

## Preparing Written Material

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## Information Presentation

Choosing the best restatement of presented information.

The information presentation questions give you sentences and then ask you to choose a paragraph which restates the information best.

With most multiple choice questions you want to formulate an answer before you look at the choices, then you want to pick the choice that most closely matches the answer you came up with on your own.

These questions are different in one way. They've basically given you the answer you're trying to match already.

## Strategy

- Underline mistakes
- Cross out choices with mistakes
- Choose the remaining one

What you have to do is eliminate the three answer choices that deviate from it in significant ways, and then choose the remaining one. In order to do this, read all the answer choices, underlining mistakes as you go along. Then cross out all the wrong answer choices, and select the remaining one. If this were a computer based exam, you couldn't do this, but fortunately the state went from adaptive exams back to paper exam booklets, and they throw out the booklets after the test.

## Stylistic Mistakes

- Grammatical mistakes
- Redundancy

## Singular/Plural

- Is/are

A single thing is / multiple things are

This is the best indicator that something is wrong

## Homophones

- Their / there / They're
- to / too / two
- cite / sight / site
- assent / ascent
- grown / groan
- bite / byte
- cash / cache

There are well over a hundred pairs of homophones in the English language. I can't go over them all in the time we have, but you can expect at least one of them to be on the test.

It's not the right word misspelled, it's the wrong word, and that changes the meaning.

## Redundancy

- Every sentence starts with the same word.
- A long string of words appears verbatim in more than one sentence.

## Factual Mistakes

- Stating things that aren't in the original
- Not stating things that are in the original
- Indefinite article confusion
- Same category, different meaning
  - Will / may
  - some / all

Shades of distinction



Example #1

## Paragraph Organization Keywords

Continuation vs Contrast

Cause & Effect

Pronouns

It's important to know what things indicate contrast and what things don't . Any time you see something that changes the direction of a sentence during the sentence reordering questions, underline it.

Continuation or Contrast?

;

A lot of people had trouble with the semicolon on the pre-test. A semicolon is half way between a comma and a period. It indicates continuation where the succeeding idea is not subordinate to the preceding one.

Continuation or Contrast?

**additionally**

Continuation

Continuation or Contrast?

also

Continuation

Continuation or Contrast?

although

This marks contrast.

I may agree with you, although I may not.

Continuation or Contrast?

and

Continuation

Continuation or Contrast?

armed with the  
knowledge that

This is a continuation.

It's used when in drawing a conclusion that's consistent with known facts.



Continuation or Contrast?

as a matter of fact

Could go either way

Is that true? As a matter of fact it is.

We thought it was true, but as a matter of fact it isn't.

Continuation or Contrast?

as well as

Continuation

Continuation or Contrast?

because

Continuation

A because B.

Continuation or Contrast?

but

Contrast

You may have thought this didn't mark contrast, but it does.

Continuation or Contrast?

**by way of contrast**

Contrast

Please tell me no one missed this.

Continuation or Contrast?

**consequently**

Continuation

This word starts with the letters “con”, but it doesn’t mean indicate a change in direction. But rather a continuation to necessary consequences. Action and consequence.

Continuation or Contrast?

**conversely**

Contrast

This isn't Converse like sneakers. The prefix con means against, as in pros and cons. It's the same three letters that the word contrast starts with.

Continuation or Contrast?

despite

Contrast

Despite the lecturers attempts to make this interesting, people still get bored



Continuation or Contrast?

for example

Continuation

Continuation or Contrast?

further

Continuation

Continuation or Contrast?

furthermore

Continuation

Continuation or Contrast?

however

When the word "however" appears toward the middle of a sentence, this means that the topic of both halves of the sentence is the same, but the tone of the first half matches the tone of the preceding sentence, and the tone of the second half is opposite to the tone of the first half, and matches the subject of the succeeding sentence.

Continuation or Contrast?

**in contrast**

Contrast

I think that's pretty obvious

Continuation or Contrast?

**in fact**

Continuation

This is a good explanation. In fact it's a great explanation.

Continuation or Contrast?

**indeed**

Continuation

This word comes before some kind of reaffirmation of a previously expressed idea.

Continuation or Contrast?

