

# Grammar And Language Arts

Helpful preparation for Basic  
Skills, Content Area Tests, and  
APT Constructed Response

A decorative graphic consisting of several sets of concentric circles, resembling ripples in water, located in the bottom right corner of the slide.

# General Strategies for Multiple Choice

- Read the directions carefully that connect with the question and before the sample
- Make sure you're answering exactly what is being asked of you in that specific question
- Ask yourself is this a sentence level issue, paragraph issue, or organization question?
- There may be several "good" answers, but only one best answer

# Grammar vs. Language Arts

## ➤ Language Arts

\*vocabulary, recognizing synonyms, homonyms, purpose, sentence arrangement

## ➤ Grammar

\* sentence level error, sentence structure, punctuation, capitalization, verb tenses

# Language Arts

- Grammar And Usage is tested objectively through multiple choice questions, but also in written response questions on some tests.
- You should be able to “command standard usage in edited English in the US”

# Grammar Issues: Verbs

- Understand standard use of verbs:
- subject-verb agreement: i.e. She walks, not She walk – or- everyone was present, not everyone were present
- verb tense: past, present, conditional (would/could), infinitive (to develop, to read) regular, irregular verbs, i.e. Walk/ walks vs. become/became
- consistency of tense, parallelism i.e. The story reflected issues, challenged standards, and was offering hope.
- Where is the sentence level issue in this last example?

# Grammar Issues: Pronouns

## ➤ Identify and apply standard use of pronouns:

1. standard pronoun case: it, he, they— as subjects, it, him, them— as objects
2. pronoun antecedent agreement: make sure a singular pronoun replaces a singular antecedent ex: The class, it took the test.

NOT: the class, they took the test.

3. use of possessive pronouns: His, her, their, ours, my— as subjects, mine—as object
4. standard use of relative and demonstrative pronouns: relative pronouns introduce a relative clause: that, which while demonstrative pronouns replace a thing: I want that! I need this!, not I need to pass this test.



# Grammar Issues: Modifiers

- Adverbs: modify adjectives, verbs, and other adverbs
- Adjectives: modify nouns, pronouns

Take this sentence

- Prepositional Phrases: modifies an entire phrase or sentence- can contain other modifiers

- In the sentences, identify one of each:
- After the wind had shifted, the rusty, tired ship docked quickly.
- Her parents entered the house without a word, after hearing the loud crash.



# Issues of Grammar: Mechanics

- Recognize when incorrect and extra punctuation has been used
- Commas, semicolons, periods, exclamation points, question marks, etc.
- Commas: used between adjectives, after prepositional opening phrases, to begin and close a restrictive clause, in a list
- Semicolons: to connect two related phrases for effect; the phrases must be independent clauses-sentences
- Exclamation points: should be used sparingly and never more than one at a time
- Question marks: Don't forget to use in rhetorical questions.
- See Quick Tip Handouts for specific examples of usage



# Issues of Grammar: Mechanics

- Capitalization: identify standard initial capitalization with proper words and titles
- Recognize standard spelling of words
- To begin sentence, not to be used after a semi-colon, in proper nouns and in titles of books, articles movies-- only major words.
- Be careful of homonyms: who's, whose, its it's (verb), reign, rain, their, there, they're (verb),
- Watch out for these mistakes: loose/lose, indefinitely, Can you think of anymore?

# Writing: Language Arts

➤ Understand role of purpose and audience

Pay attention to cues of appropriateness for certain audiences

Appreciate how diction can affect an author's tone and the audience's understanding of the text

Identify persuasive techniques:  
emotional/logical appeal, rebuttal, support

# Writing: Language Arts

- Understand unity, focus, and organization of writing

\*These questions may ask you to rearrange sentences for better organization or unity. The form given may be correct

- Know the difference between an effective and ineffective: thesis, supporting details, introductions, and conclusions. \*

- \*note commas in list (consistency)

# Writing: Language Arts

- Understand and apply editing strategies
  - diction, syntax, transitions, point of view, coherence
  - How can word choice affect revision?
  - Eliminate imprecise words: a lot, many
  - Know difference between types of transitional phrases and words
  - Eliminate accidental repetition

# Supplementary Materials

- Can be checked out from the center with a deposit
- Sample LA and grammar sections from any level test can be helpful for repetition and practice
- The Quick Tips Grammar Handout (provided)
- Take-home specialized worksheets (provided)
- Websites:

<http://www.dailygrammar.com>

<http://www.bartleby.com/64>

<http://www.bartleby.com/141/index.html>