Grammar Proficiency Exam
Form Z
WRITING CENTER AND CLASS USE

Directions: The Grammar Proficiency Exam is designed to test your basic sentence knowledge. The first five sections of the test focus on specific patterns of error. Read each group of four sentences to find the one that contains an error. Mark the letter of the incorrect sentence on your scantron form.

SECTION ONE: Fragments, Comma Splices, Fused Sentences

1. A. His final exam was returned.
   B. Because she never fully realized how important a physical exam could be.
   C. Two hours before the performance, he was nervous.
   D. After she had made a list of the cleaning supplies which she needed, she left for the store.

2. A. There are two conditions for accepting Harrington as the nominee.
   B. The woman who had been our family dentist for many years.
   C. Since she had access to the key and had been seen in the neighborhood, she was arrested.
   D. I enjoy chocolate cake, especially when it is topped with ice cream.

3. A. Besides being a loving mother, she is a loyal friend.
   B. Finally, I woke up.
   C. He had wanted to see a rodeo before he left Texas.
   D. Knowing that her money was limited.

4. A. If there is a crisis, call the nurse immediately.
   B. Make your choice based on the job you really want.
   C. Since any choice may or may not be the “right” choice.
   D. Hoping the answer was the correct one, Bob hesitantly marked A on the scantron.
5.  A. Knowing what to buy for a campsite is vital.
    B. Taking too little can be more of a problem than taking too much.
    C. Rob often goes hiking for several weeks at a time, climbing higher into the
       mountains each day.
    D. Although some items are not for the body but for the soul.

6.  A. Although she applied to several nursing schools, she was accepted by
       only one, and she always wondered why she failed to be accepted by
       the school in her hometown.
    B. Even though the swimmers had been warned about possible heat
       stroke, they decided to make one lap across the pool.
    C. The United States was the first nation to make television available
       to everyone we own more television sets than any other country.
    D. General Motors' profits suffered during the strike, but a company
       spokesman predicted a brighter future.

7.  A. Cigarette advertising has been banned from television, it does,
       however, appear in printed material.
    B. Because the economy is doing so well, the city has money to build many
       new neighborhood libraries.
    C. Computer stocks continue to look promising; market analysts project
       growth in that area, a prediction which has excited many local investors.
    D. The Texas state capitol, which was built in the last century,
       has recently undergone major renovation, a costly but popular
       project.

8.  A. Because there were ministers in the audience, many people took
       offense at the atheist's remarks.
    B. The physician discussed problems faced by everyone, and the
       response was positive.
    C. Many car owners are learning to do their own minor maintenance,
       some are finding the experience rewarding.
    D. In spite of the heat, Emma continues to jog every morning.
9. A. Claire considered cutting her psychology class to go to the golf course, but she decided she could not afford to miss the review for the upcoming exam.

B. Cheryl realized that, although her friends were able to join a country club, she had to use a public golf course.

C. Nadia's choices were difficult for her to make, she often wished she were as rich as Gloria.

D. Gloria, also a student at the university, did not have to worry about money; her father was president of an oil company, and Gloria knew she would eventually inherit millions of dollars.

10. A. Roberto came home from school, he found freshly baked brownies cooling on the counter.

B. He wants to eat the brownies, still warm from the oven.

C. Roberto’s mother, however, had warned him that the brownies were for a party planned for the evening, but he was tempted to take a few brownies to his room anyway.

D. Roberto followed the urging of his conscience when he left the brownies on the counter; he got a peach from the fruit bowl instead.

11. A. New apartment complexes are appearing all over the city the neighborhoods are constantly changing.

B. Failure to change the oil in a car regularly can lead to big problems.

C. The senator declined comment, but he did refer the press to his press secretary.

D. If a fisherman prefers perch to bass, he will want to fish the southern end of the lake.

12. A. Georgia usually behaves impulsively, doing whatever gives her pleasure at the time.

B. Psychoanalytic theory would say that Gene’s personality is dominated by his super ego.

C. Behaviorist theory would attribute Paul’s behavior to learned responses he has been conditioned to act cautiously.

D. One way to change Georgia’s behavior would be to reward her thoughtful actions and to ignore her impulsive actions, thereby changing the unwanted behavior.
13. A. Simple cookbooks for inexperienced cooks have become quite popular in recent years they are available at many bookstores.

B. Some cookbooks, such as *The Joy of Cooking*, have been classics for generations.

C. One popular cookbook is *The Art of French Cooking*, by Julia Child, a colorful character who charmed television audiences for many years.

D. *The Art of French Cooking* blends classic recipes with meticulous explanation; ordinary cooks find the recipes manageable.

14. A. Jessica Fletcher has written a series of mystery stories set on the New England coast; she is both a writer and a detective in the series.

