



PTS: 1 TOP: Diagnostic: Pre-Study Diagnostic on Sentences  
KEY: Subject-Verb Agreement | Agreement in number and person

4. Choose the correct word to fill in the blank in the following sentence.  
Peanut butter and jelly \_\_\_\_\_ a popular American sandwich filling.  
a. is b. are

ANS: A

CORRECT FEEDBACK: The phrase *Peanut butter and jelly* forms a single unit, so it agrees with a singular verb, *is*. (In *The Little Seagull Handbook*, see the section on Subject-Verb Agreement/Compound subjects.)

INCORRECT FEEDBACK: The phrase *Peanut butter and jelly* forms a single unit, so it agrees with a singular verb, *is*. (In *The Little Seagull Handbook*, see the section on Subject-Verb Agreement/Compound subjects.)

PTS: 1 TOP: Diagnostic: Pre-Study Diagnostic on Sentences  
KEY: Subject-Verb Agreement | Compound subjects

5. Choose the correct word to fill in the blank in the following sentence.  
What do you think we should do if the consensus on the city council \_\_\_\_\_ to fall apart?  
a. was b. were

ANS: B

CORRECT FEEDBACK: The information in the *if* clause is speculative, so the mood of the verb must be subjunctive (*were*) rather than indicative (*was*). (In *The Little Seagull Handbook*, see the section on Verbs/Mood.)

INCORRECT FEEDBACK: The information in the *if* clause is speculative, so the mood of the verb must be subjunctive (*were*) rather than indicative (*was*). (In *The Little Seagull Handbook*, see the section on Verbs/Mood.)

PTS: 1 TOP: Diagnostic: Pre-Study Diagnostic on Sentences  
KEY: Verbs | Mood

6. Choose the correct words to fill in the blank in the following sentence.  
Peggy is the only one of my students who \_\_\_\_\_ research papers ahead of the deadline.  
a. turns in b. turn in

ANS: A

CORRECT FEEDBACK: The phrase *the only one* always takes a singular verb. (In *The Little Seagull Handbook*, see the section on Subject-Verb Agreement/*Who, that, which*.)

INCORRECT FEEDBACK: The phrase *the only one* always takes a singular verb. (In *The Little Seagull Handbook*, see the section on Subject-Verb Agreement/*Who, that, which*.)

PTS: 1 TOP: Diagnostic: Pre-Study Diagnostic on Sentences  
KEY: Subject-Verb Agreement | Who, that, which

7. Choose the correct words to fill in the blank in the following sentence.  
The jury \_\_\_\_\_ order their lunches from various nearby take-out restaurants.  
a. has to b. have to

ANS: B

CORRECT FEEDBACK: Although *jury* can be understood as either singular or plural, here the words *their*, *lunches*, *various*, and *restaurants* all signal that *jury* refers to the multiple members of a group, so in this case, *jury* is plural. (In *The Little Seagull Handbook*, see the section on Subject-Verb Agreement/Collective nouns.)

INCORRECT FEEDBACK: Although *jury* can be understood as either singular or plural, here the words *their*, *lunches*, *various*, and *restaurants* all signal that *jury* refers to the multiple members of a group, so in this case, *jury* is plural. (In *The Little Seagull Handbook*, see the section on Subject-Verb Agreement/Collective nouns.)

PTS: 1 TOP: Diagnostic: Pre-Study Diagnostic on Sentences  
KEY: Subject-Verb Agreement | Collective nouns

8. Choose the correct words to fill in the blanks in the following sentence.  
Each of the students on the committee \_\_\_\_\_ hard, so most of the teachers only \_\_\_\_\_ to supervise them.
- |                |               |
|----------------|---------------|
| a. works; has  | c. work; has  |
| b. works; have | d. work; have |

ANS: B

CORRECT FEEDBACK: The indefinite pronoun *Each* is singular, so it takes the singular verb *works*; the indefinite pronoun *most* is plural, so it takes the plural verb *have*. (In *The Little Seagull Handbook*, see the section on Subject-Verb Agreement/*Everyone* and other indefinite pronouns.)

INCORRECT FEEDBACK: The indefinite pronoun *Each* is singular, so it takes the singular verb *works*; the indefinite pronoun *most* is plural, so it takes the plural verb *have*. (In *The Little Seagull Handbook*, see the section on Subject-Verb Agreement/*Everyone* and other indefinite pronouns.)

PTS: 1 TOP: Diagnostic: Pre-Study Diagnostic on Sentences  
KEY: Subject-Verb Agreement | *Everyone* and other indefinite pronouns

9. Choose the sentence that is most ambiguous.
- The psychologist quickly realized that the husband liked golf more than his wife.
  - The psychologist quickly realized that the husband liked golf more than he liked his wife.
  - The psychologist quickly realized that the husband liked golf more than his wife was ever going to like the game.

