone sentence, we could simply remove the “since.” On the other hand, the sentence can also be fixed by removing the semicolon altogether. There is also another error in the sentence. The word “there” is a lost pronoun. “There” does not refer logically to any word in the sentence. You may want to argue that “there” is referring to “Rome.” However, the adjective “Roman” is not the same as the geographical location “Rome.” Therefore, “there” is a lost pronoun.

**Corrected Sentence**

The book on ancient Roman history was fascinating since I was going to visit **Rome** in the summer.

- (2) There were three items that were absolutely essential for the trip, a toothbrush, a book, and a cell phone charger.

Apply COP

There were three items that were absolutely essential (for the trip), a toothbrush, a book, and a cell phone charger.

Simplified Sentence

There were three items that were absolutely essential, a toothbrush, a book, and a cell phone charger.

Clearly, the independent clause in this sentence is introducing a list of items. Therefore, a colon or dash is necessary instead of the current comma.

Corrected Sentence

There were three items that were absolutely essential: a toothbrush, a book, and a cell phone charger.

- (3) There was no doubt I was ready to fall asleep in class, the teacher even saw me put my head down on the desk.

Apply COP

There was no doubt I was ready to fall asleep in class, the teacher even saw me put my head down on the desk.

### Simplified Sentence

There was no doubt I was ready to fall asleep, the teacher even saw me put my head down.

This is the most common way the SAT creates run-on sentences: separating two complete sentences with only a comma. You must separate two complete sentences with more than a comma. This could include a period, semicolon, or a conjunction with a comma. In this example, “there was no doubt I was ready to fall asleep” and “the teacher even saw me put my head down” are both complete sentences. Therefore, the lone comma to separate these two commas is incorrect.

### Corrected Sentence

There was no doubt I was ready to fall asleep; the teacher even saw me put my head down.

- (4) Performed by Luke Wilson, the poem *Falling Leaves* delivering a powerful message about the fleeting nature of happiness.

### Apply COP

Performed (by Luke Wilson), the poem *Falling Leaves* delivering a powerful message (about the fleeting nature) (of happiness.)

### Simplified Sentence

Performed, the poem *Falling Leaves* delivering a powerful message

This is the most common way the SAT creates fragments: changing verbs to the “-ing” form. In this case, “delivering” should be changed to “delivered.” This would create a complete sentence with a verb.

### Corrected Sentence

Performed by Luke Wilson, the poem Falling Leaves **delivered** a powerful message about the fleeting nature of happiness

- (5) Due to the fact of assembling teenagers from all parts of the country for the conference.

### Apply COP

~~Due to the fact of assembling teenagers from all parts of the country for the conference.~~

### Simplified Sentence

(None)

This is another common way the SAT creates fragments: creating a sentence that is missing a verb. In this case, the entire sentence is made up of prepositional phrases and there is no verb.

### Corrected Sentence

The teenagers **assembled** from all parts of the country for the conference.

- (6) My favorite ice cream is cookie dough, my brother's favorite ice cream is chocolate chip.

### Apply COP

My favorite ice cream is cookie dough, my brother's favorite ice cream is chocolate chip.

### Simplified Sentence

My favorite ice cream is cookie dough, my brother's favorite ice cream is chocolate chip.

This is yet another example of how the SAT creates run-ons through comma splice errors.

As always, we need something more than a comma to separate two complete sentences.

### Corrected Sentence

My favorite ice cream is cookie dough, **but** my brother's favorite ice cream is chocolate chip.

### Expert Practice

More than once since its inception in the early 1970s, **5** the BLS occupational safety and health statistics program has been the subject of scrutiny, often leading to program changes. **6** Next, concern in the late 1980s that a sample survey could not provide a complete count of workplace fatalities led to the development of the BLS Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries (CFOI), which has provided a comprehensive count of fatal work injuries annually since 1992. Also in 1992, BLS expanded the SOII to include “case and demographic” details. **7** These data elaborate on the worker involved (including occupation, age, and gender) and the circumstances surrounding the incident (including nature of injury and part of body affected). Since 1992, case and demographic data have only been available for cases that result in at least 1 day away from work, although BLS recently began publishing the results of pilot tests of **8** it **9** for: cases that result in no days away from work but lead to a job transfer or restricted work.

9

- (A) NO CHANGE
- (B) for cases, that result in no days away from work
- (C) for cases; that result in no days away from work
- (D) for cases that result in no days away from work

**Solution****1 – Examine Lines Related to Question 9**

Since 1992, case and demographic data have only been available for cases that result in at least 1 day away from work, although BLS recently began publishing the results of pilot tests of **8** it **9** for: cases that result in no days away from work but lead to a job transfer or restricted work.

**2 – Apply COP**

Since 1992, case and demographic data have only been available (for cases that result) (in at least 1 day away) (from work), although BLS recently began publishing the results (of pilot tests) (of **8** it **9** for: cases that result (in no days away) (from work) but lead (to a job transfer or restricted work).

Note: In this case, I did not cross out the “of it” because this prepositional phrase contains the underlined portion that I am supposed to examine for this question.

### 3 – Apply BOSS

Since 1992, case and demographic data have only been available, although BLS recently began publishing the results **9** for cases that result but lead.

Because there is a colon, you should ask yourself, “is there an introduction being made?” Remember that colons are typically used on the SAT for introductions. In this case, there is no introduction being made. Therefore, a colon is probably not necessary. Instead, I would simply use no punctuation at all for my BOSS solution.

### 4 – Select Answer

Select answer choice D because it perfectly agrees with our BOSS solution. Answer choice B is not correct because there is no reason to pause the sentence with a comma since there is no conjunction, modifier, or natural break in the sentence. Answer choice C is not correct because “that result in no days away from work but lead to a job transfer or restricted work” is not a complete sentence. Remember that both sides of a semicolon must be able to stand alone as their own sentences.

## Modify Appropriately<sup>11</sup>

### Expert Strategy

Modifiers are phrases that describe nouns. Typically, modifiers are separated from the sentence using one or more commas. We have already discussed one type of modifier: a non-essential appositive. These modifiers are separated from the sentence using two commas. However, most modifiers have only one comma and often or end sentences.

In order to modify appropriately, you must place the correct noun next to the modifier. If the noun that is placed directly next to the comma of a modifier is not what the modifier is describing, then the sentence is grammatically incorrect.

For students who have never studied for the SAT, these errors are often difficult to spot. In everyday language, we are accustomed to incorrectly using modifiers. This error is never going to “sound incorrect.” By specifically looking for this error, you will have a huge advantage over students who approach the SAT Writing multiple-choice section by searching for errors that “sound incorrect” (most students).

Modifying appropriately is a two-step process. First, determine what noun the modifier should be modifying. Second, determine what noun is directly next to the comma of the modifier. If the first step noun and the second step noun do not agree, then you have a modifier error.

Often, the noun that is directly next to the comma is similar to the noun that should be modified, but is not the exact noun needed. For example, there is a difference between the “office” and the “office manager.”



Three Types of Modifiers	
Beginning Modifiers	<u>Having hiked for three miles</u> , the travelers were very tired.
Middle Modifiers (Appositives)	Joe Pulizzi, <u>an internet marketing guru</u> , is the foremost expert on creating content to increase traffic to your website.
End Modifiers	Perhaps the most famous character in Mad Men is Don Draper, <u>a successful New York advertising executive</u> .

### Expert Example

- (1) The Los Angeles Lakers have Lonzo Ball, one of the most celebrated team franchises in NBA history.

Apply COP

The Los Angeles Lakers have Lonzo Ball, one of the most celebrated team franchises in NBA history.

Simplified Sentence

The Los Angeles Lakers have Lonzo Ball, one

There is no error outside of the prepositional phrases. Therefore, we need to reexamine the sentence with the prepositions.

The Los Angeles Lakers have **Lonzo Ball**, one of the most celebrated team franchises in NBA history.

Looking at this whole sentence now, we need to first determine if there is a modifier in the sentence. It is not the phrase "The Los Angeles Lakers have Lonzo Ball" since this phrase is not describing a noun. But the phrase "one of the most celebrated team franchises in NBA history" is a modifier describing a noun. The noun this phrase should be describing

is “Los Angeles Lakers.” However, the noun that is directly next to the comma is “Kobe Bryant.” We need to rearrange the sentence so that “Los Angeles Lakers” should be directly next to the modifier comma.

#### Corrected Sentence

Lonzo Ball plays for the **Los Angeles Lakers**, one of the most celebrated team franchises in NBA history.

- (2) Coming home after serving three years in the military, Luther’s family was excited to see him.

#### Apply COP

Coming home (after serving three years) (in the military), Luther’s family was excited to see him.

#### Simplified Sentence

Coming home, **Luther’s family** was excited to see him.

On the surface, nothing “sounds incorrect” about this sentence. However, we should ask ourselves what noun the modifier “coming home” is attempting to describe. Well, “Luther” is the one coming home. But “Luther’s family” is currently next to the comma. The sentence should be changed so that “Luther” appears directly next to the comma, not “Luther’s family.”

#### Corrected Sentence

Coming home after serving three years in the military, **Luther had a family who** was excited to see him.

- (3) Patty Miles, when she was the winner of the National Spelling Bee in 2010, won the National Science Bowl the next year.

Apply COP

Patty Miles, when she was the winner of the National Spelling Bee in 2010, won the National Science Bowl the next year.

Simplified Sentence

Patty Miles, ~~when she was~~ the winner, won the National Science Bowl the next year.

In this case, we have a modifier that appears in the middle of the sentence separated by two commas: “when she was the winner.” The problem with this modifier is that it has the verb “was.” In order to correct this error, we should simply remove the phrase “when she was.” This creates a much better appositive that appropriately describes Patty Miles.

Corrected Sentence

Patty Miles, ~~the winner of the National Spelling Bee in 2010~~, won the National Science Bowl the next year.

### Expert Practice

Concerned about BLS workplace injury and illness data in the mid-2000s, **10** individual cases were attempted to be combated by researchers from the SOII in selected states with case data from state workers’ compensation records. The results varied, with estimates of an undercount ranging from 20 percent to 70 percent of cases depending upon the research methodology and state studied. Other research and analysis concluded that the size of the undercount is small. On the heels of this research, and media reports of unsafe work places, Congress held hearings on the subject and later identified funding for BLS to

follow up and expand on the previous research so as to understand the nature and magnitude of any undercount and attempt to identify solutions. At the same time, Congress provided funding to OSHA and to the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health to conduct complementary research into issues surrounding the completeness of work injury data.

10

- (A) NO CHANGE
- (B) data on individual cases was compared by researchers
- (C) researchers attempted to compare data on individual cases
- (D) researchers attempt to compare data on individual cases

### Solution

#### 1 – Examine Lines Related to Question 10

Concerned about BLS workplace injury and illness data in the mid-2000s,  
10 individual cases were attempted to be combated by researchers from the SOII in  
selected states with case data from state workers' compensation records.

#### 2 – Apply COP

Concerned ~~about BLS workplace injury and illness data in the mid-2000s,~~  
10 individual cases were attempted to be combated by researchers from the SOH in  
~~selected states with case data~~ from state workers' compensation records.

### 3 – Apply BOSS

Concerned, researchers attempted to combat...

The first step when you see a modifier such as “concerned” should be to ask yourself, “what noun is the modifier attempting to describe?” In this case, the “researchers” were concerned. However, “Individual cases” is currently directly next to the comma. This doesn’t make logical sense. The sentence needs to be rearranged so that “researchers” appears directly next to the comma.

### 4 – Select Answer

Select answer choice C because it perfectly agrees with our BOSS solution. Answer choice D is not correct because “attempt” is not in the past tense. We can tell that the sentence should be in the past tense based on other non-underlined verbs in the sentence such as “concerned.”

## Interpret Data 12

### Expert Strategy

A new question type is the interpretation of charts, graphs, tables, and other graphically displayed data. You might be wondering why interpretation of data questions would appear on the SAT Writing section at all. The SAT Writing passage will likely make an assertion about the graphically displayed data. Then you will have to determine whether the author's claim about the data is correct or not.

In order to tackle these questions, I will teach you a standardized method to approach data interpretation. You should have a standardize approach for interpretation for each of the most common graphically displayed data formats. You should also be aware of the supplementary information given with the graph, chart, or table.

#### Bar Graph Standardized Approach

(1) Read Title

(2) Read X-Axis

(3) Read Y-Axis

(4) Interpret: 1 Bar\*

\* If you can interpret 1 bar, then you can interpret the entire bar graph.

### Line Graph (Or Scatter Plot) Standardized Approach

(1) Read Title

(2) Read X-Axis

(3) Read Y-Axis

(4) Interpret: As there is an increase in the x-axis, what happens to the y-axis

\* If you can interpret what happens to the y-axis when the x-axis increases, then you can interpret the entire graph.

### Pie Graph Standardized Approach

(1) Read Title

(2) Interpret: 1 slice

\* If you can interpret 1 slice of the pie, then you can interpret the entire pie.

### Tables

(1) Read Title

(2) Read Column Headers

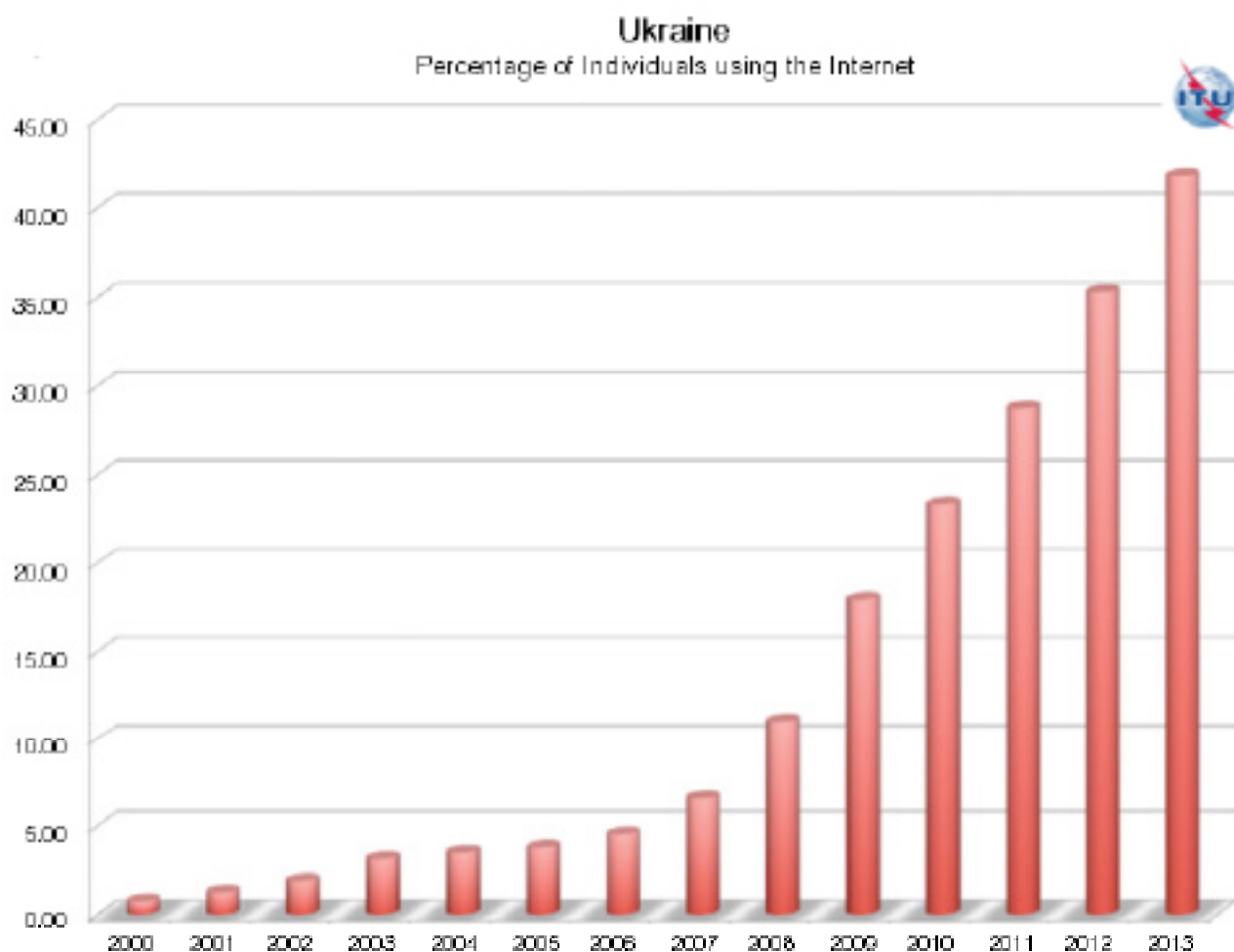
(3) Read Row Headers

(4) Interpret: 1 Row Across

\* If you can interpret 1 row across, then you can interpret the entire table.

## Expert Example

## Bar Graph



## Bar Graph Standardized Approach

(1) Ukraine – Percentage of Individuals Using the Internet

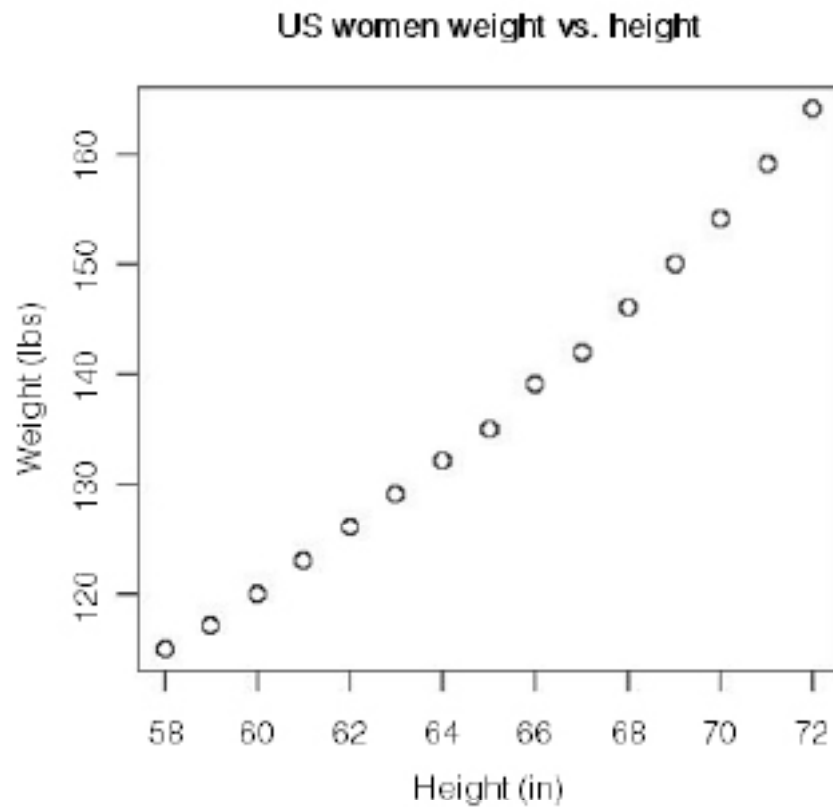
(2) Years

(3) Percentage of Individuals

(4) Interpret: In 2013, approximately 42% of people in Ukraine used the internet.