**moreover**

Continuation

This indicates a continuation where the succeeding statement is even more weighty than the preceding statement.



Continuation or Contrast?

**not only, ... but**

Contrast

Not only are some of these items hard, but many of them are ambiguous.

Continuation or Contrast?

**on the other hand**

Contrast

Some of these items indicate continuation, on the other hand some indicate contrast

Continuation or Contrast?

though

Contrast

Though it seems easy, it's really quite hard

Continuation or Contrast?

what is more

Continuation

Continuation or Contrast?

**when in fact**

Contrast

If you put the word “when” in front of the words “in fact”, they go from indicating continuation to indicating contrast. Our room is supposed to be full. In fact, it lists that way. Our room lists as being full, when in fact it isn't.

Continuation or Contrast?

while

Contrast

While you may not think this is relevant, it is.

Continuation or Contrast?

yet

Contrast

This section seemed far easier than the rest when I was writing it, yet it was not.

## Cause and Effect

- For example
- Resulting
- Therefore
- Clearly
- Consequently
- In conclusion

Words and phrases that indicate cause and effect or summaries are always keywords as well.



## Pronouns

- Personal:

He, His, Him, She, Her, Hers

- Impersonal:

This, These, Those, They, Them, They're, It, It's

Pronouns are some of the easiest keywords to link sentences with. You'll see when we get into the examples.

## Paragraph Organization Strategies

Choosing the correct order for sentences in order to form a coherent paragraph

It's important to know what things indicate contrast and what things don't . Any time you see something that changes the direction of a sentence during the sentence reordering questions, underline it.

## Basic Strategies

- Underline key words and phrases
- Look for strong connectors
- Note continuation and contrast
- Make arrows

## Make Arrows

- 
- Finally we end with the fifth sentence. **C**
  - Next we have the third sentence.
  - First we start with the first sentence. **TS**
  - After that comes the fourth sentence
  - Then we go to the second sentence.

Enjoy the splendor of this visual. I'm going to ask you to mark up your papers like this in a few minutes.

Check the topic sentence



## Check the conclusion

in all our...  
of our migration and...  
which would inevitably interrupt our connections...  
which denounces our separation, and hold them as we hold the rest of  
States of America, in General Congress, assembled, approving  
and solemnly publish and declare, That these United Colonies  
are now, and that all political connection between them and the State  
of Great Britain, is dissolved, and that all political connection between them and the State  
of Great Britain, concludes Peace, cometh alliances, establish Commerce, and  
to levy War, with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence.

*John Hancock*  
Benjamin Franklin  
John Adams  
George Washington  
James Otis  
Thomas Paine  
Charles Carroll of Carrollton

## Empire Plaza - Paragraph #1



8 Governor Nelson A. Rockefeller formulated his plans to build what is now the Empire Plaza in the wake of a diplomatic visit by Princess Beatrix of the Netherlands that highlighted the dilapidated condition of much of the city.

6 As the governor remarked: "There's no question that the city did not look as I think the Princess thought it was going to."

What things link these sentences?



8 Governor Nelson A. Rockefeller formulated his plans to build what is now the Empire Plaza in the wake of a diplomatic visit by Princess Beatrix of the Netherlands that highlighted the dilapidated condition of much of the city.

6 As the governor remarked: "There's no question that the city did not look as I think the Princess thought it was going to."

Sentence 8 reeks of being a topic sentence.

Sentence 8 mentions Princess Beatrix. Sentence 6 is the only other one that refers to her. It simply calls her "the Princess". You go from more formal to less formal titles, and when you use an article, and don't mention something or someone by name in a sentence, you typically want to have mentioned the thing or person by name in the previous sentence.

What other clues do we have?

We went from calling him Governor Nelson A. Rockefeller, to calling him the governor

6 As the governor remarked: "There's no question that the city did not look as I think the Princess thought it was going to."

10 His attempt to improve the city's looks, however, met with a great deal of criticism due in large part to the effort's gargantuan scope and budget.

What things link these sentences?

6 As the governor remarked: "There's no question that the city did not look as I think the Princess thought it was going to."