ANS: A

CORRECT FEEDBACK: In the correct answer, it is unclear whether *golf* is being compared to *his wife* or to an implied meaning of *his wife's enjoyment of golf*. (In *The Little Seagull Handbook*, see the section on Parallelism/With all the necessary words.)

INCORRECT FEEDBACK: In the correct answer, it is unclear whether *golf* is being compared to *his wife* or to an implied meaning of *his wife's enjoyment of golf*. (In *The Little Seagull Handbook*, see the section on Parallelism/With all the necessary words.)

PTS: 1 TOP: Diagnostic: Pre-Study Diagnostic on Sentences  
KEY: Parallelism | With all the necessary words

10. Does the following item contain a fragment?  
If it snows, I might try cross-country skiing. And maybe downhill.
- Yes, it contains a fragment.
  - No, it does not contain a fragment.

ANS: A

CORRECT FEEDBACK: The group of words *And maybe downhill* is an additional object of *try*; it is a fragment because it contains neither a subject nor a verb. (In *The Little Seagull Handbook*, see the section on Sentence Fragments.)

INCORRECT FEEDBACK: The group of words *And maybe downhill* is an additional object of *try*; it is a fragment because it contains neither a subject nor a verb. (In *The Little Seagull Handbook*, see the section on Sentence Fragments.)

PTS: 1 TOP: Diagnostic: Pre-Study Diagnostic on Sentences  
KEY: Sentence Fragments

11. In the following sentence, are the italicized words an independent clause, a subordinate clause, or a fragment?

The snowstorms came one after another, *yet the fires burned brightly in the cabin* where Josie read Mark Twain's novels to her favorite uncle.

- independent clause
- subordinate clause
- fragment

ANS: A

CORRECT FEEDBACK: The italicized words are a clause because they contain a subject, *fires*, and a verb, *burned*; they are an independent clause because they can function alone as a sentence. Here, *yet* functions as a coordinating conjunction, so the clause is not subordinate. (In *The Little Seagull Handbook*, see the section on Elements of a Sentence.)

INCORRECT FEEDBACK: The italicized words are a clause because they contain a subject, *fires*, and a verb, *burned*; they are an independent clause because they can function alone as a sentence. Here, *yet* functions as a coordinating conjunction, so the clause is not subordinate. (In *The Little Seagull Handbook*, see the section on Elements of a Sentence.)

PTS: 1 TOP: Diagnostic: Pre-Study Diagnostic on Sentences  
KEY: Elements of a Sentence

12. In the following sentence, the words in italics are what kind of phrase?

*Selling more than 500 million records*, Elvis Presley was the most successful solo recording artist during his lifetime.

- prepositional phrase
- appositive phrase
- participial phrase
- gerund phrase
- infinitive phrase

ANS: C

CORRECT FEEDBACK: *Selling* is the present participle of *to sell*; *more than 500 million records* is the object of *selling*; a participle plus an object is a participial phrase. The participial phrase functions as an adjective, modifying *Elvis Presley*. (In *The Little Seagull Handbook*, see the section on Elements of a Sentence.)

INCORRECT FEEDBACK: *Selling* is the present participle of *to sell*; *more than 500 million records* is the object of *selling*; a participle plus an object is a participial phrase. The participial phrase functions as an adjective, modifying *Elvis Presley*. (In *The Little Seagull Handbook*, see the section on Elements of a Sentence.)

PTS: 1 TOP: Diagnostic: Pre-Study Diagnostic on Sentences  
KEY: Elements of a Sentence

13. Select the correct pronoun to fill in the blank in the following sentence.



PTS: 1 TOP: Diagnostic: Pre-Study Diagnostic on Sentences  
KEY: Shifts | Shifts in tense

16. Select the passage that expresses the idea most clearly.
- Real estate developers want to build residences and offices on some vacant land in our town. The community objects to them.
  - Real estate developers want to build residences and offices on some vacant land in our town. The community objects to this use of the land.
  - Real estate developers want to build residences and offices on some vacant land in our town, which the community objects to it.

ANS: B

CORRECT FEEDBACK: The phrase *this use of the land* clarifies the sentence's meaning. *Them* and *it* are unclear pronoun references. (In *The Little Seagull Handbook*, see the section on Pronouns/Pronoun reference.)

INCORRECT FEEDBACK: The phrase *this use of the land* clarifies the sentence's meaning. *Them* and *it* are unclear pronoun references. (In *The Little Seagull Handbook*, see the section on Pronouns/Pronoun reference.)