## Line Graph / Scatter Plot



## Line Graph (Or Scatter Plot) Standardized Approach

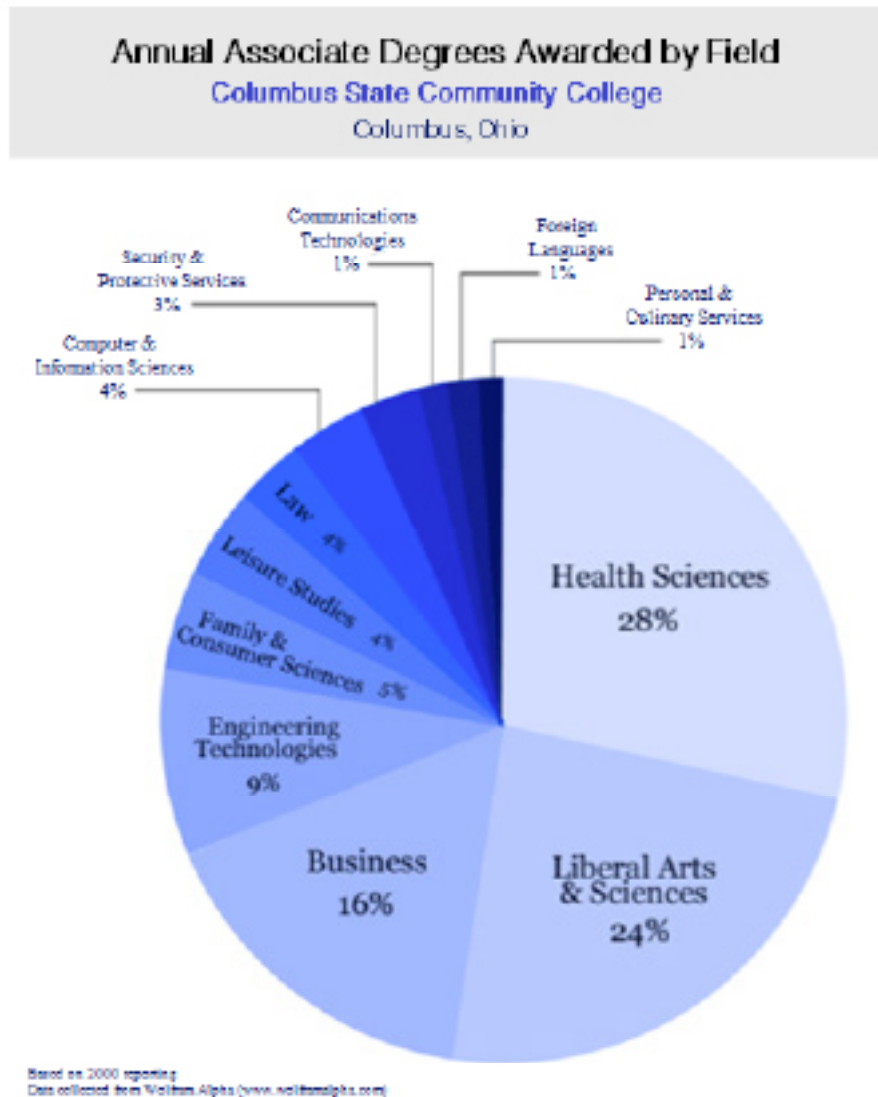
(1) US Women Weight vs. Height

(2) Height in Inches

(3) Weight in Pounds

(4) Interpret: As height increases, weight increases.

## Pie Graph



## Pie Graph Standardized Approach

- (1) Annual Associate Degrees Awarded by Field in Columbus State Community College.
- (2) Interpret: 28% of all associate degrees at Columbus State Community College were in the Health Sciences field.

Table

Resources Organizations provide to external executives	Number of orgs. that provide resource	Number that say it is effective
Mentoring or informal “buddy” networks	49%	47%
Orientation programs with other new execs	45%	19%
Customized assimilation plans and programs	32%	38%
Executive coaching	29%	34%
Pre-employment activities	27%	8%

## Tables

(1) Resources Organizations Provide to External Executives

(2) - Number of Organizations That Provide Resources

- Number That Say It Is Effective

(3) - Mentoring or Informal “Buddy” Networks

- Orientation Programs With Other New Execs

- Customized Assimilation Plans and Programs

- Executive Coaching

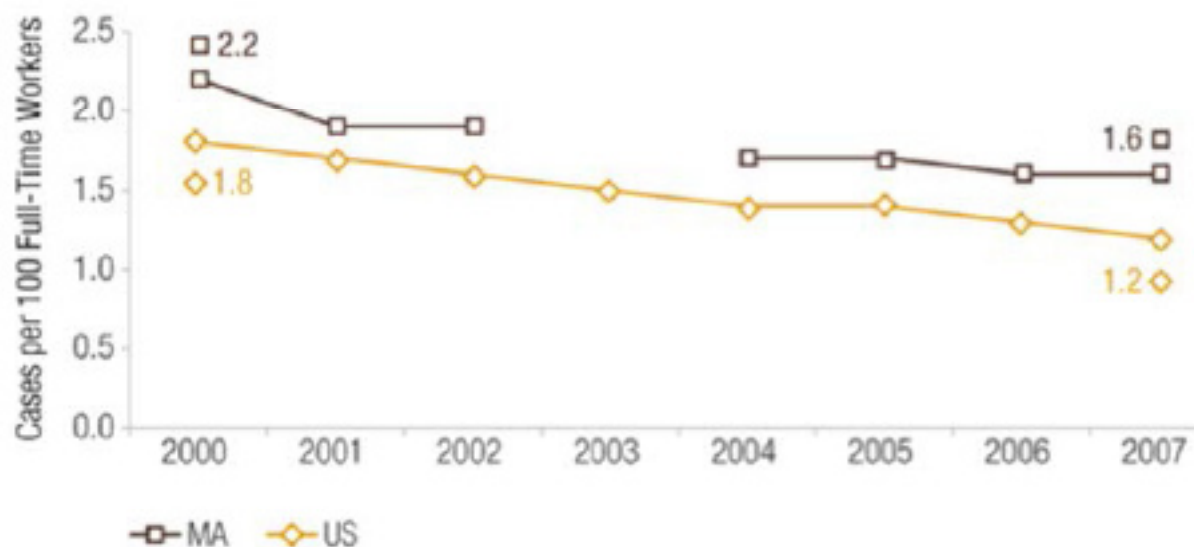
- Pre-employment Activities

(4) Interpret: 49% of organizations provide “mentoring or informal buddy networks” to their external executives, and 47% say it’s effective

## Expert Practice

BLS staff, several state agencies, and one university researcher conducted this initial round of research over 3 years. At that time, BLS convened to hear presentations on research results and to develop consensus recommendations for moving forward. Interestingly, **11** Massachusetts (MA) reported results lower than the national average.

Figure 9.3 Nonfatal Occupational Injuries and Illnesses Resulting in Lost Workdays



Source: US Dept. of Labor Bureau of Labor Statistics, Survey of Occupational Injuries and Illnesses.  
 \*The MA rate decreased over time but was significantly higher than the US rate ( $p < 0.05$ ).

11

- (A) NO CHANGE
- (B) all states were very close to the national average.
- (C) Massachusetts' nonfatal occupational injuries increased.
- (D) Massachusetts reported significant deviations from the national average.

**Solution****1 – Examine Lines Related to Question 11**

Interestingly, **11** Massachusetts (MA) reported results lower than the national average.

**2 – Interpret data****Line Graph (Or Scatter Plot) Standardized Approach**

(1) Nonfatal Occupational Injuries and Illnesses Resulting in Lost Workdays

(2) Years

(3) Cases Per 100 Full-Time Workers

(4) Interpret: As the years have gone by, the cases of non-fatal occupational injuries and illnesses resulting lost workdays have decreased for both the U.S. and Massachusetts.

**3 – Apply BOSS**

Interestingly, **11** Massachusetts (MA) reported results **higher** than the national average.

The passage currently states that “Massachusetts (MA) reported results lower than the national average.” However, it is clear from the graph that Massachusetts actually reported results that are higher than the national average.

#### 4 – Select Answer

Select answer choice D because it is closest to our BOSS solution. You might want to argue that the graph does not state that the deviations were “significant.” However, if you read the supplementary information at the bottom of the graph, it actually does – “The MA rate decreased over time but was significantly higher than the U.S. rate.”

## Stay Active 13

### Expert Strategy

You have already seen this Expert Strategy in the SAT Essay section. If you recall, you need to write your SAT Essay in the active voice rather than the passive voice. The active voice is just as important to the SAT Writing section as it is to the SAT Essay section.

Active Voice – The subject is actively doing the verb.

Passive Voice – The subject is passively receiving the verb.

Here are some examples that illustrate the difference between subjects doing the action of a verb versus subjects receiving the action of a verb.

Active Voice	Passive Voice
I aced the SAT.	The SAT was aced by me.
She plays tennis.	Tennis is played by her.
They love to eat.	Eating is loved by them.
The dog fetched the bone.	The bone was fetched by the dog.

I use two tricks to recognize the difference between active voice vs. passive voice. The first is that the passive voice often uses the word “by.” The second is that the passive voice always uses forms of “to be” (i.e. is, was, been, etc.). Knowing these two items will help you immediately recognize the difference between the passive voice and the active voice.

**Expert Example**

- (1) In order to reduce light pollution, limits on porch lights have been set by the neighborhood community committee.

**Apply COP**

In order to reduce light pollution, limits ~~on porch lights~~ have been set ~~by the neighborhood community committee~~.

**Simplified Sentence**

In order to reduce light pollution, limits have been set

In this case, there is no error outside of the prepositional phrases. Therefore, we need to reexamine the sentence with the prepositions.

In order to reduce light pollution, limits on porch lights **have been set by the neighborhood community committee**.

Looking at this whole sentence now, we are able to identify the passive voice. The passive voice is often overlooked when we cross out prepositional phrases because “by” is a preposition that also often creates the passive voice. The “to be” verb “been” is another clue that indicates the use of passive voice.

**Corrected Sentence**

In order to reduce light pollution, **the neighborhood community committee has** set limits on porch lights.



- (2) Because new SAT strategies were learned, the students aced their exam on Saturday.

Apply COP

Because new SAT strategies were learned, the students aced their exam (on Saturday.)

Simplified Sentence

Because new SAT strategies **were learned**, the students aced their exam

In this case, the word “by” is not in the sentence to help us identify the passive voice.

Instead, we should notice that the “to be” verb “were” and that “learned” is not actively }  
being done by a noun.

Corrected Sentence

Because **the students learned** new SAT strategies, they aced their exam on Saturday.

- (3) Because I was in so much pain, prescription-grade acetaminophen was prescribed by the physician.

Apply COP

Because I was in so much pain, extra-strength acetaminophen was prescribed ~~by the physician~~.

Simplified Sentence

Because I was in so much pain, extra-strength acetaminophen **was prescribed**

Although COP ignores the “by” phrase, which makes it slightly more challenging to identify the passive voice, you should still recognize the passive phrase “was prescribed.” This phrase does not have a noun actively doing the action of the verb.

## Corrected Sentence

Because I was in so much pain, **the physician prescribed** extra-strength acetaminophen.

## Expert Practice

It must have been about the same time when **12** the walls of San Marco were covered by Fra Angelico with his angel pictures that a very different kind of painter **13** had worked in the Carmine church in Florence.

This was no gentle, refined monk, but just an ordinary man of the world--an awkward, good-natured person, who, as long as he had pictures to paint, cared for little else. Why, he would even forget to ask for payment when his work was done; and as to taking care of his clothes, or trying to keep himself tidy, that was a thing he never thought of! What trouble his mother must have had with him when he was a boy! It was no use sending young Tommaso on an errand, he would forget it before he had gone a hundred yards, and he was so careless and untidy that it was enough to make any one lose patience with him. But only let him have a pencil and a smooth surface on which to draw, and he was a different boy. It is said that even now, in the little town of Castello San Giovanni, some eighteen miles from Florence, where Tommaso was born, there are still some wonderfully good figures to be seen, drawn by him when he was quite a little boy. Certainly there was no carelessness and nothing untidy about his work.

PKP: Tommaso = good painter + poor hygiene

Because this is a new passage that we are tackling, we need to come up with a Passage Key Point. Although the PKP is typically located in the first paragraph, in this particular case, the first paragraph does not give us enough information to come up with a good PKP. We should read the second para-

graph in order to gather enough information in order to synthesize our PKP. Once we have created a PKP for the passage, we can then tackle the associated questions.

12

- (A) NO CHANGE
- (B) Fra Angelico has been covering the walls of San Marco
- (C) Fra Angelico was covering the walls of San Marco
- (D) the walls of San Marco was covered by Fra Angelico

### Solution

#### 1 – Examine Lines Related to Question 12

It must have been about the same time when **12** the walls of San Marco were covered by Fra Angelico with his angel pictures that a very different kind of painter **13** had worked in the Carmine church in Florence.

#### 2 – Apply COP

It must have been (about the same time) when **12** the walls (of San Marco) were covered (by Fra Angelico) (with his angel pictures) that a very different kind (of painter) **13** had worked (in the Carmine church) (in Florence).

### 3 – Apply BOSS

It must have been when **12** Fra Angelico covered the walls that a very different kind  
**13** had worked

We should realize the sentence's use of passive voice. There is a "to be" verb "were" and "by."  
In order to fix, this, the sentence should actively have Fra Angelico covering the walls.

### 4 – Select Answer

Select answer choice C because it almost perfectly agrees with our BOSS solution. Answer choice B is not correct because "has been" is not in the past continuous tense.

## Keep Tense Agreement 14

### Expert Strategy

One major error on the SAT Writing section is disagreement of verb tenses. If one verb is in the present tense, then other verbs in the same sentence should be in the present tense. If one verb is in the past tense, then other verbs in the same sentence should be in the past tense. The only exception to this rule is if there is a clear indication that the tense should change. For example, a word such as “before” clearly indicates a change in time and that a change of tense may be needed in a sentence.

Do not get caught up with the names of different tenses. For example, it’s not important to know what the “perfect continuous” tense is. Trying to memorize these tenses will likely not add many points to your score. Instead, just try to keep verb tenses consistent throughout sentences that you tackle. Whenever you see a verb underlined on the SAT Writing section, check to make sure that its tense agrees with the tense of other verbs in the sentence.

I will review the verb tenses here. This table is especially important for foreign students who did not grow up using English as their first language since verb tense errors seem to be especially problematic for these students.

	Present	Past	Future
Simple	I study.	I studied.	I will study.
Continuous	I am studying.	I was studying.	I will be studying.
Perfect	I have studied.	I had studied.	I will have studied.
Perfect Continuous	I have been studying.	I had been studying.	I will have been studying.

\*The most common tenses of each type are bolded above.

### (1) Simple

Action occurs in the present, past or future.

- The simple tense is essentially the standard present, past, and future tenses that we think of with respect to verbs.
- The most common simple tense on the SAT is the present simple. This tense represents actions occurring at the current time.

### (2) Continuous

Action is continuing.

- The continuous tense is the same thing as the progressive tense. I typically think of this tense as the “ing” verbs.
- The most common progressive tense on the SAT is the past continuous. For example, “I was studying.”
- The past continuous tense refers to three types of actions:
  - (1) Action in the past was interrupted (i.e. I was studying until my brother walked in the room.)
  - (2) Action occurred at the same time as other actions (i.e. I was studying while she was eating)
  - (3) Indicates atmosphere (i.e. Students were studying in the library)

NOTE: Continuous/progressive verbs are not the same thing as gerunds. Gerunds are nouns with “ing” at the end. For example, “studying is important” uses “studying” as gerund rather than a continuous verb.

### (3) Perfect

Action is completed.

- I typically think of the perfect tense as having either “have” or “had.”
- The most common perfect tense on the SAT is the past perfect. For example, “I had studied.” Past perfect refers to actions that have occurred before another action in the past (i.e. Before basketball season started, I had studied a lot for the SAT.)

### (4) Perfect Continuous

Continuing action that has been completed at some point in the past.

- I typically think of the perfect continuous as having either “have” or “had” and a “to be” verb. (notice that although it is called “continuous” that an “ing” verb is not necessary)
- The most common perfect continuous tense on the SAT is the present perfect continuous. For example, “I have been studying.” Present perfect continuous refers to actions that have occurred in the past but are continuing on into the present (i.e. I have been studying for 40 long nights for the upcoming exam.)

NOTE: Would/Could are not verb tenses. Instead, they typically represent “conditional verbs.” This means they are used when a certain event or verb were to happen.

In addition, you should be wary of verb tense shifts between sentences in the same paragraph. For example, it is not logical to say the following:

The painting has been now been restored. The painting was destroyed.

Instead, you would want to reverse the order of these two sentences. Recognizing inappropriate shifts in verb tense between sentences is especially important on sentence placement questions that ask you to move a sentence to a more logical location within a paragraph.

### Expert Example

- (1) When Jackie and Sasha visited the museum, they had noticed their favorite painting was missing.

Apply COP

When Jackie and Sasha visited the museum, they had noticed their favorite painting was missing.

Simplified Sentence

When Jackie and Sasha visited the museum, they **had** noticed their favorite painting was missing.

When you come across a verb phrase such as “had noticed,” you should ask yourself whether the “had” is necessary. Remember that the past perfect tense should be used when the verb has occurred prior to another action in the past. Did Jackie and Sasha notice their favorite painting was missing before or after they visited the museum? After. Therefore, the past perfect tense is not necessary.

Corrected Sentence

When Jackie and Sasha visited the museum, they noticed their favorite painting was missing.



- (2) Printed almost 50 years after it has been written, The Sun Also Rises is still one of Ernest Hemingway's greatest works.