10 His attempt to improve the city's looks, however, met with a great deal of criticism due in large part to the effort's gargantuan scope and budget.

Sentence 6 addresses the way the city looked

Sentence 10 opens by discussing the city's looks, but then changes direction

What other clues do we have?

We went from using the words "the governor" to using the word "his". Same subject, but less formality, and less specificity.

10 His attempt to improve the city's looks, however, met with a great deal of criticism due in large part to the effort's gargantuan scope and budget.

1 The massive undertaking used 232,000 tons of steel, 900,000 cubic yards of concrete, and 40,000 tons of marble, and expended 1.7 billion in 1970s dollars, leading to the popular joke that the governor had an "edifice complex", though not all commentators were so waggish.

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Sentence 10, talks about gargantuan scope.

Sentence 1, refers to the massive undertaking.

Sentence 10 mentions the large budget.

Sentence 1 tells you how many dollars it was.

Sentence 10 brings up the subject of criticism.

Sentence 1 cites an example of a popular joke at the governors expense.

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9 One biographer wrote: "In a deeper sense, art and architecture have a much more intimate relationship. For him, art and architecture often blurred, and there is no doubt that on one plane of consciousness, Rockefeller perceived the outer shell of buildings as sculpture. The Mall

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Sentence 1 changes direction with the word "though", then it refers to commentators who weren't waggish.

Sentence 9 opens by saying it's going to tell you what a biographer wrote. Then it says something nice about the project.

## Empire Plaza - Paragraph #2



So in the first paragraph, we talked about Empire State Plaza as a whole. Now we're just going to talk about one structure



7 One of the most striking and distinctive features of Empire Plaza is a concert hall commonly known as 'The Egg'.

2 This name comes from the structure's distinctive curvilinear concrete shell with a half-spherical half-prolate oval horizontal cross section.

What things link these sentences?

7 One of the most striking and distinctive features of Empire Plaza is a concert hall commonly known as 'The Egg'.

2 This name comes from the structure's distinctive curvilinear concrete shell with a half-spherical half-prolate oval horizontal cross section.

Sentence 6 mentions The Empire Plaza for the last time, and it mentions the Egg for the first time.

Sentence 7 tells where the name comes from, and 7 has to come after 6

2 This name comes from the structure's distinctive curvilinear concrete shell with a half-spherical half-prolate oval horizontal cross section.

3 The shell's vast interior houses two amphitheatres with a combined seating capacity of 1,432, more than enough for the Ellen Sinopoli Dance Company, which has called it home for more than ten years.

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2 This name comes from the structure's distinctive curvilinear concrete shell with a half-spherical half-prolate oval horizontal cross section.

3 The shell's vast interior houses two amphitheatres with a combined seating capacity of 1,432, more than enough for the Ellen Sinopoli Dance Company, which has called it home for more than ten years.

Sentence 2 discusses the shell.

Sentence 3 is the only other sentence that talks about the shell.

3 The shell's vast interior houses two amphitheatres with a combined seating capacity of 1,432, more than enough for the Ellen Sinopoli Dance Company, which has called it home for more than ten years.

5 The New York City Ballet, Henry Rollins, and They Might Be Giants, have also performed there.

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5 The New York City Ballet, Henry Rollins, and They Might Be Giants, have also performed there.

The word “also” in sentence 5 is of key importance.

We know that whatever sentence precedes 5 must have the name of a performer at The Egg.

5 The New York City Ballet, Henry Rollins, and They Might Be Giants, have also performed there.

4 In 2004, the latter wrote a song entitled "The Egg" about the venue.

What things link these sentences?

5 The New York City Ballet, Henry Rollins, and They Might Be Giants, have also performed there.

4 In 2004, the latter wrote a song entitled "The Egg" about the venue.

In sentence 4, the phrase "the latter" is of key importance.

We know that a list of musical acts must be named in the preceding sentence.



Civil Service Exams in Ancient  
China - Paragraph #1



2 In the 20th century, the term "Mandarin Bureaucrat" was frequently used as a contemptuous epithet connoting stodgy corruption, but the Mandarin system was actually a model of transparency and meritocracy beginning at its inception and continuing through nearly all of its existence.