PTS: 1 TOP: Diagnostic: Pre-Study Diagnostic on Sentences  
KEY: Pronouns | Pronoun reference

17. Select the sentence that best shows the relationship between the two ideas expressed in the sentence.
- When the side effects of antidepressant drugs range from dizziness to sexual dysfunction, these drugs can save lives.
  - Side effects of antidepressant drugs range from dizziness to sexual dysfunction; obviously, these drugs can save lives.
  - Although the side effects of antidepressant drugs range from dizziness to sexual dysfunction, these drugs can save lives.

ANS: C

CORRECT FEEDBACK: In the correct answer, the word *Although* correctly indicates that the drugs' side effects do not outweigh the fact that the drugs can save lives. (In *The Little Seagull Handbook*, see the section on Coordination, Subordination.)

INCORRECT FEEDBACK: In the correct answer, the word *Although* correctly indicates that the drugs' side effects do not outweigh the fact that the drugs can save lives. (In *The Little Seagull Handbook*, see the section on Coordination, Subordination.)

PTS: 1 TOP: Diagnostic: Pre-Study Diagnostic on Sentences  
KEY: Coordination, Subordination

18. Select the sentence that is neither a comma splice nor a fused sentence.
- In clinical psychology, the therapist tries to treat mental disturbances without prescribing drugs; therefore, this branch of psychology often carries the label *talk therapy*.
  - In clinical psychology, the therapist tries to treat mental disturbances without prescribing drugs, this branch of psychology often carries the label *talk therapy*.
  - In clinical psychology, the therapist tries to treat mental disturbances without prescribing drugs therefore this branch of psychology often carries the label *talk therapy*.

ANS: A

CORRECT FEEDBACK: The answer with a comma after *drugs* contains a comma splice; the answer with no punctuation after *drugs* is a fused sentence. (In *The Little Seagull Handbook*, see the section on Comma Splices, Fused Sentences.)

INCORRECT FEEDBACK: The answer with a comma after *drugs* contains a comma splice; the answer with no punctuation after *drugs* is a fused sentence. (In *The Little Seagull Handbook*, see the section on Comma Splices, Fused Sentences.)

PTS: 1                    TOP: Diagnostic: Pre-Study Diagnostic on Sentences  
KEY: Comma Splices, Fused Sentences

19. Select the sentence that contains no shifts in either verb tense or point of view.
- To understand the Korean War, which started in 1950, you have to know that the Soviet Union backed the northern occupation zone.
  - For one to understand the Korean War, which started in 1950, you have to know that the Soviet Union backed the northern occupation zone.
  - To understand the Korean War, which started in 1950, you have to know that the Soviet Union is backing the northern occupation zone.

ANS: A

CORRECT FEEDBACK: One wrong answer incorrectly shifts the point of view from *one* to *you*; the other wrong answer incorrectly shifts the verb tense from the past (*started*) to the present (*is backing*), which erroneously implies that the Korean War continues to this day with the participation of the Soviet Union. (In *The Little Seagull Handbook*, see the section on Shifts.)

INCORRECT FEEDBACK: One wrong answer incorrectly shifts the point of view from *one* to *you*; the other wrong answer incorrectly shifts the verb tense from the past (*started*) to the present (*is backing*), which erroneously implies that the Korean War continues to this day with the participation of the Soviet Union. (In *The Little Seagull Handbook*, see the section on Shifts.)

PTS: 1                    TOP: Diagnostic: Pre-Study Diagnostic on Sentences  
KEY: Shifts

20. Select the sentence that shows correct parallel structure.
- To do well on final exams, students should not only study every day but also be getting enough sleep.
  - To do well on final exams, students should not only have studied every day but also sleep enough.
  - To do well on final exams, students should not only study every day but also get enough sleep.

ANS: C

CORRECT FEEDBACK: In the correct answer, the verbs *study* and *get* are parallel. (In *The Little Seagull Handbook*, see the section on Parallelism/With paired ideas.)

INCORRECT FEEDBACK: In the correct answer, the verbs *study* and *get* are parallel. (In *The Little Seagull Handbook*, see the section on Parallelism/With paired ideas.)

PTS: 1                    TOP: Diagnostic: Pre-Study Diagnostic on Sentences  
KEY: Parallelism | With paired ideas

21. The following sentence is in the passive voice. What are the subject and the verb of this sentence?  
The World Series was finally won by the Boston Red Sox in 2004.
- Teams; won
  - World Series; was won

c. Boston Red Sox; won

ANS: B

CORRECT FEEDBACK: In a sentence with a passive verb, the subject is acted upon. In this case, the World Series was won by the Boston Red Sox, so *World Series* is the subject. (In *The Little Seagull Handbook*, see the section on Verbs/Active and passive voice.)

INCORRECT FEEDBACK: In a sentence with a passive verb, the subject is acted upon. In this case, the World Series was won by the Boston Red Sox, so *World Series* is the subject. (In *The Little Seagull Handbook*, see the section on Verbs/Active and passive voice.)