#### Apply COP

Printed almost 50 years after it has been written, The Sun Also Rises is still one of Ernest Hemingway's greatest works.

#### Simplified Sentence

Printed almost 50 years after it **has been** written, The Sun Also Rises is still one

Here we have the present perfect continuous tense with the phrase "has been written."

This would indicate that the writing of The Sun Also Rises occurred in the past and is still occurring. However, the writing of The Sun Also Rises is a completed action that can be expressed using the simple past tense. In addition, there is nothing wrong with the pronoun "it." Although some students might think that "it" is a lost pronoun in this sentence, there is actually one and only one noun that "it" can logically refer to: The Sun Also Rises. Therefore, there is only a verb tense error in this sentence.

#### Corrected Sentence

Printed almost 50 years after it **was** written, The Sun Also Rises is still one of Ernest Hemingway's greatest works.

- (3) Although the author never actually writing a book himself, he believed ghostwriters did the job just fine.

#### Apply COP

Although the author never actually writing a book himself, he believed ghostwriters did the job just fine.

### Simplified Sentence

Although the author never actually **writing** a book himself, he believed ghostwriters did the job just fine.

Given the past tense verbs “believed” and “did,” the verb “writing” should also be in the past tense.

### Corrected Sentence

Although the author never actually **wrote** a book himself, he believed ghostwriters did the job just fine.

### Expert Practice

It must have been about the same time when **12** the walls of San Marco were covered by Fra Angelico with his angel pictures that a very different kind of painter **13** had worked in the Carmine church in Florence.

This was no gentle, refined monk, but just an ordinary man of the world--an awkward, good-natured person, who, as long as he had pictures to paint, cared for little else. Why, he would even forget to ask for payment when his work was done; and as to taking care of his clothes, or trying to keep himself tidy, that was a thing he never thought of! What trouble his mother must have had with him when he was a boy! It was no use sending young Tommaso on an errand, he would forget it before he had gone a hundred yards, and he was so careless and untidy that it was enough to make any one lose patience with him. But only let him have a pencil and a smooth surface on which to draw, and he was a different boy. It is said that even now, in the little town of Castello San Giovanni, some eighteen miles from Florence, where Tommaso was born, there are still some wonderfully good figures to be seen, drawn by him when he was quite a little boy. Certainly there was no carelessness and nothing untidy about his work.

13

- (A) NO CHANGE
- (B) was working
- (C) had been working
- (D) would work

**Solution****1 – Examine Lines Related to Question 13**

It must have been about the same time when **12** the walls of San Marco were covered by Fra Angelico with his angel pictures that a very different kind of painter **13** had worked in the Carmine church in Florence.

**2 – Apply COP**

It must have been (about the same time) when **12** the walls (of San Marco) were covered (by Fra Angelico) (with his angel pictures) that a very different kind (of painter) **13** had worked (in the Carmine church) (in Florence.)

**3 – Apply BOSS**

It must have been when **12** the walls were covered that a very different kind **13** was working

“The different kind of painter” is completing an action at the same time as when Fra Angelico was covering walls. Actions that occur at the same time in the past as other actions require the past continuous form. However, the sentence is currently using the past perfect form since the word “had” is being used. Remember that the past perfect form is only used when an action has occurred before another action, both of which have occurred in the past. In other words, when you see “had” on the SAT, make sure that the action occurred prior to another action in the past.

#### 4 – Select Answer

Select answer choice B because it almost perfectly agrees with our BOSS solution. Answer choice C is the past perfect continuous, which would indicate that the action was completed at some point in the past and is still being completed today. However, the action is not still being done today. Answer choice D introduces the conditional verb “would,” which is not appropriate for this sentence. As I stated previously, it’s not necessary to know that name of every tense you come across on the SAT. A simpler way to think about this problem is to realize that two actions are occurring at the same time in the past. Whenever I see that this is happening, I think to myself “I need the ‘ing’ form.”

## Compare Correctly 15

### Expert Strategy

You must make sure to compare similar items on the SAT. In everyday language, we are extremely bad at this. We make incorrect comparisons all the time. These errors typically do not “sound wrong” on the SAT since we are so used to making bad comparisons. But if you think about what an incorrect SAT comparison is literally saying, it is often ridiculous.

### Expert Example

- (1) Three times as many pandas live in Asia as North America.

Apply COP

Three times as many pandas live (in Asia) as North America.

Simplified Sentence

Three times as many pandas live as North America.

Is it appropriate to compare pandas living in Asia to a country such as North America? No.

You must compare pandas living in Asia to pandas living in North America.

Corrected Sentence

Three times as many pandas live in Asia as in North America.

- (2) Like most famous musicians, Taylor Swift's vocal talents far surpass most people.

Apply COP

Like most famous musicians, Taylor Swift's vocal talents far surpass most people.

Simplified Sentence

Like **most famous musicians**, Taylor Swift's vocal talents far surpass **most people**.

There are actually two comparison errors in this sentence. The first is a modifier comparison error. You cannot compare "famous musicians" to "vocal talents." In addition, you cannot compare "vocal talents" to "most people."

Corrected Sentence

Like most famous musicians, Taylor Swift **has** vocal talents **that** far surpass **those** of most people.

- (3) Henry is certainly faster than Julie and Andre.

Apply COP

Henry is certainly faster than Julie and Andre.

Simplified Sentence

Henry is certainly **faster** than Julie and Andre.

This is a simple comparison rule that you must know for the SAT. When comparing two items, use the "-er" form of an adjective. When comparing more than two items, use the "-est" form of an adjective. In this case, we have three people: Henry, Julie, and Andre. Therefore, the adjective "faster" is incorrect.

## Corrected Sentence

Henry is certainly the fastest among himself, Julie, and Andre.

## Expert Practice

As the boy grew older all his longings would turn towards Florence, the beautiful city where there was everything to learn and to see, and so he was sent to become a pupil in the studio of Masolino, a great Florentine painter. But though his drawings improved, his careless habits continued the same. Unlike his peers, <sup>14</sup> Tomasso's ill-groomed appearance would draw ridicule.

“There goes Tommaso the painter,” the people would say, watching the big awkward figure passing through the streets on his way to work. “Truly he pays but little heed to his appearance. Look but at his untidy hair and the holes in his boots.” “Ay, indeed!” <sup>15</sup> an other would answer, “and yet it is said if only people paid him all they owed he would have gold enough and to spare. But what cares he so long as he has his paints and brushes? ‘Masaccio’ would be a more <sup>16</sup> felicitous name for him than Tommaso.” So the name Masaccio, or Ugly Tom, came to be that by which the big awkward painter was known. But no one thinks of the unkind meaning of the nickname now, for Masaccio <sup>17</sup> is why he is honored as one of the great names in the history of Art. <sup>18</sup>

14

- (A) NO CHANGE
- (B) Tomasso had an ill-groomed appearance that
- (C) Tomasso's appearance was ill-groomed and
- (D) Tomasso had been ill-groomed in appearance, which

**Solution****1 – Examine Lines Related to Question 14**

Unlike his peers, 14 Tomasso's ill-groomed appearance would draw ridicule.

**2 – Apply COP**

Unlike his peers, 14 Tomasso's ill-groomed appearance would draw ridicule.

**3 – Apply BOSS**

Unlike his peers, 14 Tomasso... .

The word “unlike” signals that a comparison is being made. However, you cannot compare “peers” to “appearance.” Instead, you must compare people to people. Therefore, “Tomasso” must be placed next to the comma. Notice that I only placed “Tomasso” next to the comma as my BOSS solution. BOSS needs to be quick. So it’s not necessary to write out a full solution to every question.



#### 4 – Select Answer

Select answer choice B because it almost perfectly agrees with our BOSS solution. Notice that “had” here is just the simple past tense. If you use “had” as a helping verb with another verb such as “had noticed” then you have the perfect tense, which is when an action occurs before another action in the past.

## Use Precise Word Choice 16

### Expert Strategy

On the New SAT, precision of word choice has become more important than ever. You must be aware of instances when an author uses words incorrectly. There are multiple ways that an author can misuse words.

You must understand the author's message when you decide what specific words he or she needs to be using. This is another reason why Reading Expert strategies have become so important on the SAT Writing section.

### Homophones

Homophones are words that sound similar but have different meanings. You must pay attention to the spelling of these words. Below is not an exhaustive list of Homophones that could appear on the SAT, but it should give you a good idea of what kind errors you should be looking for.

Homophones	
Accept vs. Except	Accept – Receive Except – Excluding
Affect vs. Effect	Affect – Influence Effect – Result
Apart vs. A Part	Apart – Not Together A Part – Portion
Ascent vs. Assent	Ascent – Rise Assent – Agreement

Eminent vs. Imminent	Eminent – Well-Known Imminent – Forthcoming
Illusion vs. Allusion	Illusion – Deception Allusion – Reference
Lead vs. Led	Lead – Frontrunner or Chemical Material Led – Guided
Precede vs. Proceed	Precede – Come Before Proceed – Move Forward
Than vs. Then	Than – Signals Comparison Then – Signals Progression

### Accurate Words

Accurate Words refers to using the appropriate word at the appropriate time. Sometimes, the SAT will not try to trick you by using a word that sounds similar to the correct word. Instead, the SAT will try to trick you by using an altogether incorrect word.

Accurate Words	
The new dance vacated from the norm.	The word “vacated” is incorrect. Instead, the accurate word should be “departed.”
He endorsed his muscle gains to exercise not steroids.	The word “endorsed” is incorrect. Instead, the accurate word should be “attributed.”
She thought she was competent of driving the racecar.	The word “competent” is incorrect. Instead, the accurate word should be “capable.”

After their 2-week honeymoon, Sally and Sam reverted home.	The word “reverted” is incorrect. Instead, the accurate word should be “returned.”
To initiate the test before everyone has a copy of the exam booklet is considered cheating.	The word “initiate” is incorrect. Instead, the accurate word should be “start.”

### Adjectives vs. Adverbs

Adjectives describe nouns. Adverbs describe verbs, adjectives, and other adverbs. Adverbs typically end in “-ly.”

Adjectives vs. Adverbs	
The firefighter entered the building calm despite the large flames.	The adjective “calm” is incorrectly describing the verb “went.” Instead, the adverb “calmly” should be used.
The boat floated serene down the river.	The adjective “serene” is incorrectly describing the verb “floated.” Instead, the adverb “serenely” should be used.
He had an uncontrollably laughter.	The adverb “uncontrollably” is incorrectly describing the noun “laughter.” Instead, the adjective “uncontrollable” should be used.

Idioms

Idioms are fixed phrases or expressions in the English language. I think of idioms as small words that always go with larger words. Idiom errors are difficult to spot because idioms are also prepositions. By using COP, you can sometimes overlook idioms. Because there are thousands of idioms in the English language, you should not try to memorize any list of idioms. If English is your first language, then you should be able to identify idiom errors since they will “sound funny.” Only if English is not your first language should you consider looking over a list of commonly used idioms in the English language. If you are ever unsure about what small word is the correct one to use an idiomatic phrase, think about how you would use the large word with an idiomatic phrase in a different context.

Idioms	
The teacher attributed his behavior for bad parenting.	The idiomatic phrase “attributed for” is incorrect. The correct idiomatic phrase is “attributed to.”
Her SAT score was inconsistent to her ACT score.	The idiomatic phrase “inconsistent to” is incorrect. The correct idiomatic phrase is “inconsistent with.”
My mom believes of horoscopes.	The idiomatic phrase “believes of” is incorrect. The correct idiomatic phrase is “believes in.”

**Expert Example**

- (1) Jane's prom date complemented her dress.

Apply COP

Jane's prom date complemented her dress.

Simplified Sentence

Jane's prom date **complemented** her dress.

The confusing word "complemented" is used here. It is confusing because there are two different words in the English language that sound similar, but mean different things.

Complement means to balance or match, whereas compliment means to flatter. In this case, we need the latter word.

Corrected Sentence

Jane's prom date **complimented** her dress.

- (2) Technology these days seems to change constant due to advances in both science and engineering.

Apply COP

Technology these days seems to change constant (due to advances) (in both science and engineering).

Simplified Sentence

Technology these days seems to change **constant**.

These errors are pretty easy to spot when the adjective/adverb is directly next to the item it is describing. In this case, the adjective “constant” cannot describe the verb “change.”

#### Corrected Sentence

Technology these days seems to change **constantly**.

#### Expert Practice

As the boy grew older all his longings would turn towards Florence, the beautiful city where there was everything to learn and to see, and so he was sent to become a pupil in the studio of Masolino, a great Florentine painter. But though his drawings improved, his careless habits continued the same. Unlike his peers, **14** Tomasso’s ill-groomed appearance would draw ridicule.

“There goes Tommaso the painter,” the people would say, watching the big awkward figure passing through the streets on his way to work. “Truly he pays but little heed to his appearance. Look but at his untidy hair and the holes in his boots.” “Ay, indeed!” **15** an other would answer, “and yet it is said if only people paid him all they owed he would have gold enough and to spare. But what cares he so long as he has his paints and brushes? ‘Masaccio’ would be a more **16** felicitous name for him than Tommaso.” So the name Masaccio, or Ugly Tom, came to be that by which the big awkward painter was known. But no one thinks of the unkind meaning of the nickname now, for Masaccio **17** is why he is honored as one of the great names in the history of Art. **18**

15

- (A) NO CHANGE
- (B) an another
- (C) another
- (D) other

**Solution****1 – Examine Lines Related to Question 15**

“Ay, indeed!” 15 an other would answer, “and yet it is said if only people paid him all they owed he would have gold enough and to spare.”

**2 – Apply COP**

“Ay, indeed!” 15 an other would answer, “and yet it is said if only people paid him all they owed he would have gold enough and to spare.”

**3 – Apply BOSS**

“Ay, indeed!” 15 another would answer, “and yet it is said if only people paid him all they owed he would have gold enough and to spare.”

This is a pretty simple word choice error. The phrase “an other” should be “another.”



## 4 – Select Answer

Select answer choice C because it almost perfectly agrees with our BOSS solution.

## Expert Practice

As the boy grew older all his longings would turn towards Florence, the beautiful city where there was everything to learn and to see, and so he was sent to become a pupil in the studio of Masolino, a great Florentine painter. But though his drawings improved, his careless habits continued the same. Unlike his peers, **14** Tomasso's ill-groomed appearance would draw ridicule.

“There goes Tommaso the painter,” the people would say, watching the big awkward figure passing through the streets on his way to work. “Truly he pays but little heed to his appearance. Look but at his untidy hair and the holes in his boots.” “Ay, indeed!” **15** an other would answer, “and yet it is said if only people paid him all they owed he would have gold enough and to spare. But what cares he so long as he has his paints and brushes? ‘Masaccio’ would be a more **16** felicitous name for him than Tommaso.” So the name Masaccio, or Ugly Tom, came to be that by which the big awkward painter was known. But no one thinks of the unkind meaning of the nickname now, for Masaccio **17** is why he is honored as one of the great names in the history of Art. **18**

16

- (A) NO CHANGE
- (B) fortuitous
- (C) fusing
- (D) facetious

### Solution

#### 1 – Examine Lines Related to Question 16

‘Masaccio’ would be a more 16 felicitous name for him than Tommaso.” So the name Masaccio, or Ugly Tom, came to be that by which the big awkward painter was known.

#### 2 – Apply COP

‘Masaccio’ would be a more 16 felicitous name (for him) than Tommaso.” So the name Masaccio, or Ugly Tom, came to be that (by which the big awkward painter was known).

#### 3 – Apply BOSS

‘Masaccio’ would be a more 16 appropriate name than Tommaso.” So the name Masaccio, or Ugly Tom, came to be that....

Let’s assume we don’t know the definition of “felicitous.” Even so, we can still come up with a BOSS solution. In order to do so, pretend that “felicitous” is not in the sentence at all. You

may even cross it out or cover it with your hand. Then, think of a word that should go in the sentence. Your word does not have to be a complex SAT vocabulary word. The word that I would fill in for the BOSS solution would be “appropriate.”

#### 4 – Select Answer

Since we don’t know the definition of “felicitous,” we can only compare our BOSS solution of “appropriate” to the other answer choices. “Fortuitous” means accidental (often indicating that something was lucky). “Fusing” means to combine. And “facetious” means sarcastic. None of these answer choices agree with our BOSS solution of “appropriate.” Therefore, we can be fairly certain that the answer to this question is A – no change. And yes, “felicitous” means appropriate. Although obscure vocabulary words are not emphasized on this New SAT as much as they were on previous versions of the SAT, it’s still important to be aware of the definitions of certain key words that would be appropriate for a high school reading level.



## 99% Wrong 17

### Expert Strategy

There are certain words and phrases that are almost always incorrect on the SAT Writing section. I used to tell students that these words and phrases are “always” wrong on the SAT. However, I now hesitate to use the word “always” because there are some instances in which these words and phrases are acceptable. Therefore, you can be 90-99% certain that these words or phrases are wrong on the SAT, but not 100%. This strategy will typically help you eliminate incorrect answer choices more than it will help you select the correct answer choice.

99% Wrong Words & Phrases
Being
For the Reason
Is Because
Is the Reason Why
Is Why

It’s not completely clear why the SAT does not like the above phrases. We do know that the word “being” (and many forms of “to be” for that matter) is often an indication of passive voice. In addition, phrases such as “is the reason why” are redundant. There is no reason to state “why” after you say “reason.” As a reminder of some of the other common “to be” verbs, see the table below. However, know that none of the above “to be” forms are as bad as “being.” “Being” is the most notorious 99% wrong word on the SAT.

Common "To Be" Verbs
Am
Are
Be
Been
Being
Is
Was
Were

### Expert Example

- (1) To camp in those mountains, you risk being bitten by the numerous mosquitoes up there.

Apply COP

To camp (in those mountains), you risk being bitten (by the numerous mosquitoes) (up there.)

Simplified Sentence

To camp, you risk **being** bitten.

As we just discussed, "being" is the most infamous 99% wrong word on the SAT. In this sentence, "being" also creates the passive voice, which is not immediately apparent because of COP. In order to correct this sentence, we would want to rewrite it without using the 99% wrong word "being."

## Corrected Sentence

If you camp in the mountains, numerous mosquitoes may bite you.

- (2) In the morning, I went for my seven-mile run, and to be returning in less than an hour.

## Apply COP

~~In the morning, I went for my seven-mile run, and to be returning in less than an hour.~~

## Simplified Sentence

I went and **to be returning**

The infinitive “to be” can be a 99% wrong word as well. In this case, it is creating a fragment. In order to match the tense of “went” and to create parallelism across the transition “and,” the verb should be changed to the past tense.