B. Fletcher’s stories are set in a little fishing village it is called Cabot Cove.

C. Her two friends, the sheriff and the village doctor, are important characters in almost every episode.

D. Fans of Jessica Fletcher enjoy the quaint village setting although no American town actually looks so charming.

15. A. Students who learn note-taking strategies well have an easier time remembering the key ideas of their reading.

B. Among the more common strategies are outlining, mapping, and Cornell Note-Taking; other patterns are summarization and questioning.

C. These strategies can help any student become a better learner for example, many students rely on outlining as a study aid.

D. Students who use these strategies find remembering what they have read much easier than students who take no notes at all.

**SECTION TWO: Agreement (Subject-Verb and Pronoun-Antecedent)**

16. A. The custodial staff, the cafeteria staff, and the bus drivers were commended by the school board for their actions to improve the school.

B. After waiting in line for hours, each of the girls was allowed to buy only one dress.

C. When all is said and done, the car salesman who does the best job of convincing buyers that their best interests will be served by his dealership are going to make the sale.

D. Neither the conductor of the orchestra nor the concertmaster was blamed for the terrible performance.
17.  A. The new store, with its large collection of books and videos, makes a fascinating place to shop.
    B. Math interests students who want to major in scientific careers.
    C. Frequently, the ideas for new ad campaigns originates within the weekly staff meetings.
    D. Each of his pet turtles has developed a personality of its own.

18.  A. Driving long distances causes sleepiness, and sleepiness causes serious accidents.
    B. On a table at the rear of the room was a notebook, a pair of scissors, and a biology textbook.
    C. Finally, there seems to be a growing interest in vegetarianism in this country.
    D. Either the local chief of police or his officers are guilty of violating the rights of prisoners.

19.  A. One of the drummers in the band is my brother.
    B. The jury were out for only twenty minutes.
    C. If the bandleader is asked to perform on his own, the other members of the band want a part of the profits.
    D. No one practices when the wind in the south part of the state is blowing.

20.  A. Everyone’s automobile breaks down at one time or another.
    B. A book with a coherent plot and interesting characters make me not want to put it down.
    C. Neither the chief of police nor his officers leave the scene of the crime until all pieces of evidence have been examined.
    D. A large herd of sheep crosses the road at dawn every day.

21.  A. Both of the students seemed to have learned their lessons well.
    B. I am always excited by this type of adventure story.
    C. If anybody needs a new book, I wish they would tell me.
    D. Each of the members of the audience was advised to hold his or her applause until the end of the introductions.
22.  A. No one who really cared about his children would beat them.

    B. Whoever mailed the card didn't sign his or her name on it.

    C. Either the chefs or the waiter should do whatever they can to accommodate the diners.

    D. Any member of this group may leave early.

23.  A. Any person who believes they can keep up an impressive grade-point average without hard work is kidding themselves.

    B. Janet’s mother and father ordered her to come in by midnight.

    C. Anyone of those present can choose to speak out on the crime.

    D. The House of Representatives has unanimously chosen to give the Speaker of the House unusual powers.

24.  A. Each of the four players is choosing a separate lawyer.

    B. Neither the boy nor the girl were able to choose the teacher for the class.

    C. After the platter of turkey had been passed, it was discovered that someone had taken all the white meat.

    D. Each of the students should do his or her fair share of the assignment.

25.  A. The University of Texas decided to raise their dorm fees this year.

    B. The new governor wants to hear everyone’s ideas on that matter.

    C. If someone cannot afford the new housing rate, he should call the housing office.

    D. The University of Texas will profit from the large amount of money generated by this increase.
SECTION THREE: Faulty Parallel Structure, Dangling and Misplaced Modifiers, Shifts in Person, Tense, and Mood


B. Our uniqueness is formed by both heredity and what type of environment we have.

C. Jack became quiet and serious after the lecture.

D. Cool, collected individuals get ulcers as often as hard-pressed, competitive people do.

27. A. Three ideas influenced my decision to move: climate, economy, and jobs.

B. Mary helps with the housekeeping by cooking and by sweeping the floor.

C. They can often find their dog in the shade or on the deck.

D. She became a woman of very strong convictions and who always said what she thought.

28. A. Julie does her part of the housekeeping by cooking and by sweeping the floor.

B. Most citizens believe they must own a boat, two cars, and travel to Europe.

C. To prepare for an exam is simpler than to cheat on it.

D. Scholars want to do research, to read, and to travel, but not necessarily in that order.

29. A. They want to visit new places and meeting the people who live there.

B. Eating well is easier than dieting.

C. Three ideas influenced my decision to change jobs: my desire to relocate, my dissatisfaction with my current job, and my need for greater responsibility.

D. If I’m not wrong, the movie starred either Tom Selleck or Burt Reynolds.

30. A. Since TV first came into our homes, it has replaced baseball as our national pastime.

B. Seeking escape and relaxation, most individuals sit in front of the TV on a daily basis.

C. Before turning on the television set, the shows appeared to be interesting.

D. After watching for four hours, I started to call myself a couch potato.
31. A. Experienced swimmers, neither Kate nor Paul prepared for trouble in the water.