4 In 605 Emperor Sui Yangdi instituted sweeping reforms that replaced direct appointment with a national system where the majority of appointments were only obtainable through impartially graded open competitive exams.

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Sentence 2 reeks of being a topic sentence.

Sentence 2 mentions the inception of the system

Sentence 3 gives you the year of its inception

Sentence 2 talks about transparency and meritocracy

Sentence 3 let's you know that the reforms led to impartially graded open competitive exams --- on a side note, that's what we're all studying to take

4 In 605 Emperor Sui Yangdi instituted sweeping reforms that replaced direct appointment with a national system where the majority of appointments were only obtainable through impartially graded open competitive exams.

3 Each exam required the examinees to write stylized essays in black ink according to a strictly formulaic set of rules and conventions which were well known and primarily remained constant.

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Sentence 4 introduces the idea of using exams

Sentence 3 starts to tell you what the exams were like

3 Each exam required the examinees to write stylized essays in black ink according to a strictly formulaic set of rules and conventions which were well known and primarily remained constant.

10 Each essay would be anonymized by transcribing it into a red ink copy without the examinee's name on it before handing it to the examiner for grading, thus systematically eliminating any potential for bias or favoritism.

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Sentence 3 tells you about the black ink used on the essays.

Sentence 10 tells you about how the black ink essays were transcribed into red ink essays.

10 Each essay would be anonymized by transcribing it into a red ink copy without the examinee's name on it before handing it to the examiner for grading, thus systematically eliminating any potential for bias or favoritism.

6 Clearly, mindful use of the word Mandarin should take into account the history of this carefully designed system robust enough to survive for well over a thousand years.

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6 Clearly, mindful use of the word Mandarin should take into account the history of this carefully designed system robust enough to survive for well over a thousand years.

Sentence 10 refers to the process being systematical.

Sentence 6 is a conclusion, and it tells you that the system was carefully designed.

Civil Service Exams in Ancient  
China - Paragraph #2



1 A truly sophisticated understanding of the cultural underpinnings that the Chinese civil service both drew from and nourished can be obtained by focusing on the eight-legged essay, which was a chief hallmark of the Imperial Exam system.

7 An eight-legged essay is a learned commentary (typically on Confucian works relating to virtue in governance) with a set number of sentences, and a carefully prescribed role for each sentence.

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1 A truly sophisticated understanding of the cultural underpinnings that the Chinese civil service both drew from and nourished can be obtained by focusing on the eight-legged essay, which was a chief hallmark of the Imperial Exam system.

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Sentence 1 is a topic sentence that mentions the eight-legged essay.

Sentence 7 tells you what an eight-legged essay is.

7 An eight-legged essay is a learned commentary (typically on Confucian works relating to virtue in governance) with a set number of sentences, and a carefully prescribed role for each sentence.

9 The best eight-legged essays were republished in official style guides, which not only served as standards for grading and studying, but also helped disseminate good views on government.

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Sentence 7 tells you about some of the rules for eight legged essays.

Sentence 9 tells you about the official style guides that could be used by people who wanted to learn to write according to the rules.

9 The best eight-legged essays were republished in official style guides, which not only served as standards for grading and studying, but also helped disseminate good views on government.

5 Perhaps the most admired of all essayists was Wang Ao, who was ranked first among 2,300 candidates in the 1474 Nanking provincial exams, and first again in the 1477 national level Metropolitan Exams.

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Sentence 9 deals with the republishing of virtuous essays

Sentence 5 starts to tell you about the most admired essayist of them all



5 Perhaps the most admired of all essayists was Wang Ao, who was ranked first among 2,300 candidates in the 1474 Nanking provincial exams, and first again in the 1477 national level Metropolitan Exams.

8 His most memorable essay responded to the question "When the people have enough, how can the ruler alone have too little?" by giving independently arrived at assertions in the tone of Khaldun's economic paradox.

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8 His most memorable essay responded to the question "When the people have enough, how can the ruler alone have too little?" by giving independently arrived at assertions in the tone of Khaldun's economic paradox.

Sentence 8 says "His most memorable essay"

So right away we know that his must refer to either the emperor or the essayist, and since we're talking an essay, obviously "His" refers to the essayist