PTS: 1 TOP: Diagnostic: Pre-Study Diagnostic on Sentences

KEY: Verbs | Active and passive voice

22. What are the subject and the verb of the following sentence?  
Issues considered worthy of debate include health insurance and the environment.
- Issues; include
  - health insurance and the environment; include
  - Issues; considered

ANS: A

CORRECT FEEDBACK: The phrase *considered worthy of debate* is a participial phrase modifying *Issues*; *health insurance* and *environment* are the objects of *include*. (In *The Little Seagull Handbook*, see the section on Elements of a Sentence.)

INCORRECT FEEDBACK: The phrase *considered worthy of debate* is a participial phrase modifying *Issues*; *health insurance* and *environment* are the objects of *include*. (In *The Little Seagull Handbook*, see the section on Elements of a Sentence.)

PTS: 1 TOP: Diagnostic: Pre-Study Diagnostic on Sentences

KEY: Elements of a Sentence

23. What is the correct verb form to fill in the blank in the following sentence?  
Once Nora is out of college, she wants \_\_\_\_\_ to Spain and Portugal.
- to travel
  - traveling
  - to traveling

ANS: A

CORRECT FEEDBACK: The verb *wants* calls for the infinitive form (*to travel*) as its object. (In *The Little Seagull Handbook*, see the section on Verbs/Verb forms.)

INCORRECT FEEDBACK: The verb *wants* calls for the infinitive form (*to travel*) as its object. (In *The Little Seagull Handbook*, see the section on Verbs/Verb forms.)

PTS: 1 TOP: Diagnostic: Pre-Study Diagnostic on Sentences

KEY: Verbs | Verb forms

24. Which of the following sentences contains neither a comma splice nor a fused sentence?
- Winslow Homer (1836–1910) excelled in painting dramatic seascapes, one example is *On a Lee Shore*.
  - Lonely streets, buildings, and interiors dominate the canvases of Edward Hopper (1882–1967) his work has influenced a 21st-century photographer of street scenes.
  - Robert Indiana (born 1928) produces pop paintings and sculptures, such as his *Love* series, that sometimes look like large signs.



ANS: C

CORRECT FEEDBACK: The answer choice beginning with *Winslow Homer* contains a comma splice; the answer choice beginning with *Lonely streets* contains a fused sentence. (In *The Little Seagull Handbook*, see the section on Comma Splices, Fused Sentences.)

INCORRECT FEEDBACK: The answer choice beginning with *Winslow Homer* contains a comma splice; the answer choice beginning with *Lonely streets* contains a fused sentence. (In *The Little Seagull Handbook*, see the section on Comma Splices, Fused Sentences.)

PTS: 1 TOP: Diagnostic: Pre-Study Diagnostic on Sentences  
KEY: Comma Splices, Fused Sentences

25. Which of the following sentences has no problems with verb tense?
- By the end of tomorrow's race, Annie will run more than forty miles.
  - By the end of tomorrow's race, Annie will have run more than forty miles.
  - By the end of tomorrow's race, Annie has run more than forty miles.

ANS: B

CORRECT FEEDBACK: The phrase *by the end of tomorrow* calls for the future perfect tense (*will have run*), not the simple future tense (*will run*) or the present perfect tense (*has run*). (In *The Little Seagull Handbook*, see the section on Verbs/Verb tenses.)

INCORRECT FEEDBACK: The phrase *by the end of tomorrow* calls for the future perfect tense (*will have run*), not the simple future tense (*will run*) or the present perfect tense (*has run*). (In *The Little Seagull Handbook*, see the section on Verbs/Verb tenses.)

PTS: 1 TOP: Diagnostic: Pre-Study Diagnostic on Sentences  
KEY: Verbs | Verb tenses

26. Which of the following sentences contains no fragments?
- Agnes de Mille (1909–1993) choreographed not only ballets based on American folklore but also dances for Broadway musicals. Among the latter, *Oklahoma!*
  - Agnes de Mille (1909–1993) choreographed not only ballets based on American folklore but also dances for Broadway musicals. Among the latter, *Oklahoma!* stands out.

ANS: B

CORRECT FEEDBACK: In the incorrect answer choice, the group of words *Among the latter, Oklahoma!* is a fragment because it has no verb. (In *The Little Seagull Handbook*, see the section on Sentence Fragments.)

INCORRECT FEEDBACK: In the incorrect answer choice, the group of words *Among the latter, Oklahoma!* is a fragment because it has no verb. (In *The Little Seagull Handbook*, see the section on Sentence Fragments.)

PTS: 1 TOP: Diagnostic: Pre-Study Diagnostic on Sentences  
KEY: Sentence Fragments