## Corrected Sentence

In the morning, I went for my seven-mile run, and **returned** in less than an hour.

- (3) Due to inexperience and naivety about the industry is the reason why many startups fail.

## Apply COP

(Due to inexperience and naivety) (about the industry) is the reason why many startups fail.

## Simplified Sentence

**is the reason why** many startups fail.

Once you have an eye for 99% wrong phrases, they become really easy to spot. To correct this, simply reword this sentence so that there isn't redundancy.

### Corrected Sentence

Many startups fail due to inexperience and naivety about the industry.

### Expert Practice

As the boy grew older all his longings would turn towards Florence, the beautiful city where there was everything to learn and to see, and so he was sent to become a pupil in the studio of Masolino, a great Florentine painter. But though his drawings improved, his careless habits continued the same. Unlike his peers, **14** Tomasso's ill-groomed appearance would draw ridicule.

"There goes Tommaso the painter," the people would say, watching the big awkward figure passing through the streets on his way to work. "Truly he pays but little heed to his appearance. Look but at his untidy hair and the holes in his boots." "Ay, indeed!" **15** an other would answer, "and yet it is said if only people paid him all they owed he would have gold enough and to spare. But what cares he so long as he has his paints and brushes? 'Masaccio' would be a more **16** felicitous name for him than Tommaso." So the name Masaccio, or Ugly Tom, came to be that by which the big awkward painter was known. But no one thinks of the unkind meaning of the nickname now, for Masaccio **17** is why he is honored as one of the great names in the history of Art. **18**



- (A) NO CHANGE
- (B) is the reason why he is
- (C) is
- (D) being why he is

### Solution

#### 1 – Examine Lines Related to Question 17

But no one thinks of the unkind meaning of the nickname now, for Masaccio **17** is why  
he is honored as one of the great names in the history of Art.

#### 2 – Apply COP

But no one thinks ~~of the unkind meaning of the nickname now, for Masaccio~~ **17** is why  
he is honored as one ~~of the great names in the history of Art.~~

#### 3 – Apply BOSS

‘But no one thinks **17** is honored as one.

As soon as we recognize the 99% wrong phrase “is why” in the sentence, we should attempt to correct it. In this case, replacing “is why he is” with “is” makes the most sense for our

BOSS solution.

#### 4 – Select Answer

Select answer choice C because it perfectly agrees with our BOSS solution. Of course, an actual SAT question would not have 99% Wrong words and phrases in every answer choice. I simply did this to make an illustrative point that you can immediately eliminate answer choices that you see have these phrases.

## Keep Consistent Style 18

### Expert Strategy

Because Expression of Ideas is so important on the new SAT Writing section, it's important that the author of the passage has a consistent style throughout his or her composition. You need to make sure the author does not deviate in his or her style too much. Here are some style devices you should pay attention to as you are reading each passage.

#### Mood

The atmosphere of the text. Based on the word choice or diction of the author, what kind of mood is he or she creating? You will most commonly find questions that ask about the mood in narrative texts that tell a story.

#### Tone

The author's voice. A very common question on the SAT Reading section is to ask what the tone of a passage is. On the SAT Writing section, you will not be asked what the tone of a passage is. However, you may be asked to correct a sentence in order to match the tone of the rest of the passage.

#### Literary Devices

The literary techniques an author uses. You may be asked to identify or correct the literary devices an author uses such as rhetorical questions or personal narration.

**Expert Example****(1) Identifying Mood**

“ The river, reflecting the clear blue of the sky, glistened and sparkled as it flowed noiselessly on. ”

- Charles Dickens

The phrases “clear blue,” “glistened and sparkled,” and “noiselessly” should indicate a peaceful mood. If this sentence was in a larger paragraph, the author should stick to a tranquil mood for at least that paragraph in order to keep consistent style. Many students have trouble synthesizing into words the atmosphere of a text. However, it’s absolutely essential that you practice identifying text atmosphere more and more as you read SAT Writing passages. Having a BOSS mood written down prior to looking at the answer choices will result in higher scores.

**(2) Identifying Tone**

“ And the trees all died. They were orange trees. I don’t know why they died, they just died. ”

- Donald Barthelme

The author says “died” three times. The tone is clearly “hopeless.” But the SAT Writing section will not ask you what the tone of the passage is. Instead, the SAT Writing section may ask you to keep a consistently “dejected” tone throughout the rest of the passage.

## (3) Identifying Literary Devices

“ If practice makes perfect, and no one’s perfect, then why practice? ”

You should be able to recognize that the author is using a rhetorical question here. The SAT may ask you what kind of literary device is being used and/or if that literary technique is consistent with the rest of the passage.

## Expert Practice

As the boy grew older all his longings would turn towards Florence, the beautiful city where there was everything to learn and to see, and so he was sent to become a pupil in the studio of Masolino, a great Florentine painter. But though his drawings improved, his careless habits continued the same. Unlike his peers, <sup>14</sup> Tomasso’s ill-groomed appearance would draw ridicule.

“There goes Tommaso the painter,” the people would say, watching the big awkward figure passing through the streets on his way to work. “Truly he pays but little heed to his appearance. Look but at his untidy hair and the holes in his boots.” “Ay, indeed!” <sup>15</sup> an other would answer, “and yet it is said if only people paid him all they owed he would have gold enough and to spare. But what cares he so long as he has his paints and brushes? ‘Masaccio’ would be a more <sup>16</sup> felicitous name for him than Tommaso.” So the name Masaccio, or Ugly Tom, came to be that by which the big awkward painter was known. But no one thinks of the unkind meaning of the nickname now, for Masaccio <sup>17</sup> is why he is honored as one of the great names in the history of Art. <sup>18</sup>

18

All of the following strategies are used by the author of the passage EXCEPT

- (A) direct quotation
- (B) rhetorical questioning
- (C) statistical data
- (D) narrative description

### Solution

#### 1 – Examine Lines Related to Question 18

“There goes Tommaso the painter,” the people would say, watching the big awkward figure passing through the streets on his way to work. “Truly he pays but little heed to his appearance. Look but at his untidy hair and the holes in his boots.” “Ay, indeed!” **15** an other would answer, “and yet it is said if only people paid him all they owed he would have gold enough and to spare. But what cares he so long as he has his paints and brushes? ‘Masaccio’ would be a more **16** felicitous name for him than Tommaso.” So the name Masaccio, or Ugly Tom, came to be that by which the big awkward painter was known. But no one thinks of the unkind meaning of the nickname now, for Masaccio **17** is why he is honored as one of the great names in the history of Art. **18**

#### 2 – Analyze Answer Choices

When you have a question that appears at the end of a paragraph or passage, then COP and BOSS don’t work that well. COP and BOSS especially don’t work well on “EXCEPT” questions. In these situations, it’s best to simply analyze the answer choices. Essentially,

this is the strategy that most students use to approach the SAT – we only use it when our tools of COP and BOSS don't work like we would like them to.

(A) Direct Quotation

Are quotes used in the passage? Yes. Here is a good example:

"There goes Tommaso the painter," the people would say

(B) Rhetorical Questioning

Does the author ever ask a question to make a point? Yes.

Here is a good example: But what cares he so long as he has his paints and brushes?

(C) Statistical Data

Does the author use numbers such as percentages? No.

(D) Narrative Description

Does the author ever tell a story with details? Yes. Here is a good example:

the people would say, watching the big awkward figure passing through the streets on his way to work.

3 – Select Answer

Select answer choice C because statistical data is clearly not used in the passage.

## Understand the Writing Goal <sup>19</sup>

### Expert Strategy

Similar to the previous strategy, Understand the Writing Goal is another Expert Strategy that is intimately tied to Expression of Ideas, or clarity questions, on the SAT. Understand the Writing Goal means to interpret the author's purpose in a particular piece of text. Luckily, understanding the author's message is already built-in to many of the Expert Strategies.

The two main ways to understand the writing goal are to write paragraph summaries and BOSS solutions. Paragraph summaries help us understand the writing goal because you must synthesize the author's message in your own words as succinctly as possible. BOSS helps us understand the writing goal because you must synthesize your own answer based on the passage prior to looking at any answer choices.

An example of a question that requires you to understand the writing goal would be, "What is the best topic sentence for paragraph X?"

### Expert Example

Unlike many of the academics of the early twentieth century who speculated about the oppressed state of India, Gandhi had a specific vision for his home country: free the country of India from British rule and create an independent democratic government. Without this clear vision, it would have been difficult for Gandhi to gain support. Certainly, every leader needs to have a clear vision of where the organization they lead will be 1, 5, and 10 years down the line. Just as important as having a vision is to have a specific plan to achieve company goals. For example, Gandhi created specific plans to free India from British oppression through non-violence and peaceful protests. Without a specific,



actionable plan, Gandhi would have been just another academic speculating about India's freedom. Similarly, if leaders have visions without specific plans, they are likely chasing implausible dreams rather than realistic goals.

In order to understand the writing goal of the above paragraph, it would be best to create a paragraph summary. After reading the above paragraph, my paragraph summary would be:

Specific Vision = Key (Gandhi)

However, I probably wouldn't write that in my test booklet. Instead, I would write an abbreviated version:

Sp. Vis = Key (G)

### Expert Practice

**19** [1] This painter, careless of many things, cared with all his heart and soul for the work he had chosen to do. [2] It seemed to him that painters had always failed to make their pictures like living things. [3] The pictures they painted were flat, not round as a figure should be, and very often the feet did not look as if they were standing on the ground at all, but pointed downwards as if they were hanging in the air. [4] His models were taken from the ordinary Florentine youths whom he saw daily in the studio, but he drew them as no one had drawn figures before. [5] So he worked with light and shadow and careful drawing until the figures he drew looked rounded instead of flat, and their feet were planted firmly on the ground. [6] The buildings, too, he made to look like real houses leading away into the distance, and not just like a flat picture.

19

To make this paragraph most logical, sentence 5 should be placed

- (A) where it is now
- (B) after sentence 1
- (C) after sentence 3
- (D) after sentence 6

### Solution

#### 1 – Examine Lines Related to Question 19

[5] So he worked with light and shadow and careful drawing until the figures he drew looked rounded instead of flat, and their feet were planted firmly on the ground.

#### 2 – Apply BOSS

In this case, it's not as important to create a paragraph summary. Instead, we should examine the line cited and think about where it can be better placed in the paragraph. Well, the concept of round figures and feet on the ground is also mentioned in sentence 3. Therefore, my BOSS solution would be to place it after sentence 3.

#### 3 – Select Answer

Select answer choice C because it perfectly agrees with our BOSS solution.

## Expert Practice

20 He painted many frescoes both in Florence and Rome, this Ugly Tom, but at the time the people did not pay him much honor: for they thought him just a great awkward fellow with his head always in the clouds. Perhaps if he had lived longer fame and wealth would have come to him, but he died when he was still a young man, 21 and only a few realized how great he was.

20

Which choice most effectively establishes the main topic of the paragraph?

- (A) Masaccio was never a famous or talented painter.
- (B) People ridiculed Masaccio before he died.
- (C) Masaccio died before his talents were fully recognized.
- (D) People came to recognize Masaccio's skill after he died.

## Solution

## 1 – Examine Lines Related to Question 20

20 He painted many frescoes both in Florence and Rome, this Ugly Tom, but at the time the people did not pay him much honor: for they thought him just a great awkward fellow with his head always in the clouds. Perhaps if he had lived longer fame and wealth would have come to him, but he died when he was still a young man, 21 and only a few realized how great he was.

## 2 – Create a Paragraph Summary

Create a paragraph summary since the question is asking about the main topic of the paragraph. The entire paragraph discusses how Masaccio was not appreciated while he was living. So for my paragraph summary, I would write:

Unrecognized

## 3 – Select Answer

Select answer choice C because it perfectly agrees with our paragraph summary, which in this case is also our BOSS solution. Answer choice A does not work because Masaccio was recognized as a famous painter after his death. In addition, the word “never” is an extreme word that is almost always incorrect. We will learn more about this on the SAT Reading section. Answer choice B is incorrect because although people did ridicule, this teasing is not in this particular paragraph. Answer choice D is incorrect because although Masaccio was recognized for his skill after his death, this paragraph focuses on how he was unrecognized prior to his death.

## Expert Practice

20 He painted many frescoes both in Florence and Rome, this Ugly Tom, but at the time the people did not pay him much honor: for they thought him just a great awkward fellow with his head always in the clouds. Perhaps if he had lived longer fame and wealth would have come to him, but he died when he was still a young man, 21 and only a few realized how great he was.

21

The author wants to complete the sentence with a statement that Masaccio's talents were unrecognized before his death. Which choice best accomplishes this goal?

- (A) NO CHANGE
- (B) so it was understandable that no one was aware of his talents.
- (C) and few young men ever receive the fame they deserve.
- (D) so one is left to wonder what he would have accomplished in a longer life.

## Solution

## 1 – Examine Lines Related to Question 21

Perhaps if he had lived longer fame and wealth would have come to him, but he died when he was still a young man, 21 and only a few realized how great he was.

## 2 – Apply BOSS

Perhaps if he had lived longer fame and wealth would have come to him, but he died when he was still a young man, **21** so he did not get the recognition he deserved.

To answer this question, we should use BOSS. In your own words, write a statement to complete sentence 21 that conveys “that Masaccio’s talents were unrecognized before his death.” You can see my BOSS solution above. Of course, I would likely abbreviate this in my test booklet during the actual exam to save time.

## 3 – Select Answer

Select answer choice A because it almost perfectly agrees with our BOSS solution. The way the sentence is currently written does convey the fact that “Masaccio’s talents were unrecognized before his death.” Answer choice B is incorrect because the author does not say that the lack of awareness of Masaccio’s talents was “understandable.” Answer choice C is about multiple “young men;” however, the question asks us specifically about Masaccio. Answer choice D makes a hypothetical assertion, which is not how the question asks us to end the passage.

## Stay Organized 20

### Expert Strategy

The last writing Expert Strategy also deals with Expression of Ideas questions. Many times on the SAT Writing section, you may encounter questions that ask you how the author should introduce a paragraph/passage, conclude a paragraph/passage, change the location of a sentence, etc.

This strategy is intimately linked to the previous Expert Strategy of understanding the writing goal. If you understand the writing goal, it's easy to stay organized because you are able to better understand how to build cohesive sentences, paragraphs, and passages.

Make sure to keep the big picture in mind as you read a passage – how do the introduction, body paragraphs, and conclusion all fit together?

### Expert Example

#### (1) Stay Organized

The primary concern against having an open policy to Chinese solar manufacturers is that the United States would lose jobs. However, many jobs would actually also be created by opening the solar market up to foreign companies. This is because solar energy is a very local industry; many jobs will be created in the development of solar energy infrastructure. Therefore, the United States government should follow the precept of an “open market” with respect to the solar energy industry. If there is an increased supply of solar energy at a lower cost, more consumers are likely to switch. Even if manufacturing jobs are lost because the creation of solar cells/panels is outsourced to foreign

countries where labor and material costs are lower, this will be balanced by the local solar development jobs that are created.

As you are reading a paragraph such as this on the SAT Writing section, you should think about what the writing goal of the paragraph is. Clearly, this paragraph is arguing that jobs in the United States will actually be created despite Chinese solar manufacturers. Once we understand the writing goal, we should think about what sentence did not help accomplish this writing goal. I believe it was this one:

"If there is an increased supply of solar energy at a lower cost, more consumers are likely to switch."

The above sentence has nothing to do with job creation due to Chinese solar manufacturers. Therefore, this sentence is out of place. If this was an actual SAT question, we can anticipate that there would be a question asking us to either remove the above sentence or place it elsewhere in the passage in order to stay organized.

On questions that require you to move the placement of a sentence in a paragraph, be careful not to confuse the question numbers with the sentence numbers. The sentence numbers are represented by bracketed numbers at the beginning of each sentence whereas the question numbers are represented by bolded dark squares. For example, number 19 in the below paragraph represents the question number, but the bracketed numbers represent the sentence numbers within that paragraph.

**19** [1] This painter, careless of many things, cared with all his heart and soul for the work he had chosen to do. [2] It seemed to him that painters had always failed to make their pictures like living things. [3] The pictures they painted were flat, not round as a figure should be, and very often the feet did not look as if they were standing on the ground at all, but pointed downwards as if they were hanging in the air. [4] His models were taken from the ordinary Florentine youths whom he saw daily in the studio, but he drew them as no one had drawn figures before. [5] So he worked with light and shadow and careful drawing until the figures he drew looked rounded instead of flat, and their feet were planted firmly on the ground. [6] The



buildings, too, he made to look like real houses leading away into the distance, and not just like a flat picture.

### Expert Practice

But in years after, one by one, all the great artists would come to that little chapel of the Carmine. They would learn their first lessons from those life-like figures. Especially they would stand before the fresco which shows St. Peter baptizing a crowd of people. And in that fresco they would study more than all the figure of a boy who has just come out of the water, shivering with cold, the most natural figure that had ever been painted up to that time. All things must be learnt little by little, and each new thing we know is a step onwards. 22

22

The author wants to conclude the passage with a sentence that emphasizes the importance of Masaccio's work in the chapel of the Carmine. Which choice would best accomplish this goal?

- (A) The name of Masaccio was worthy to be placed upon the list of world's great painters because he painted well.
- (B) Today, unlike his contemporaries, people are more aware of the great talents that Masaccio possessed.
- (C) So this figure of a shivering boy is very important to the art world and people admire the painter.
- (D) So this figure of a shivering boy marks a new step on the ladder of art and places Masaccio upon the list of world's great painters.

**Solution****1 – Examine Lines Related to Question 22**

But in years after, one by one, all the great artists would come to that little chapel of the Carmine. They would learn their first lessons from those life-like figures. Especially they would stand before the fresco which shows St. Peter baptizing a crowd of people. And in that fresco they would study more than all the figure of a boy who has just come out of the water, shivering with cold, the most natural figure that had ever been painted up to that time. All things must be learnt little by little, and each new thing we know is a step onwards. 22

**2 – Apply BOSS**

My BOSS solution for this question would be:

Shivering Boy made Masaccio great

The abbreviated version would be:

Shiv. Boy = Mas. Great

This is a solid BOSS because I have identified “Masaccio’s work” that the question asks about – the painting of the shivering boy.

**3 – Select Answer Choice**

Select answer choice D because it almost perfectly agrees with our BOSS solution. This

answer emphasized both the painting of the shivering boy and that Masaccio is one of the best painters to have ever lived. Answer choice A and B are incorrect because they do not mention the painting of the shivering boy. Answer choice C mentions that “people admire the painter,” which does not emphasize how great Masaccio was compared to all painters.