   B. Even though storm clouds rolled in, the swimmers ignored the warnings and continued to play happily in the surf.

   C. Although warned to “beware the undertow,” the water peaks started to thunder in toward shore.

   D. Kate almost drowned although she is an especially strong swimmer.

32. A. After discovering some cards missing from the pack, poker could not be played.

   B. Since he started attending college as a full-time student, his spare time is a thing of the past.

   C. Sitting on the dock of the bay, Otis whiled away the afternoon wasting time.

   D. Marie, hoping for kindness, approached the stranger.

33. A. Lock the door if you want to be left alone.

   B. Katherine jogs twelve miles a day and hopes to qualify for the Olympics.

   C. Fasten the wire to the speaker, and then connect it to the amplifier.

   D. When a person works out for years, there is no way to calculate how much the activity improves your health.

34. A. No one should fail to get a gold pin at the banquet on Friday night.

   B. Matt fixed the antenna wire in the living room and then changes the channel.

   C. When kids eat too much, they sometimes get sick.

   D. One of the boys will be good at his job.

35. A. After Scott mows the grass, sometimes he has difficulty breathing.

   B. If Gretchen visited last week, she missed the meeting.

   C. She maintains that the report is accurate.

   D. When Tom eats too much, sometimes he became sick.
SECTION FOUR: COMMAS AND SEMICOLONS

36. A. Salt is a compound formed through the bonding of the two elements, sodium and chloride.
   
   B. Houston Texas, is not the capital of Texas.
   
   C. Cruising at five miles above the speed limit, the car avoided detection.
   
   D. That TV station shows classic films all day.

37. A. On Sundays, the friends usually ordered French fries, malted milkshakes, yogurt freezes, and sundaes.
   
   B. Lane didn’t want to see another cat, either.
   
   C. The police officers who were both male and female were wearing gray uniforms.
   
   D. Rome, Italy, is the city Deidre most desires to visit.

38. A. The horseman with the black mask, is Zorro’s friend.
   
   B. The Clarks bought a VCR in order to record their favorite soap operas.
   
   C. May 5 is the day Martha celebrates her adoption.
   
   D. Never have I seen anyone put so much pepper on his eggs.

39. A. The chief resident believed Roy was a good doctor now; he would be an excellent doctor in two more years.
   
   B. Her life finally became organized; in fact, she even began to enjoy her work again.
   
   C. Marco liked the action; the subtle humor; and the great jazz music in the movie.
   
   D. Paula went to Hollywood to find fame and fortune as a star; instead, she found poverty and rejection.
40. A. The time had finally come; Glenda went to the hardware store and bought a mousetrap.

B. At the meeting Bonnie tried to hide her snacking; she would stick her head under the table and stuff peanuts in her mouth; while picking up the pencil she had deliberately dropped on the floor.

C. The protective mother demanded proof of her daughter's involvement in drugs; then she remembered the bent spoon she had found in the girl's pocket just the week before.

D. For years the music haunted him; it was as vivid as if he had heard it only the night before.

41. A. Lucy decorated the couch and chairs with crepe paper streamers; Kenny blew up balloons and taped them to the dining room walls.

B. Because the path was icy; she could not walk to the village.

C. Americans in the 1990's live in fear of obesity; indeed that, next to cancer, is the most dreaded disease.

D. Her father said this often: “Remember a man for what he did best, not for what he did last.”

SECTION FIVE: APOSTROPHES

42. A. Who's taking algebra next year?

B. The hiring committee submitted it's list of possible candidates.

C. Weren't Anne and Angie in that group?

D. Don't they have to be nominated before they run for office?

43. A. I sent my two sisters a copy of the picture in the newspaper.

B. Mary's teachers' were looking for her.

C. My two brothers-in-law's jobs were eliminated in the cutback.

D. She walked into the women's room.

44. A. Can you draw a picture of his countries' flag?

B. The Smiths' car was stolen.

C. The principal is inspecting the students' lockers.

D. My mother's sister is moving to Austin.
45. A. Do you know who’s books are on the table?  
   B. Who’s going to class with me on Saturday afternoon?  
   C. It’s not time to leave because he’s still speaking.  
   D. The book’s climax was totally unexpected.

SECTION SIX: SPELLING AND USAGE

Directions: The last section of the test is concerned with common usage and spelling errors. This section contains a series of sentences with options for you to choose. Mark the letter of the correct choice on your scantron form.

46. The increase in salary __________ to better morale and a more generally cooperative attitude on the part of the employees.  
   A. led  
   B. lead

47. She must acknowledge my argument from a broader __________.  
   A. prospective  
   B. prespective  
   C. perspective

48. He will be sentenced __________ jail for that crime.  
   A. to  
   B. two  
   C. too

49. She is certain __________ we are going after class.  
   A. where  
   B. were  
   C. we’re

50. The chairman of the board gave me a sincere __________.  
   A. complment  
   B. compliment

Note: An answer key for this test is available in the tutor room. See the writing tutors or your English instructor to discuss your performance.