### Writing Expert Strategy 21 Read The Question First

Timing is probably the most stressful part of the Writing section. You not only have to read the passage itself, but you also have to come up with your own solution to any given question. A good habit to develop is to avoid re-reading any given Writing passage or paragraph. By understanding what type of question we are being asked, we can avoid re-reading, saving us time.

As discussed earlier on, we can broadly categorize the types of SAT Writing questions as:

**Underlined Grammar Questions.** These are the most common questions and simply underline parts of the sentence that needs to be fixed. You should read the passage and try to fix the grammatical error yourself before looking at the answer choices.

**Blurb Questions** - These are less common questions that actually have an associated blurb of a question it is asking you to answer about the passage.

Blurb Questions are where students might struggle the most with timing. In order to tackle these question types, you should first read the questions first before reading the associated part of the passage. This allows us to have a goal in mind as we read supplementing our BOSS-ing process.

Questions 24-33 are based on the following passage and supplementary material.

### The American Workforce

The 20th century was **24** a remarkable period for the American worker, as wages rose, fringe benefits grew, and working conditions improved. Even though many statistics were sketchy at the beginning of the century, the picture is **25** even less clear. The American workforce was much better off at the end of the century than it was at the beginning. And the statistics used to understand the condition of working Americans also stopped over the course of the century.

24

The writer wants to convey a tone of enthusiasm for the topic without sounding satirical. Which of the following best accomplishes this goal?

- A) NO CHANGE
- B) a shocking
- C) a stupendous and exciting
- D) an irrelevant

25

Which choice most effectively sets up the contrast in the sentence and is consistent with the information in the rest of the paragraph?

- A) NO CHANGE
- B) clear
- C) changing
- D) convoluted

Here we have a Blurb Question in question number 24. Instead of reading the paragraph first, we are going to read the questions themselves. As we read the blurb, we develop a specific goal: "What is the tone that is conveyed?" Then, as we read, we are able to BOSS that the answer is C: a stupendous and exciting. By anticipating blurb questions before reading the passage, we are able to create stronger BOSS solutions saving us time in the long run. This is similar to reading the questions after PKP'ing on the SAT Reading section.

## Writing Expert Strategy 22 Master Sentence Placement Questions

The SAT Writing section is evolving. We are noticing that there are new types of questions that the SAT previously did not test on appearing more frequently. One perfect example of this is Sentence Placement Questions. These are questions that ask students where to place a given sentence correctly in either a paragraph or any of the passage's paragraphs. Most students will dread these types of questions as they might think that they have to reread the whole paragraph or passage. However, Prep Expert students will love these types of questions.

A paragraph that has bracketed numbers before each sentence indicates that you will be asked a Sentence Placement Question. If you see bracketed numbers within a paragraph, you want to think about the function of each sentence. Think about how each sentence flows into the next and if there is a logical flow of ideas. As you think about this, create a BOSS solution where the placement should be before looking at the answer choices.

A paragraph that has bracketed numbers before each PARAGRAPH indicates that you will be asked a Sentence Placement Paragraph Question. Towards the end of the passage, you will be asked where a given sentence should be placed in any of the paragraphs. The best way to approach these types of questions is to PKP each individual paragraph's function. Then, you can just refer back to those PKPs to determine the best paragraph to place the sentence.

### Writing Expert Strategy 23 Avoid The “ING” Suffix

Many students dread answer choices that contain “ing” suffixes. Fortunately, the SAT Writing section typically AVOIDS the “ing” suffix on correct answers. Avoiding words with the “ING” suffix works about 70% of the time on the SAT. The 30% that the “ING” suffix is correct is when “ING” words create parallel structure or verb tense. If you were left with 2 answer choices, and 1 has a word with “ING” in it, cross the “ING” one out and choose the other one. Statistically, you will be more often correct than incorrect.

To review, there are three main purposes for the “ING” suffix:

Gerund- acts like a noun (i.e. studying is difficult)

Present Participle- acts like a verb (i.e. I am studying)

Independent adjective- to describe a noun (i.e. studying is boring)

While it’s great to know these 3 items above, it is not all that important. The quickest way to learn this strategy is to just avoid “ING” suffixes 70% of the time and you will be correct!

#### EXAMPLE

Practice avoid the “ING” suffix on the SAT Writing section as soon as possible. Remember, this rule does not work as well as Avoiding 99% Wrong Phrases (i.e. “being”). However, it still works about 70% of the time and really helps if deciding between 2 choices. If the “ING” word does create correct parallel structure, verb tense, or all of the choices use an “ING” suffix, then the “ING” word may in fact be correct!

Use this strategy more as a general rule of thumb rather than an absolute truth

### Writing Expert Strategy 24 KNOW YOUR PASSAGE TYPE

As covered early on, there are only 4 types of passages on the SAT Writing test:

History/Social studies

Humanities

Science (i.e. academic papers)

Careers (i.e. explore job fields)

It's important that you identify what kind of passage that you are reading. If it is a passage that you are good at (i.e. Careers), try to save time by going a little faster. If it is a passage that you are not as good at (i.e. Science), slow down to improve accuracy.



### Writing Expert Strategy 25 SELECT “NO CHANGE” STRATEGICALLY

An analysis of Official College Board SAT Tests shows that “No Change” is the answer 7-11 times on any given SAT Writing section. Remember that “NO CHANGE” is usually answer A on the SAT Writing section. There are 44 questions on the SAT Writing section. Therefore, “NO CHANGE” is the answer 16-25%. If you are selecting the answer “A” too frequently on the SAT Writing section, think again. If you finish an SAT Writing section and have selected “A” fifteen times, think again. Aim to have approximately 7-11 “No Change” answers on any given SAT Writing section. In order for you to choose “NO CHANGE,” you want to first be certain the other answers are incorrect.

# SAT WRITING

## PRACTICE

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## Writing Expert Practice

### Becoming an Agricultural Engineer

Agricultural engineers—also known as biological and agricultural engineers—work on a variety of activities. These activities range from aquaculture (raising food, such as fish, that thrive in water) to **1** some who farm land to forestry; from developing biofuels to improving conservation; from planning animal environments to finding better ways to process food.

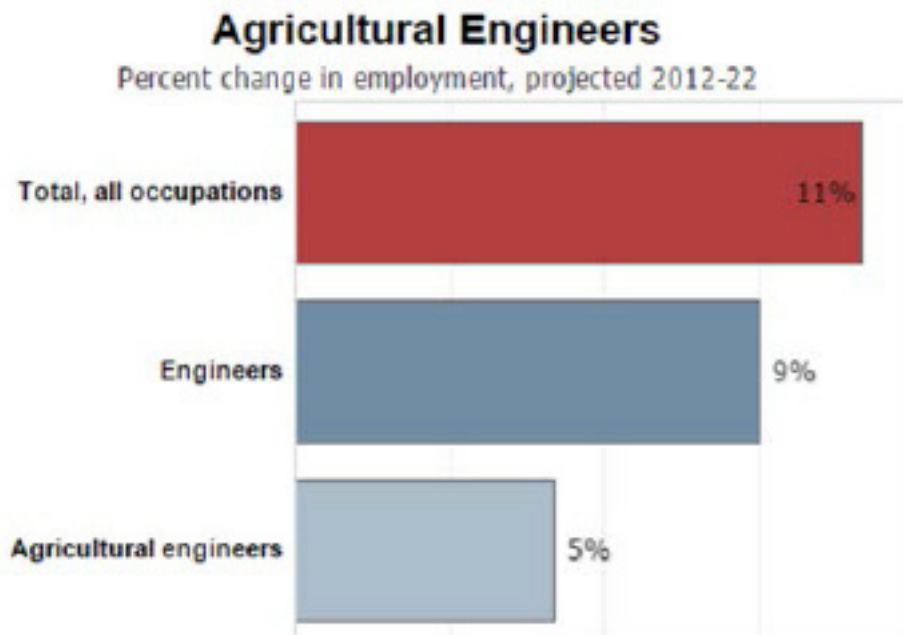
Students who are interested in studying agricultural engineering will benefit from taking high school courses in **2** mathematics, such as algebra, trigonometry, and calculus; and science, such as biology, chemistry, and physics. **3** Entry-level jobs in agricultural engineering require a bachelor's degree. **4** Bachelor's degree programs typically are 4-year programs **5** that includes classroom, laboratory, and field studies in areas such as science, mathematics, and engineering principles. Most colleges and universities offer cooperative programs that allow students to gain practical experience while completing their education.

**6** Students, who are interested in studying agricultural engineering will benefit from taking traditional math and science high school courses, **7** but they can take other courses if they like, as well. Because agricultural engineers sometimes design systems that are part of a larger agricultural or environmental system, they must be able to propose solutions that interact well with other workers, machinery and equipment, and the environment.

Agricultural engineers must listen to and seek out information from clients, workers, and other professionals working on a project. **8** Using the principles of calculus, trigonometry, and other advanced topics in math for analysis, design, and troubleshooting in their work is a good idea for them. Agricultural engineers work on problems affecting many different aspects of agricultural production, from designing safer equipment for food processing to water erosion. To solve these problems, agricultural engineers must be able to apply general principles of engineering to new circumstances.

Employment of agricultural engineers **9** is projected to grow 9 percent from 2012 to 2022, **10** that puts it at a slower than the average for all occupations. Agricultural engineers are pursuing new areas related to agriculture, such as high-tech applications to agricultural products, water resource management, and alternative energies. However, activity related to designing new machinery and equipment in agriculture also is expected to continue to create some employment opportunities.

These engineers are also involved with designing and building machinery and equipment needed to implement findings from research on genetically modified plants and seeds. **11** Consequently, demand is also expected to come from U.S. firms that market their farm technology products to farmers internationally.



## Question 1

Agricultural engineers—also known as biological and agricultural engineers—work on a variety of activities. These activities range from aquaculture (raising food, such as fish, that thrive in water) to **1** some who farm land to forestry; from developing biofuels to improving conservation; from planning animal environments to finding better ways to process food.

1

- (A) NO CHANGE
- (B) farming
- (C) farmers
- (D) some that farm

## Solution

## 1 – Write PKP

Whenever you start a new passage, the first step is always to come up with a passage key point. This will help clarify many of the Expression of Ideas questions that we come across on the SAT Writing section. After reading, the first paragraph of this passage above, I believe the passage key point is the following:

PKP = There are a variety of types of agricultural engineers

However, I probably wouldn't write all of that in my test booklet since it would take too long. Instead, I would write the following:

AE = Variety

Once you have come up with a Passage's Key Point, then you can tackle the first question associated with the passage.

## 2 – Examine Lines Related to Question 1

These activities range from aquaculture (raising food, such as fish, that thrive in water) to **1** some who farm land to forestry; from developing biofuels to improving conservation; from planning animal environments to finding better ways to process food.

## 3 – Apply COP

These activities range ~~from aquaculture (raising food, such as fish, that thrive in water)~~ to **1** some who farm land to forestry; ~~from developing biofuels~~ to improving conservation; ~~from planning animal environments~~ to finding better ways to process food.

## 4 – Apply BOSS

These activities range to **1** farming to forestry; to improving conservation; to finding better ways to process food.

This question requires Writing Expert Strategy #3 Preserve Parallelism. The structure of the sentence requires that a single-word noun comes after the "to." For example, "aquaculture" and "forestry" are simple, single-word nouns. So we should change "some who farm land" to "farming."

## 5 – Select Answer

Select answer choice B because it perfectly agrees with our BOSS solution. Answer choice C would not be parallel with the rest of the sentence since “farmers” is referring to people, whereas every other item refers to an activity. Answer choice D is not parallel because of the “some that.”

## Question 2

Students who are interested in studying agricultural engineering will benefit from taking high school courses in **2** mathematics, such as algebra, trigonometry, and calculus; and science, such as biology, chemistry, and physics. **3** Entry-level jobs in agricultural engineering require a bachelor's degree. **4** Bachelor's degree programs typically are 4-year programs **5** that includes classroom, laboratory, and field studies in areas such as science, mathematics, and engineering principles. Most colleges and universities offer cooperative programs that allow students to gain practical experience while completing their education.

2

- (A) NO CHANGE
- (B) mathematics such as
- (C) mathematics such as;
- (D) mathematics, for example

**Solution****1 – Examine Lines Related to Question 2**

Students who are interested in studying agricultural engineering will benefit from taking high school courses in **2** mathematics, such as algebra, trigonometry, and calculus; and science, such as biology, chemistry, and physics.

**2 – Apply COP**

Students who are interested (in studying agricultural engineering) will benefit (from taking high school courses) (in **2** mathematics), such as algebra, trigonometry, and calculus; and science, such as biology, chemistry, and physics.

**3 – Apply BOSS**

Students who are interested will benefit, such as algebra, trigonometry, and calculus; and science, such as biology, chemistry, and physics.

After using COP, I am unable to identify any errors in the simplified sentence above. Therefore, I need to reexamine the entire sentence with prepositional phrases.

Students who are interested (in studying agricultural engineering) will benefit (from taking high school courses) (in **2** mathematics), such as algebra, trigonometry, and calculus; and science, such as biology, chemistry, and physics.

Once again, I do not see any errors. I am using Expert Strategy #10 Punctuate Appropriately to determine whether a comma is the appropriate punctuation to use before the transition “such as.” I believe it is because it is a logical pause in the sentence as it transitions to



give examples of subjects in mathematics. Further evidence that the comma is appropriate appears after “science.” The “, such as” structure is used in a part of a sentence that is not underlined. We can be even more sure that “, such as” is appropriate because of Expert Strategy #3 Preserve Parallelism since similar structure is required in lists such as this one.

#### 4 – Select Answer

Select answer choice A because it perfectly agrees with our BOSS solution of no change. Answer choice B is not correct because the comma is required before “such as.” Not only is there a logical pause in the sentence, but there is also parallelism with the other “, such as” in the non-underlined portion of the sentence. Answer choice C is not correct because the semicolon would not be parallel to the other “, such as” in the sentence. Notice that there is a semicolon in the sentence and one side of it is not a complete sentence: “and science, such as biology, chemistry, and physics.” However, this is one exception to the rule that both sides of a semicolon must be complete sentences. A semicolon can also separate lists that are made up of items that contain commas, such as in this sentence. Finally, answer choice D is incorrect because switching the transition to “for example” would not be parallel to the other “, such as” in the sentence.

#### Question 3

Students who are interested in studying agricultural engineering will benefit from taking high school courses in **2** mathematics, such as algebra, trigonometry, and calculus; and science, such as biology, chemistry, and physics. **3** Entry-level jobs in agricultural engineering require a bachelor's degree. **4** Bachelor's degree programs typically are 4-year programs **5** that includes classroom, laboratory, and field studies in areas such as science, mathematics, and engineering principles. Most colleges and universities offer cooperative programs that allow students to gain practical experience while completing their education.

3

The writer is considering deleting the underlined sentence. Should the sentence be kept or deleted?

- (A) Kept, because it provides supporting evidence about education.
- (B) Kept, because it provides an essential transition to the sentences that follow.
- (C) Deleted, because it confuses the paragraph's focus.
- (D) Deleted, because it doesn't provide any essential information.

### Solution

#### 1 – Examine Lines Related to Question 3

Students who are interested in studying agricultural engineering will benefit from taking high school courses in **2** mathematics, such as algebra, trigonometry, and calculus; and science, such as biology, chemistry, and physics. **3** Entry-level jobs in agricultural engineering require a bachelor's degree. **4** Bachelor's degree programs typically are 4-year programs **5** that includes classroom, laboratory, and field studies in areas such as science, mathematics, and engineering principles.

When you are faced with a question that asks you to delete or keep a particular sentence, you should read the lines before and after that sentence to determine whether or not it is essential.

## 2 – Apply BOSS

Use Expert Strategy #8 Improve Paragraph Cohesion to determine whether the sentence in question is necessary to convey the message of the paragraph. In this case, the paragraph is discussing the educational requirements to become an agricultural engineer. Is Sentence 3 necessary? Yes. Sentence 3 introduces the idea that a bachelor's degree is required to become an agricultural engineer. Sentence 4 then offers further explanation on this point. Therefore, Sentence 3 should be kept because Sentence 4 expounds on its concepts. Of course, we would not want to write such a long BOSS solution in our test booklet. Instead, I would probably abbreviate my BOSS solution:

K -> S4

To me, this means that I want to KEEP sentence 3 because of SENTENCE 4. Although you may not understand my abbreviated BOSS solution, that's okay. The BOSS solution that I write in my test booklet only needs to be understood by me. Similarly, the BOSS solution that you write in your test booklet only needs to be understood by you.

## 3 – Select Answer

Select answer choice B because it perfectly agrees with our BOSS solution that Sentence 3 is needed for future sentences in the paragraph. Answer choice A is not correct because "supporting evidence" is not contained in Sentence 3. And answer choices C and D are not correct because the sentence should be kept, not deleted.

## Question 4

Students who are interested in studying agricultural engineering will benefit from taking high school courses in **2** mathematics, such as algebra, trigonometry, and calculus; and science, such as biology, chemistry, and physics. **3** Entry-level jobs in agricultural engineering require a bachelor's degree. **4** Bachelor's degree programs typically are 4-year programs **5** that includes classroom, laboratory, and field studies in areas such as science, mathematics, and engineering principles. Most colleges and universities offer cooperative programs that allow students to gain practical experience while completing their education.

4

- (A) NO CHANGE
- (B) Bachelors degree programs
- (C) Bachelor's degree programs,
- (D) Bachelor's degree program

## Solution

## 1 – Examine Lines Related to Question 4

**4** Bachelor's degree programs typically are 4-year programs **5** that includes classroom, laboratory, and field studies in areas such as science, mathematics, and engineering principles.

## 2 – Apply COP

4 Bachelor's degree programs typically are 4-year programs 5 that includes classroom, laboratory, and field studies ~~in areas~~ such as science, mathematics, and engineering principles.

## 3 – Apply BOSS

4 Bachelor's degree programs typically are 4-year programs 5 that includes classroom, laboratory, and field studies such as science, mathematics, and engineering principles.

Remember that as we are tackling each question, we are not supposed to look at the answer choices yet. Even if we haven't looked at the answer choices, we can still anticipate that this is a question that involves Expert Strategy #5 Prove Possessives because of the apostrophe.

Is the apostrophe in the right place? Well, "Bachelor's" is describing the type of degree program. Hence, I believe it is correct the way it is written. I can't imagine not having an apostrophe since that would indicate multiple bachelors. I also don't believe putting an apostrophe after the "s" would be correct either since that would indicate possession by multiple bachelors. Therefore, my BOSS solution would be no change.

## 4 – Select Answer

Select answer choice A because it perfectly agrees with our BOSS solution of no change. Answer choice B is not correct because the degree programs need to be described, and without an apostrophe, placing "bachelors" in front of "degree programs" doesn't describe the type of degree programs. Answer choice C is not correct because the comma is an

unnecessary pause after “Bachelor’s degree programs.” Finally, answer choice D is not correct because there are multiple degree programs, not just one.

### Question 5

Students who are interested in studying agricultural engineering will benefit from taking high school courses in **2** mathematics, such as algebra, trigonometry, and calculus; and science, such as biology, chemistry, and physics. **3** Entry-level jobs in agricultural engineering require a bachelor’s degree. **4** Bachelor’s degree programs typically are 4-year programs **5** that includes classroom, laboratory, and field studies in areas such as science, mathematics, and engineering principles. Most colleges and universities offer cooperative programs that allow students to gain practical experience while completing their education.

5

- (A) NO CHANGE
- (B) which includes
- (C) including
- (D) that include

### Solution

#### 1 – Examine Lines Related to Question 5

**4** Bachelor’s degree programs typically are 4-year programs **5** that includes classroom, laboratory, and field studies in areas such as science, mathematics, and engineering principles.

## 2 – Apply COP

4 Bachelor's degree programs typically are 4-year programs 5 that includes classroom, laboratory, and field studies ~~in areas~~ such as science, mathematics, and engineering principles.

## 3 – Apply BOSS

4 Bachelor's degree programs typically are 4-year programs 5 that include classroom, laboratory, and field studies such as science, mathematics, and engineering principles.

Use Expert Strategy #2 Avoid Singular-Plural Mismatches to answer this question. The noun that is paired with the verb “includes” is “4-year programs.” Because “4-year programs” is plural and the verb “includes” is singular, we have a singular-plural mismatch. In order to avoid this error, we need to change “includes” to “include.”

## 4 – Select Answer

Select answer choice D because it perfectly agrees with our BOSS solution of using the plural verb “include.” Answer choice B is not correct because it contains the singular verb “includes.” Answer choice C is not correct because “including” turns the sentence into a fragment.

## Question 6

6 Students, who are interested in studying agricultural engineering will benefit from taking traditional math and science high school courses, 7 but they can take other courses if they like, as well. Because agricultural engineers sometimes design systems that are part of a larger agricultural or environmental system, they must be able to propose solutions that interact well with other workers, machinery and equipment, and the environment. Agricultural engineers must listen to and seek out information from clients, workers, and other professionals working on a project. 8 Using the principles of calculus, trigonometry, and other advanced topics in math for analysis, design, and troubleshooting in their work is a good idea for them. Agricultural engineers work on problems affecting many different aspects of agricultural production, from designing safer equipment for food processing to water erosion. To solve these problems, agricultural engineers must be able to apply general principles of engineering to new circumstances.

6

- (A) NO CHANGE
- (B) Students, who are interested in studying agricultural engineering,
- (C) Students who are interested in studying agricultural engineering
- (D) Students who are interested in studying agricultural engineering,

## Solution

## 1 – Examine Lines Related to Question 6

6 Students, who are interested in studying agricultural engineering will benefit from taking traditional math and science high school courses, 7 but they can take other courses if they like, as well.



## 2 – Apply COP

6 Students, who are interested (in studying agricultural engineering) will benefit (from taking traditional math and science high school courses), 7 but they can take other courses if they like, as well.

## 3 – Apply BOSS

6 Students who are interested will benefit, 7 but they can take other courses if they like, as well.

Use Expert Strategy #9 Check Pronoun Precision and Expert Strategy #10 Punctuate Appropriately to solve this question. First, ask yourself whether “who” is the correct pronoun. Yes, because “who” is directly next to people. Fortunately, the SAT did not try to use an incorrect relative pronoun such as “whom,” “where,” or “when.” Remember to use “who” when you would use “he” and use “whom” when you would use “him.” In this case, “he is interested” not “him is interested.” Therefore, the sentence requires a the relative pronoun “who.”

Second, ask yourself whether a comma is needed between “students” and “who.” No, because “who” is not a relative pronoun that requires a comma. Therefore, our BOSS solution should be to remove the comma between “students” and “who.”

## 4 – Select Answer

Select answer choice C because it perfectly agrees with our BOSS solution of not needing a comma between “students” and “who.” Answer choice B is incorrect because of the comma between “students” and “who.” In addition, answer choice B creates a non-essential appositive by placing the phrase “who are interested in studying agricultural

engineering” between two commas. Although the sentence still reads well if we ignore the non-essential appositive, placing a “who are” within the non-essential appositive is not appropriate. To create an appropriate non-essential appositive, you would want to remove the “who are.” Answer choice D is incorrect because a comma after “engineering” is not necessary. Not to mention this would be awkward since there is another comma in the sentence that comes later on after “courses.” This would place the phrase “will benefit from taking traditional math and science high school courses” in yet another incorrectly used non-essential appositive.

#### Question 7

6 Students, who are interested in studying agricultural engineering will benefit from taking traditional math and science high school courses, 7 but they can take other courses if they like, as well. Because agricultural engineers sometimes design systems that are part of a larger agricultural or environmental system, they must be able to propose solutions that interact well with other workers, machinery and equipment, and the environment. Agricultural engineers must listen to and seek out information from clients, workers, and other professionals working on a project. 8 Using the principles of calculus, trigonometry, and other advanced topics in math for analysis, design, and troubleshooting in their work is a good idea for them. Agricultural engineers work on problems affecting many different aspects of agricultural production, from designing safer equipment for food processing to water erosion. To solve these problems, agricultural engineers must be able to apply general principles of engineering to new circumstances.

7

Which choice results in the most effective transition to the information that follows in the paragraph?

- (A) NO CHANGE
- (B) or other courses they prefer.
- (C) Delete the underlined portion and end the sentence with a period
- (D) ; and courses they enjoy

### Solution

#### 1 – Examine Lines Related to Question 7

6 Students, who are interested in studying agricultural engineering will benefit from taking traditional math and science high school courses, 7 but they can take other courses if they like, as well.

#### 2 – Apply COP

6 Students, who are interested (in studying agricultural engineering) will benefit (from taking traditional math and science high school courses), 7 but they can take other courses if they like, as well.

#### 3 – Apply BOSS

6 Students who are interested will benefit, 7

Use Expert Strategy #6 Eliminate Excess and Expert Strategy #7 Use Logical Transitions to solve this question. The first issue that immediately pops out at me when I approach the underlined portion of sentence 7 is the amount of redundancy. Not only is the pronoun “they” used twice, but the words “other” and “as well” are redundant. In order to reduce the amount of redundancy in this sentence, I would eliminate this excess here.

The second issue in this sentence is the transition. I don’t think that “but” is the logical transition here. There is no reason to indicate an exception here. Instead, I believe this transition could be eliminated altogether.

Applying these concepts, my BOSS solution would be to delete the end of the sentence entirely.

#### 4 – Select Answer

Select answer choice C because it perfectly agrees with our BOSS solution of eliminating excess in the sentence. Answer choice B is incorrect because there is no reason to discuss “other courses” that agricultural engineers prefer when the entire paragraph is about the skills needed to be an agricultural engineer. Answer choice D is incorrect because “and courses they enjoy” is not a complete sentence – remember a semicolon needs complete sentences on both sides of it.

## Question 8

6 Students, who are interested in studying agricultural engineering will benefit from taking traditional math and science high school courses, 7 but they can take other courses if they like, as well. Because agricultural engineers sometimes design systems that are part of a larger agricultural or environmental system, they must be able to propose solutions that interact well with other workers, machinery and equipment, and the environment. Agricultural engineers must listen to and seek out information from clients, workers, and other professionals working on a project. 8 Using the principles of calculus, trigonometry, and other advanced topics in math for analysis, design, and troubleshooting in their work is a good idea for them. Agricultural engineers work on problems affecting many different aspects of agricultural production, from designing safer equipment for food processing to water erosion. To solve these problems, agricultural engineers must be able to apply general principles of engineering to new circumstances.

8

Which choice best maintains the sentence pattern already established by the paragraph?

- (A) NO CHANGE
- (B) Agricultural engineers use the principles of calculus, trigonometry, and other advanced topics in math for analysis, design, and troubleshooting in their work.
- (C) Calculus, trigonometry, and other advanced topics in math— these are helpful skills.
- (D) Learning important mathematical principles is important in architecture.

**Solution****1 – Examine Lines Related to Question 8**

Agricultural engineers must listen to and seek out information from clients, workers, and other professionals working on a project. **8** Using the principles of calculus, trigonometry, and other advanced topics in math for analysis, design, and troubleshooting in their work is a good idea for them. Agricultural engineers work on problems affecting many different aspects of agricultural production, from designing safer equipment for food processing to water erosion.

**2 – Apply BOSS**

Use Expert Strategy #18 Keep Consistent Style to answer questions related to sentence pattern. You may also argue that Expert Strategy #3 Preserve Parallelism is relevant here since you are attempting to maintain parallelism (or similar structure) across sentences. Nonetheless, remember that COP does not typically work all that well for questions related to this Expert Strategy #18 Keep Consistent Style. Instead, you must examine the sentence before and the sentence after the sentence in question in order to be able to establish a clear sentence pattern for the paragraph.

In this case, the sentence that comes before sentence 8, starts with “Agricultural engineers must listen...” and the sentence that comes after sentence 9 ends with “Agricultural engineers work...” The sentence pattern established here includes “agricultural engineers” actively doing verbs. Therefore, my BOSS solution would have Agricultural engineers doing a verb. It’s not necessary to write out the whole sentence since that would take up a lot of precious time during the exam, but simply write out what you would be looking for in the correct answer:

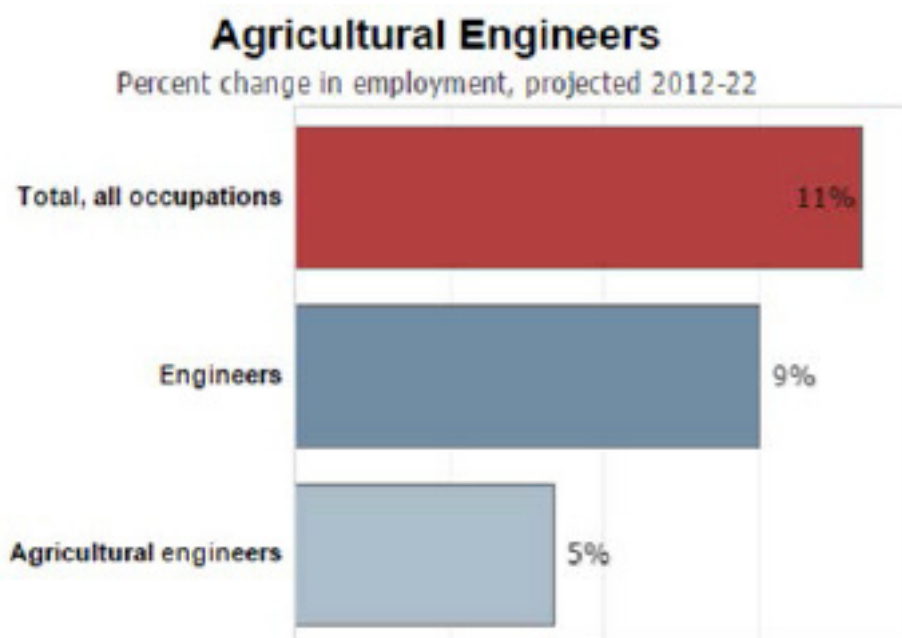
Agricultural engineers use the principles

## 4 – Select Answer

Select answer choice B because it almost perfectly agrees with our BOSS solution of having agricultural engineers actively doing a verb. Answer choice C is incorrect because it removes agricultural engineers entirely from the sentence. In addition, the dash transition is not appropriate since it is not introducing anything. Answer choice D is also incorrect because it removes agricultural engineers from the sentence.

## Question 9

Employment of agricultural engineers **9** is projected to grow 9 percent from 2012 to 2022, **10** that puts it at a slower than the average for all occupations. Agricultural engineers are pursuing new areas related to agriculture, such as high-tech applications to agricultural products, water resource management, and alternative energies. However, activity related to designing new machinery and equipment in agriculture also is expected to continue to create some employment opportunities.



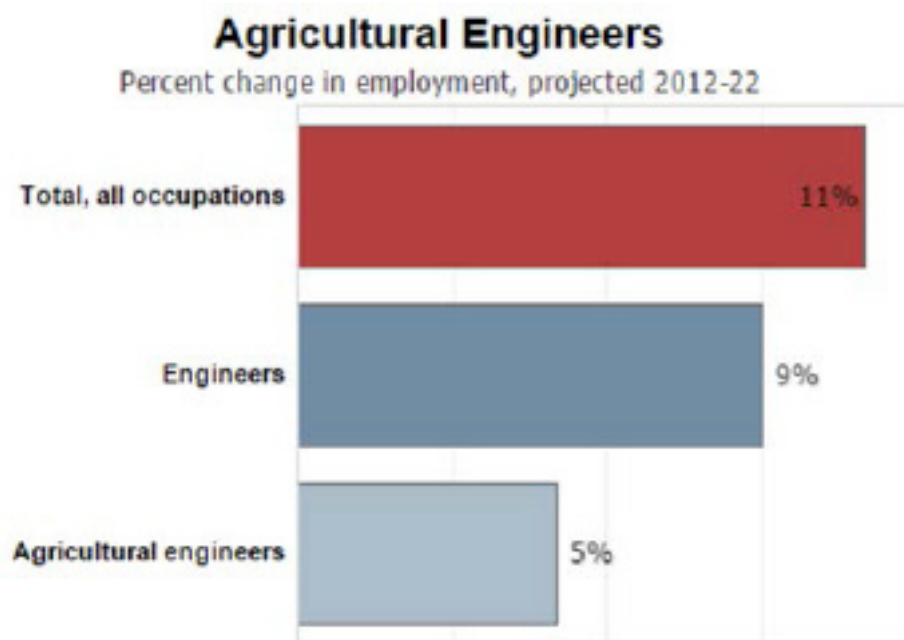
9

Which of these choices completes the sentence with accurate data based on the graph?

- (A) NO CHANGE
- (B) is projected to slow down before 2022
- (C) is projected to account for 5 percent of all jobs by 2022
- (D) is projected to grow 5 percent from 2012 to 2022

**Solution****1 – Examine Lines Related to Question 9**

Employment of agricultural engineers **9** is projected to grow 9 percent from 2012 to 2022, **10** that puts it at a slower than the average for all occupations.

**2 – Interpret Data**



## Bar Graph Standardized Approach

- (1) Read Title
- (2) Read X-Axis
- (3) Read Y-Axis
- (4) Interpret: 1 Bar

## Bar Graph Standardized Approach

- (1) Agricultural Engineers
- (2) Percent Change, Projected in 2012 - 2022
- (3) Total Occupations | Engineers | Agricultural Engineers
- (4) Interpret: There is an 11% expected percent change in all occupations between 2012 and 2022

## 3 – Apply BOSS

Employment of agricultural engineers **9** is projected to grow 9 percent from 2012 to 2022, **10** that puts it at a slower than the average for all occupations.

The passage clearly has an incorrect statement. It has replaced the percent growth of agricultural engineers with the percent growth of all engineers. Therefore, “9 percent” needs to be changed to “5 percent.”

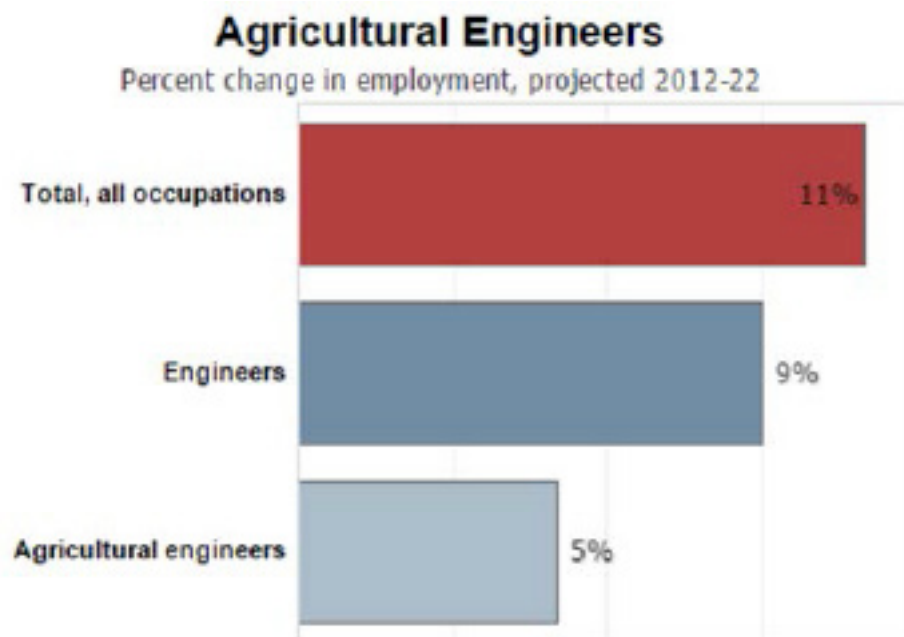
## 4 – Select Answer

Select answer choice D because it perfectly agrees with our BOSS solution that agricultural engineering employment will increase 5 percent between 2012 and 2022. Answer choice B is incorrect because nothing in the graph indicates that agricultural engineering employment is

going to “slow down.” Although answer choice C did get the percentage correct, the answer is incorrect because it states that this percentage represents what proportion agricultural engineers will make up of all jobs. This is a misinterpretation of the graph, which is further evidence of why reading titles and labels of graphs is so important.

### Question 10

Employment of agricultural engineers **9** is projected to grow 9 percent from 2012 to 2022, **10** that puts it at a slower than the average for all occupations. Agricultural engineers are pursuing new areas related to agriculture, such as high-tech applications to agricultural products, water resource management, and alternative energies. However, activity related to designing new machinery and equipment in agriculture also is expected to continue to create some employment opportunities.



10

Which of these choices completes the sentence with accurate data based on the graph?

- (A) NO CHANGE
- (B) slower than the average for all occupations
- (C) which puts it at a far slower rate than all other occupations
- (D) a slow rate

**Solution****1 – Examine Lines Related to Question 10**

Employment of agricultural engineers **9** is projected to grow 9 percent from 2012 to 2022, **10** that puts it at a slower than the average for all occupations.

**2 – Apply COP**

Employment of agricultural engineers **9** is projected to grow 9 percent from 2012 to 2022, **10** that puts **it** at a slower than the average for all occupations.

**3 – Apply BOSS**

Employment of agricultural engineers **9** is projected to grow 9 percent from 2012 to 2022, **10** **which is** slower than the average for all occupations.

Use Expert Strategy #9 Check Pronoun Precision to solve this question. When you can avoid using an “it” in a sentence, you probably should. In this case, the noun that “it” is referring to

is ambiguous. Is “it” referring to “employment” or “9 percent”? The sentence is not clear. Therefore, my BOSS solution would be to remove the “it” if at all possible.

#### 4 – Select Answer

Select answer choice B because it almost perfectly agrees with our BOSS solution. Answer choice C is not correct because this option also contains an unnecessary “it” pronoun. And answer choice D is incorrect because ending the sentence with a phrase such as “a slow rate” is actually using a modifier. If you remember from Expert Strategy #11 Modify Appropriately, the word that is directly next to the comma needs to be the one that is modified. In this case, 2022 is not “a slow rate.”

#### Question 11

These engineers are also involved with designing and building machinery and equipment needed to implement findings from research on genetically modified plants and seeds. **11** Consequently, demand is also expected to come from U.S. firms that market their farm technology products to farmers internationally.

11

Which of these choices completes the sentence with accurate data based on the graph?

- (A) NO CHANGE
- (B) Furthermore,
- (C) However,
- (D) In addition,

**Solution****1 – Examine Lines Related to Question 11**

These engineers are also involved with designing and building machinery and equipment needed to implement findings from research on genetically modified plants and seeds. **11** Consequently, demand is also expected to come from U.S. firms that market their farm technology products to farmers internationally.

Whenever you are dealing with a transition at the beginning of a sentence, you must examine the sentence that came before it as well.

**2 – Apply COP**

These engineers are also involved (with designing and building machinery and equipment needed to implement findings) (from research) (on genetically modified plants and seeds). **11** Consequently, demand is also expected to come (from U.S. firms that market their farm technology products to farmers internationally).

**3 – Apply BOSS**

These engineers are also involved. **11** Additionally, demand is also expected to come

Use Expert Strategy #7 Use Logical Transitions to solve this question. In this case, we need to think about whether “consequently” is the appropriate transition to from the previous sentence to this one. I do not believe so. One especially powerful strategy that will help you solve transition questions is to ignore the transition altogether. This means to read the two sentences as follows:

These engineers are also involved... demand is also expected to come

When you read the sentence without the transition, you don't allow the SAT confuse you with the transition that it has placed (often incorrectly) in between two sentences. If you do read the transition that the SAT has given you, often you begin to incorrectly believe that the SAT is using the appropriate transition. Let's think about the relationship between the two sentences based on their content. The former sentence discusses the agricultural engineers are involved with genetically modified plants. The latter sentence discusses the demand of farming technology products. Because these two sentences are somewhat unrelated, I would use a transition such as "additionally." The current transition "consequently" is not appropriate because there is no cause-and-effect relationship between the two sentences.

#### 4 – Select Answer

Select answer choice D because it almost perfectly agrees with our BOSS solution. Answer choice B is incorrect because the transition "furthermore" would imply additional information related to the genetically modified foods discussed in the previous sentence is given. Answer choice C is incorrect because the transition "however" would indicate an opposing idea. There is no evidence that the sentence related to question 11 contains any ideas in opposition to the ideas in the previous sentence.

## The Serious and the Smirk: The Smile in Portraiture

A walk around any art gallery will reveal that the image of the open smile has, for a very long time, been deeply unfashionable. Miss La Creevy's equivocal 'smirks' do however make more frequent appearances: a smirk may offer artists an opportunity for ambiguity that the open smile cannot. Such a subtle and complex facial expression may **1** demand almost anything — piqued interest, condescension, **2** that the subject is flirting, wistfulness, boredom, discomfort, **3** contentment— or mild embarrassment. This equivocation allows the artist to offer us a lasting emotional engagement with the image. An open smile, however, is unequivocal, a signal moment of unselfconsciousness.

**4** [1] Such is the field upon which the mouth in portraiture has been debated: an ongoing conflict between the serious and the smirk. [2] Millions of words have been devoted to the Mona Lisa and her smirk — more generously known as her 'enigmatic smile' — and so today it's difficult to write about her without sensing that you're at the back of a very **5** short line that stretches all the way back to 16th century Florence. [3] The most famous and enduring portrait in the world **6** functions around this very conflict. But to write about the smile in portraiture without mentioning her is **7** perverse. [4] For the effect of the Mona Lisa has always been in its inherent ability to demand further examination. [5] Leonardo impels us to do this using a combination of skillful **8** sfumato (the effect of blurriness, or smokiness) and his profound understanding of human desire. [6] It is a **9** kind of magic when you first glimpse her, she appears to be issuing a wanton invitation, so alive is the smile. [7] But when you look again, and the sfumato clears in focus, she seems to have changed her mind about you. [8] This is interactive stuff, and paradoxical: the effect of the painting only occurs in dialogue, yet she is only really there when you're not really looking. [9] The Mona Lisa is thus, in many ways, designed to frustrate — and frustrate she did.

10 The hubbub around her smile really got going in the 19th century, when unfettered critical devotion to Renaissance art was at an all-time high. One critic and historian in particular, Jules Michelet, enjoyed, or at least endured, a very personal moment with her. In Volume VII of his *Histoire de France* (1855) he wrote, ‘This canvas attracts me, calls me, invades me. I go to it in spite of myself, like the bird to the serpent.’ Artfully concealed under the guise of Romantic criticism, this was in fact an expression of the new cult of the Mona Lisa that was growing. 11

### Question 1

A walk around any art gallery will reveal that the image of the open smile has, for a very long time, been deeply unfashionable. Miss La Creevy’s equivocal ‘smirks’ do however make more frequent appearances: a smirk may offer artists an opportunity for ambiguity that the open smile cannot. Such a subtle and complex facial expression may 1 demand almost anything — piqued interest, condescension, 2 that the subject is flirting, wistfulness, boredom, discomfort, 3 contentment— or mild embarrassment. This equivocation allows the artist to offer us a lasting emotional engagement with the image. An open smile, however, is unequivocal, a signal moment of unselfconsciousness.

1

- (A) NO CHANGE
- (B) convey
- (C) reply
- (D) transfer



**Solution****1 – Write PKP**

When starting a new passage, the first step is always to come up with a passage key point. This will help clarify many of the Expression of Ideas questions that we come across on the SAT Writing section. After reading the first paragraph of the above passage, I believe the passage key point is the following:

PKP: Smirk = ambiguous

Because the passage constantly uses the word equivocal (which means ambiguous), I believe the author is saying that a smirk is ambiguous because it leaves a painting open to interpretation whereas a smile is not ambiguous at all.

Once you have come up with a Passage's Key Point, then you can tackle the first question associated with the passage.

**2 – Examine Lines Related to Question 1**

Such a subtle and complex facial expression may **1** demand almost anything — piqued interest, condescension, **2** that the subject is flirting, wistfulness, boredom, discomfort, **3** contentment— or mild embarrassment.

**3 – Apply COP**

Such a subtle and complex facial expression may **1** demand almost anything — piqued interest, condescension, **2** that the subject is flirting, wistfulness, boredom, discomfort, **3** contentment— or mild embarrassment.

#### 4 – Apply BOSS

Such a subtle and complex facial expression may **1** communicate almost anything — piqued interest, condescension, **2** that the subject is flirting, wistfulness, boredom, discomfort, **3** contentment— or mild embarrassment.

This question requires Writing Expert Strategy #16 Use Precise Word Choice. The word “demand” does not seem appropriate here. Instead, I would cover it up with my hand and pretend that the word is not there. Then, using the context clues of the sentence, I would attempt to come up with my own word that should replace “demand.” In this case, the sentence is stating that the “facial expression” is could cause a variety of different emotions to arise. Therefore, my BOSS solution would be “communicate.”

#### 5 – Select Answer

I would select answer choice B even though it doesn’t perfectly agree with our BOSS solution of “communicate.” By now, you may be getting tired of hearing that BOSS solutions perfectly agree with answer choices. That’s simply not realistic. Sometimes, your BOSS solution will not be close to what is listed in the answer choices. However, that does not mean your efforts were wasted. Coming up with a BOSS solution is an exercise that requires you to think actively about what the passage is saying. If you don’t do the active thinking yourself, and allow the answer choices to do the thinking for you, you will often be led astray by incorrect answer choices.

Therefore, having come up with the BOSS solution of “communicate” on this question was not a waste. It still gave me some idea of what I needed to look for in the answer choices: a solution that says the smirk facial expression is causing a variety of different emotions to arise.

From the options of answer choices, only “convey” does this. Answer choice A is wrong

because “demand” means “to require,” not “to express.” Answer choice C is wrong because “reply” means “to respond,” not “to express.” And finally answer choice D is wrong because “transfer” means “to move,” not “to express.”

You will often encounter answer choices that do not fully agree with your BOSS solution. However, I bet that you will still be able to come up with the correct answer because you have gone through the thought process of figuring out what is needed even if you didn’t articulate it correctly through your BOSS solution.

## Question 2

A walk around any art gallery will reveal that the image of the open smile has, for a very long time, been deeply unfashionable. Miss La Creevy’s equivocal ‘smirks’ do however make more frequent appearances: a smirk may offer artists an opportunity for ambiguity that the open smile cannot. Such a subtle and complex facial expression may **1** demand almost anything — piqued interest, condescension, **2** that the subject is flirting, wistfulness, boredom, discomfort, **3** contentment— or mild embarrassment. This equivocation allows the artist to offer us a lasting emotional engagement with the image. An open smile, however, is unequivocal, a signal moment of unselfconsciousness.

2

- (A) NO CHANGE
- (B) people who flirt
- (C) flirtations that occur
- (D) flirtation

**Solution****1 – Examine Lines Related to Question 2**

Such a subtle and complex facial expression may **1** demand almost anything — piqued interest, condescension, **2** that the subject is flirting, wistfulness, boredom, discomfort, **3** contentment— or mild embarrassment.

**2 – Apply COP**

Such a subtle and complex facial expression may **1** demand almost anything — piqued interest, condescension, **2** that the subject is flirting, wistfulness, boredom, discomfort, **3** contentment— or mild embarrassment.

**3 – Apply BOSS**

Such a subtle and complex facial expression may **1** demand almost anything — piqued interest, condescension, **2** flirtation, wistfulness, boredom, discomfort, **3** contentment— or mild embarrassment.

Use Expert Strategy #3 Preserve Parallelism to solve this question. Every item in this list is a single-word noun, except the item that is underlined. This should be a clear sign that there is a parallelism error in the sentence. To change “that the subject is flirting” to a single-word noun, my BOSS solution would be “flirtation.”

**4 – Select Answer**

Select answer choice D because it perfectly agrees with our BOSS solution of “flirtation.” Answer choices A, B, and C are incorrect because they are not single-word nouns.

## Question 3

A walk around any art gallery will reveal that the image of the open smile has, for a very long time, been deeply unfashionable. Miss La Creevy's equivocal 'smirks' do however make more frequent appearances: a smirk may offer artists an opportunity for ambiguity that the open smile cannot. Such a subtle and complex facial expression may **1** demand almost anything — piqued interest, condescension, **2** that the subject is flirting, wistfulness, boredom, discomfort, **3** contentment— or mild embarrassment. This equivocation allows the artist to offer us a lasting emotional engagement with the image. An open smile, however, is unequivocal, a signal moment of unselfconsciousness.

3

- (A) NO CHANGE
- (B) contentment and
- (C) contentment, or
- (D) contentment, but not

## Solution

## 1 – Examine Lines Related to Question 3

Such a subtle and complex facial expression may **1** demand almost anything — piqued interest, condescension, **2** that the subject is flirting, wistfulness, boredom, discomfort, **3** contentment— or mild embarrassment.

## 2 – Apply COP

Such a subtle and complex facial expression may **1** demand almost anything — piqued interest, condescension, **2** that the subject is flirting, wistfulness, boredom, discomfort, **3** contentment — or mild embarrassment.

## 3 – Apply BOSS

Such a subtle and complex facial expression may **1** demand almost anything — piqued interest, condescension, **2** that the subject is flirting, wistfulness, boredom, discomfort, **3** contentment, or mild embarrassment.

Use Expert Strategy #10 Punctuate Appropriately to solve this question. This question is pretty simple. In order to separate items in a list, commas should be used. A dash is used to introduce items. My BOSS solution would be to switch out the dash for the comma. You should also use Expert Strategy #7 Use Logical Transitions to make sure that the “or” transition is the correct one to use here. I believe it is because this is a list of possible emotions that a person can have from a certain piece of artwork.

## 4 – Select Answer

Select answer choice C because it perfectly agrees with our BOSS solution. Answer choice B is incorrect because “and” would indicate that a person is having all of the cited emotions. Answer choice D is incorrect because “but not” is not the proper transition since nothing in the sentence indicates an exception.

## Question 4

4 [1] Such is the field upon which the mouth in portraiture has been debated: an ongoing conflict between the serious and the smirk. [2] Millions of words have been devoted to the Mona Lisa and her smirk – more generously known as her ‘enigmatic smile’ — and so today it’s difficult to write about her without sensing that you’re at the back of a very 5 short line that stretches all the way back to 16th century Florence. [3] The most famous and enduring portrait in the world 6 functions around this very conflict. But to write about the smile in portraiture without mentioning her is 7 perverse. [4] For the effect of the Mona Lisa has always been in its inherent ability to demand further examination. [5] Leonardo impels us to do this using a combination of skillful 8 sfumato (the effect of blurriness, or smokiness) and his profound understanding of human desire. [6] It is a 9 kind of magic when you first glimpse her, she appears to be issuing a wanton invitation, so alive is the smile. [7] But when you look again, and the sfumato clears in focus, she seems to have changed her mind about you. [8] This is interactive stuff, and paradoxical: the effect of the painting only occurs in dialogue, yet she is only really there when you’re not really looking. [9] The Mona Lisa is thus, in many ways, designed to frustrate — and frustrate she did.

4

To make this paragraph most logical, sentence 3 should be placed

- (A) where it is now
- (B) after sentence 4
- (C) after sentence 1
- (D) after sentence 2

## Solution

## 1 – Examine Lines Related to Question 4

[4] [1] Such is the field upon which the mouth in portraiture has been debated: an ongoing conflict between the serious and the smirk. [2] Millions of words have been devoted to the Mona Lisa and her smirk – more generously known as her ‘enigmatic smile’ — and so today it’s difficult to write about her without sensing that you’re at the back of a very [5] short line that stretches all the way back to 16th century Florence. [3] The most famous and enduring portrait in the world [6] functions around this very conflict. But to write about the smile in portraiture without mentioning her is [7] perverse. [4] For the effect of the Mona Lisa has always been in its inherent ability to demand further examination.

## 2 – Apply BOSS

[4] [1] Such is the field upon which the mouth in portraiture has been debated: an ongoing conflict between the serious and the smirk. [3] The most famous and enduring portrait in the world [6] functions around this very conflict. [2] Millions of words have been devoted to the Mona Lisa and her smirk – more generously known as her ‘enigmatic smile’ — and so today it’s difficult to write about her without sensing that you’re at the back of a very [5] short line that stretches all the way back to 16th century Florence. But to write about the smile in portraiture without mentioning her is [7] perverse. [4] For the effect of the Mona Lisa has always been in its inherent ability to demand further examination.

Use Expert Strategy #20 Stay Organized to solve this question. When reading a question that asks about the placement of a sentence, you should immediately be skeptical about its current placement. As you read the current paragraph, you should realize that the sentence mentions an “enduring portrait” after it has already mentioned “Mona Lisa” in the previous sentence. This should likely be the other way around. In addition, I notice that a “conflict” is



mentioned in sentence 1 of the paragraph, which is also mentioned in sentence 3. Therefore, my BOSS solution would be to place sentence 3 after sentence 1.

### 3 – Select Answer

Select answer choice C because it perfectly agrees with our BOSS solution of “after sentence 1.” Answer choice A, B, and D are incorrect because it doesn’t make sense to mention a “famous and enduring portrait” after you have already mentioned the Mona Lisa painting.

#### Question 5

4 [1] Such is the field upon which the mouth in portraiture has been debated: an ongoing conflict between the serious and the smirk. [2] Millions of words have been devoted to the Mona Lisa and her smirk – more generously known as her ‘enigmatic smile’ — and so today it’s difficult to write about her without sensing that you’re at the back of a very 5 short line that stretches all the way back to 16th century Florence. [3] The most famous and enduring portrait in the world 6 functions around this very conflict. But to write about the smile in portraiture without mentioning her is 7 perverse. [4] For the effect of the Mona Lisa has always been in its inherent ability to demand further examination. [5] Leonardo impels us to do this using a combination of skillful 8 sfumato (the effect of blurriness, or smokiness) and his profound understanding of human desire. [6] It is a 9 kind of magic when you first glimpse her, she appears to be issuing a wanton invitation, so alive is the smile. [7] But when you look again, and the sfumato clears in focus, she seems to have changed her mind about you. [8] This is interactive stuff, and paradoxical: the effect of the painting only occurs in dialogue, yet she is only really there when you’re not really looking. [9] The Mona Lisa is thus, in many ways, designed to frustrate — and frustrate she did.

5

The writer wants to convey what it feels like to write on a very popular topic. Which choice best accomplishes this?

- (A) NO CHANGE
- (B) large building
- (C) boring line
- (D) long and noisy line

### Solution

#### 1 – Examine Lines Related to Question 5

Millions of words have been devoted to the Mona Lisa and her smirk – more generously known as her ‘enigmatic smile’ — and so today it’s difficult to write about her without sensing that you’re at the back of a very **5** short line that stretches all the way back to 16th century Florence.

#### 2 – Apply BOSS

Millions of words have been devoted to the Mona Lisa and her smirk – more generously known as her ‘enigmatic smile’ — and so today it’s difficult to write about her without sensing that you’re at the back of a very **5** long line that stretches all the way back to 16th century Florence.

Use Expert Strategy #16 Use Precise Word Choice to solve this question. I decided to skip COP step because the underlined portion “short line” is within the prepositional phrase “of a

very short line.” My BOSS solution would be “long line.” This would convey that many writers have written about the Mona Lisa, which is what the question states is the author’s intention.

### 3 – Select Answer

Select answer choice D because it almost perfectly agrees with our BOSS solution of “long line.” The answer choice also includes the word “noisy.” This makes sense within the context of the passage. If a line is “noisy,” then it is probably difficult to get your voice heard. In the same manner, it is probably hard to have your voice heard if you are writing on a popular topic. Answer choice A is incorrect because a “short line” conveys that an author is writing about a unpopular topic. Answer choice B is incorrect because “large building” does not convey that an author is writing about a very popular topic. Finally, answer choice C is incorrect because “boring” does not convey that an author is writing a very popular topic.

### Question 6

4 [1] Such is the field upon which the mouth in portraiture has been debated: an ongoing conflict between the serious and the smirk. [2] Millions of words have been devoted to the Mona Lisa and her smirk – more generously known as her ‘enigmatic smile’ — and so today it’s difficult to write about her without sensing that you’re at the back of a very 5 short line that stretches all the way back to 16th century Florence. [3] The most famous and enduring portrait in the world 6 functions around this very conflict. But to write about the smile in portraiture without mentioning her is 7 perverse. [4] For the effect of the Mona Lisa has always been in its inherent ability to demand further examination. [5] Leonardo impels us to do this using a combination of skillful 8 sfumato (the effect of blurriness, or smokiness) and his profound understanding of human desire. [6] It is a 9 kind of magic when you first glimpse her, she appears to be issuing a wanton invitation, so alive is the smile. [7] But when you look again, and the sfumato clears in focus, she seems to have changed her mind about

you. [8] This is interactive stuff, and paradoxical: the effect of the painting only occurs in dialogue, yet she is only really there when you're not really looking. [9] The Mona Lisa is thus, in many ways, designed to frustrate — and frustrate she did.

6

- (A) NO CHANGE
- (B) is functioning
- (C) did function
- (D) was functioning

**Solution****1 – Examine Lines Related to Question 6**

The most famous and enduring portrait in the world 6 functions around this very conflict.

**2 – Apply COP**

The most famous and enduring portrait (in the world) 6 functions around this very conflict.

**3 – Apply BOSS**

The most famous and enduring portrait 6 functions around this very conflict.

Use Expert Strategy #2 Avoid Singular-Plural Mismatches and Expert Strategy #14 Keep Tense Agreement to solve this question. Crossing Out Prepositions on this question is

especially important because there is an underlined verb. Whenever there is an underlined verb on the SAT Writing section, you should make sure the singularity or plurality of the verb is correct. In addition, the SAT will often attempt to distract you from the true singularity/plurality of a verb by placing prepositional phrases between the verb and its associated noun. In this case, the preposition “in the world” is between the noun “portrait” and verb “functions.” However, there is actually no singular-plural error in the sentence. “Portrait” is a singular noun that is appropriately paired with the singular verb “functions.” Next, we need to check that the verb tense of the sentence is correct. In this case “functions” is in the simple present tense. I believe this is the correct tense to use because the sentence before uses the word “today” and the sentence after uses the simple present tense verb “is.” Using context clues such as this can help you make decisions about tense on the SAT Writing section. Therefore, my BOSS solution would simply be to keep the word “functions” as it currently stands in the sentence.

#### 4 – Select Answer

Select answer choice A because it perfectly agrees with our BOSS solution of no change. Answer choice B is incorrect because the tense of the sentence is not simple continuous (also known as progressive). Answer choice C is incorrect because the tense of the sentence is not simple past. Answer choice D is incorrect because the tense of the sentence is not past continuous (or progressive).

#### Question 7

**4** [1] Such is the field upon which the mouth in portraiture has been debated: an ongoing conflict between the serious and the smirk. [2] Millions of words have been devoted to the Mona Lisa and her smirk – more generously known as her ‘enigmatic smile’ — and so today it’s difficult to write about her without sensing that you’re at the back of a very **5** short

line that stretches all the way back to 16th century Florence. [3] The most famous and enduring portrait in the world [6] functions around this very conflict. But to write about the smile in portraiture without mentioning her is [7] perverse. [4] For the effect of the Mona Lisa has always been in its inherent ability to demand further examination. [5] Leonardo impels us to do this using a combination of skillful [8] sfumato (the effect of blurriness, or smokiness) and his profound understanding of human desire. [6] It is a [9] kind of magic when you first glimpse her, she appears to be issuing a wanton invitation, so alive is the smile. [7] But when you look again, and the sfumato clears in focus, she seems to have changed her mind about you. [8] This is interactive stuff, and paradoxical: the effect of the painting only occurs in dialogue, yet she is only really there when you're not really looking. [9] The Mona Lisa is thus, in many ways, designed to frustrate — and frustrate she did.

7

Which of the answers below best combines the sentences at the underlined section?

- (A) NO CHANGE
- (B) perverse and for the effect
- (C) perverse, for the effect
- (D) perverse; however, the effect

### Solution

#### 1 – Examine Lines Related to Question 7

But to write about the smile in portraiture without mentioning her is [7] perverse. [4] For the effect of the Mona Lisa has always been in its inherent ability to demand further examination.

## 2 – Apply COP

But to write ~~about the smile in portraiture~~ without mentioning her is **7** perverse. **[4]**  
For the effect of the Mona Lisa has always been ~~in its inherent ability~~ to demand further examination.

## 3 – Apply BOSS

But to write without mentioning her is **7** perverse. **[4]** has always been to demand further examination.

I do not see any grammatical errors without prepositional phrases. Therefore, I need to reexamine the full two sentences with prepositional phrases.

But to write about the smile in portraiture without mentioning her is **7** perverse. **[4]**  
For the effect of the Mona Lisa has always been in its inherent ability to demand further examination.

Use Expert Strategy #10 Punctuate Appropriately in order to solve this question. The current punctuation that is separating these two sentences is a period. So we need to decide whether a period is the best punctuation to separate these two sentences. As you should recall, a period is used to separate two complete sentences. Is the following a complete sentence?

But to write about the smile in portraiture without mentioning her is **7** perverse.  
Yes.

Is the following a complete sentence?

For the effect of the Mona Lisa has always been in its inherent ability to demand further examination.

Yes. Therefore, a period is appropriate to separate these two complete sentences. In addition to punctuation issues, we should consider using Expert Strategy #7 Use Logical Transitions to decide whether we need a different transition between the sentences. As far as I can tell, the ideas between the two sentences are not related in any way (such as contrast, additional explanation, etc.) that would require a different transition. Therefore, my BOSS solution for this question would be to simply keep the transition between the two sentences the same.

#### 4 – Select Answer

Select answer choice A because it perfectly agrees with our BOSS solution of no change. Answer choice B is incorrect because the transition “and” is unnecessary. In addition, you cannot separate two complete sentences with only a conjunction. You need something more than a conjunction such as a period, a semicolon, or a conjunction with a comma. Answer choice C is incorrect because you cannot separate two complete sentences with just a comma. This creates a comma splice error, or run-on sentence. Finally, answer choice D is incorrect because the transition “however” is not appropriate here. There is nothing in either sentence that would indicate that a contrasting transition is needed.

#### Question 8

**4** [1] Such is the field upon which the mouth in portraiture has been debated: an ongoing conflict between the serious and the smirk. [2] Millions of words have been devoted to the Mona Lisa and her smirk – more generously known as her ‘enigmatic smile’ — and so today it’s difficult to write about her without sensing that you’re at the back of a very **5** short line that stretches all the way back to 16th century Florence. [3] The most famous and



enduring portrait in the world [6] functions around this very conflict. But to write about the smile in portraiture without mentioning her is [7] perverse. [4] For the effect of the Mona Lisa has always been in its inherent ability to demand further examination. [5] Leonardo impels us to do this using a combination of skillful [8] sfumato (the effect of blurriness, or smokiness) and his profound understanding of human desire. [6] It is a [9] kind of magic when you first glimpse her, she appears to be issuing a wanton invitation, so alive is the smile. [7] But when you look again, and the sfumato clears in focus, she seems to have changed her mind about you. [8] This is interactive stuff, and paradoxical: the effect of the painting only occurs in dialogue, yet she is only really there when you're not really looking. [9] The Mona Lisa is thus, in many ways, designed to frustrate — and frustrate she did.

8

- (A) NO CHANGE
- (B) *sfumato* is the effect of blurriness or smokiness
- (C) *sfumato*, the effect of blurriness, or smokiness,
- (D) *sfumato*, that is to say, the effect of blurriness, or smokiness,

**Solution****1 – Examine Lines Related to Question 8**

Leonardo impels us to do this using a combination of skillful [8] sfumato (the effect of blurriness, or smokiness) and his profound understanding of human desire.

**2 – Apply COP**

Leonardo impels us to do this using a combination of skillful [8] sfumato (the effect of blurriness, or smokiness) and his profound understanding of human desire.

### 3 – Apply BOSS

Leonardo impels us to do this using a combination of skillful **8** sfumato (the effect) and his profound understanding.

Use Expert Strategy #4 Remove Non-Essential Appositives in order to solve this question. The words in parenthesis are describing what “sfumato” is. We need to decide if this is the best way to separate out this description. We know that appositives are modifiers of nouns. We also know that appositives are typically separated from the rest of a sentence through the use of commas. Therefore, do we need commas to separate out the appositive “the effect of blurriness, or smokiness”? I actually think we don’t want to use commas in order to separate this appositive. There is already a comma in the actual appositive: “, or smokiness.” Because of the existing comma in this appositive, I don’t believe it’s necessary to add another two commas on the sides of this appositive. Therefore, my BOSS solution would be to leave the sentence as it currently is written.

### 4 – Select Answer

Select answer choice A because it perfectly agrees with our BOSS solution of no change. Answer choice B is incorrect because the verb “is” is not necessary. Answer choice C is incorrect because surrounding an appositive that already contains a comma with two more commas is not the best way to separate an appositive. Answer choice D is incorrect because the phrase “, that is to say” is unnecessary.

## Question 9

4 [1] Such is the field upon which the mouth in portraiture has been debated: an ongoing conflict between the serious and the smirk. [2] Millions of words have been devoted to the Mona Lisa and her smirk – more generously known as her ‘enigmatic smile’ — and so today it’s difficult to write about her without sensing that you’re at the back of a very 5 short line that stretches all the way back to 16th century Florence. [3] The most famous and enduring portrait in the world 6 functions around this very conflict. But to write about the smile in portraiture without mentioning her is 7 perverse. [4] For the effect of the Mona Lisa has always been in its inherent ability to demand further examination. [5] Leonardo impels us to do this using a combination of skillful 8 sfumato (the effect of blurriness, or smokiness) and his profound understanding of human desire. [6] It is a 9 kind of magic when you first glimpse her, she appears to be issuing a wanton invitation, so alive is the smile. [7] But when you look again, and the sfumato clears in focus, she seems to have changed her mind about you. [8] This is interactive stuff, and paradoxical: the effect of the painting only occurs in dialogue, yet she is only really there when you’re not really looking. [9] The Mona Lisa is thus, in many ways, designed to frustrate — and frustrate she did.

9

- (A) NO CHANGE
- (B) kind of magic; when
- (C) kind of magic, but when
- (D) kind of magic and when

**Solution****1 – Examine Lines Related to Question 9**

It is a **9** kind of magic when you first glimpse her, she appears to be issuing a wanton invitation, so alive is the smile.

**2 – Apply COP**

It is a **9** kind of magic when you first glimpse her, she appears to be issuing a wanton invitation, so alive is the smile.

**3 – Apply BOSS**

It is a **9** kind when you first glimpse her, she appears to be issuing a wanton invitation, so alive is the smile.

Use Expert Strategy #9 Check Pronoun Precision to solve this question. The relative pronoun “when” refers to time. Ask yourself whether a specific time is referenced in the sentence. Yes, “you first glimpse her” is an event that refers to a specific period of time. Therefore, “when” is the appropriate relative pronoun. You should also use Expert Strategy #10 Punctuate Appropriately and Expert Strategy #7 Use Logical Transitions. In this case, the relative pronoun “when” does not need any punctuation in combination with it. Therefore, my BOSS solution would be to leave the sentence as is.

**4 – Select Answer**

Select answer choice A because it perfectly agrees with our BOSS solution of no change. Answer choice B is incorrect because a semicolon is not needed before “when.”

Remember that a semicolon is used to separate two complete sentences. The phrase “It is a kind of magic” is not a complete sentence. Answer choice C is incorrect because “but” is not a conjunction that is needed in this sentence since there is no indication of an exception is being made. Finally, answer choice D is incorrect because the conjunction “and” is not needed in this sentence.

## Question 10

10 The hubbub around her smile really got going in the 19th century, when unfettered critical devotion to Renaissance art was at an all-time high. One critic and historian in particular, Jules Michelet, enjoyed, or at least endured, a very personal moment with her. In Volume VII of his *Histoire de France* (1855) he wrote, ‘This canvas attracts me, calls me, invades me. I go to it in spite of myself, like the bird to the serpent.’ Artfully concealed under the guise of Romantic criticism, this was in fact an expression of the new cult of the Mona Lisa that was growing. 11

10

Which choice most effectively represents the main topic of the paragraph?

- (A) The Mona Lisa has a mysterious smile.
- (B) Considering the Mona Lisa’s smile would become a personal issue for an art critic.
- (C) The Mona Lisa would come to compel many art critics to despise Leonardo.
- (D) Interest in the Mona Lisa became more intense over time.

**Solution****1 – Examine Lines Related to Question 10**

**10** The hubbub around her smile really got going in the 19th century, when unfettered critical devotion to Renaissance art was at an all-time high. One critic and historian in particular, Jules Michelet, enjoyed, or at least endured, a very personal moment with her. In Volume VII of his *Histoire de France* (1855) he wrote, ‘This canvas attracts me, calls me, invades me. I go to it in spite of myself, like the bird to the serpent.’ Artfully concealed under the guise of Romantic criticism, this was in fact an expression of the new cult of the Mona Lisa that was growing. **11**

**2 – Apply BOSS**

**10** The hubbub around her smile really got going in the 19th century, when unfettered critical devotion to Renaissance art was at an all-time high. One critic and historian in particular, Jules Michelet, enjoyed, or at least endured, a very personal moment with her. In Volume VII of his *Histoire de France* (1855) he wrote, ‘This canvas attracts me, calls me, invades me. I go to it in spite of myself, like the bird to the serpent.’ Artfully concealed under the guise of Romantic criticism, this was in fact an expression of the new cult of the Mona Lisa that was growing. **11**

Use Expert Strategy #8 Improve Paragraph Cohesion and develop a paragraph summary to solve this question. My paragraph summary would be the following:

PS: Mona Lisa Obsession Growing

I would likely abbreviate the above to the following in my test booklet:

PS: ML Obs ↑

Now I have my BOSS solution to compare answer choices to.

#### 4 – Select Answer

Select answer choice D because it almost perfectly agrees with our BOSS solution of no change. Answer choice A is incorrect because the entire paragraph is not about the mysteriousness of Mona Lisa's smile. Answer choice B is incorrect because the entire paragraph is not about one art critic. Although Jules Michelet is mentioned in a couple sentences of the paragraph, the concluding sentence of the paragraph tells us that this paragraph is discussing something larger than just one art critic. Had we not come up with a BOSS solution, this answer would have been enticing. Answer choice C is incorrect because there is nothing in the paragraph about despising Leonardo.

#### Question 11

10 The hubbub around her smile really got going in the 19th century, when unfettered critical devotion to Renaissance art was at an all-time high. One critic and historian in particular, Jules Michelet, enjoyed, or at least endured, a very personal moment with her. In Volume VII of his *Histoire de France* (1855) he wrote, 'This canvas attracts me, calls me, invades me. I go to it in spite of myself, like the bird to the serpent.' Artfully concealed under the guise of Romantic criticism, this was in fact an expression of the new cult of the Mona Lisa that was growing. 11

The writer wants to conclude the passage with a sentence that emphasizes the legacy of Mona Lisa's smile. Which choice would best achieve this?

- (A) In the end, Mona Lisa's smile would remain relatively interesting to people who enjoy art.
- (B) In the following decades, there would still be people dedicated to the mysteries of Mona Lisa's smile.
- (C) Over the coming years, historians would attempt to outdo each other with their devotion to her charms.
- (D) Mona Lisa's smile would continue to hang in the Louvre, enticing visitors and art critics alike.

### Solution

#### 1 – Examine Lines Related to Question 11

**10** The hubbub around her smile really got going in the 19th century, when unfettered critical devotion to Renaissance art was at an all-time high. One critic and historian in particular, Jules Michelet, enjoyed, or at least endured, a very personal moment with her. In Volume VII of his *Histoire de France* (1855) he wrote, 'This canvas attracts me, calls me, invades me. I go to it in spite of myself, like the bird to the serpent.' Artfully concealed under the guise of Romantic criticism, this was in fact an expression of the new cult of the Mona Lisa that was growing. **11**



## 2 – Apply BOSS

10 The hubbub around her smile really got going in the 19th century, when unfettered critical devotion to Renaissance art was at an all-time high. One critic and historian in particular, Jules Michelet, enjoyed, or at least endured, a very personal moment with her. In Volume VII of his *Histoire de France* (1855) he wrote, ‘This canvas attracts me, calls me, invades me. I go to it in spite of myself, like the bird to the serpent.’ Artfully concealed under the guise of Romantic criticism, this was in fact an expression of the new cult of the Mona Lisa that was growing. 11

Use Expert Strategy #19 Understand the Writing Goal to solve this question. This is clearly the best strategy for this question because the writing goal is actually given directly to us: “emphasizes the legacy of Mona Lisa’s smile.” Given the paragraph summary we just created for the final paragraph (“Mona Lisa obsession growing”), we should be able to come up with an appropriate BOSS solution prior to looking at the answer choices.

ML smile is impactful throughout history

I would abbreviate the above to the following in my test booklet:

ML smile = impactful in hist.

Now I have my BOSS solution to compare answer choices to.

## 4 – Select Answer

Select answer choice B because it almost agrees with our BOSS solution. Answer choice A is incorrect because “relatively interesting” does not do Mona Lisa’s legacy justice. Answer choice C is incorrect because historians competing against each other does not emphasize Mona Lisa’s legacy. Finally, answer choice D is incorrect because Mona Lisa’s painting hanging in the Louvre is unrelated to the rest of this concluding paragraph.