

ACT Conventions of Standard English Practice Test (Sample)

Study Guide



Everything you need from our exam experts!

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Introduction

Preparing for a certification exam can feel overwhelming, but with the right tools, it becomes an opportunity to build confidence, sharpen your skills, and move one step closer to your goals. At Examzify, we believe that effective exam preparation isn't just about memorization, it's about understanding the material, identifying knowledge gaps, and building the test-taking strategies that lead to success.

This guide was designed to help you do exactly that.

Whether you're preparing for a licensing exam, professional certification, or entry-level qualification, this book offers structured practice to reinforce key concepts. You'll find a wide range of multiple-choice questions, each followed by clear explanations to help you understand not just the right answer, but why it's correct.

The content in this guide is based on real-world exam objectives and aligned with the types of questions and topics commonly found on official tests. It's ideal for learners who want to:

- Practice answering questions under realistic conditions,
- Improve accuracy and speed,
- Review explanations to strengthen weak areas, and
- Approach the exam with greater confidence.

We recommend using this book not as a stand-alone study tool, but alongside other resources like flashcards, textbooks, or hands-on training. For best results, we recommend working through each question, reflecting on the explanation provided, and revisiting the topics that challenge you most.

Remember: successful test preparation isn't about getting every question right the first time, it's about learning from your mistakes and improving over time. Stay focused, trust the process, and know that every page you turn brings you closer to success.

Let's begin.

How to Use This Guide

This guide is designed to help you study more effectively and approach your exam with confidence. Whether you're reviewing for the first time or doing a final refresh, here's how to get the most out of your Examzify study guide:

1. Start with a Diagnostic Review

Skim through the questions to get a sense of what you know and what you need to focus on. Your goal is to identify knowledge gaps early.

2. Study in Short, Focused Sessions

Break your study time into manageable blocks (e.g. 30 - 45 minutes). Review a handful of questions, reflect on the explanations.

3. Learn from the Explanations

After answering a question, always read the explanation, even if you got it right. It reinforces key points, corrects misunderstandings, and teaches subtle distinctions between similar answers.

4. Track Your Progress

Use bookmarks or notes (if reading digitally) to mark difficult questions. Revisit these regularly and track improvements over time.

5. Simulate the Real Exam

Once you're comfortable, try taking a full set of questions without pausing. Set a timer and simulate test-day conditions to build confidence and time management skills.

6. Repeat and Review

Don't just study once, repetition builds retention. Re-attempt questions after a few days and revisit explanations to reinforce learning. Pair this guide with other Examzify tools like flashcards, and digital practice tests to strengthen your preparation across formats.

There's no single right way to study, but consistent, thoughtful effort always wins. Use this guide flexibly, adapt the tips above to fit your pace and learning style. You've got this!

Questions

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1. Which sentence correctly fixes a dangling modifier?
 - A. Crawling on the wall, the cat was startled by a giant spider.
 - B. Crawling on the wall, a giant spider startled the cat.
 - C. The cat crawled on the wall, and a giant spider startled.
 - D. The cat, crawling on the wall, was startled by a giant spider.

2. Which sentence uses that to introduce an essential clause?
 - A. Jennifer visited the city, where she went to college.
 - B. Jennifer visited the city that she went to college.
 - C. Jennifer visited the city which she went to college.
 - D. Jennifer visited the city that she went to college.

3. Which sentence uses they're correctly?
 - A. Their going to the park.
 - B. They're going to the park.
 - C. Theyre going to the park.
 - D. There's going to the park.

4. Which sentence demonstrates correct parallel structure?
 - A. Victoria likes swimming and riding her bike.
 - B. Victoria likes to swim and riding her bike.
 - C. Victoria likes swimming and to ride her bike.
 - D. Victoria likes swimming and to riding her bike.

5. Which word completes 'The change had a noticeable ___ on the schedule'?
 - A. affect
 - B. impact
 - C. effect
 - D. consequence

6. Which sentence uses you're correctly?
 - A. Your going to love this movie.
 - B. You are going to love this movie.
 - C. Your are going to love this movie.
 - D. You're going to love this movie.

- 7. What are the present, past, and past participle forms of 'read'?**
- A. Read, Read, Read**
 - B. Read, Red, Read**
 - C. Reads, Read, Read**
 - D. Reading, Read, Read**
- 8. A festival was contemporary with the launch.**
- A. with**
 - B. of**
 - C. to**
 - D. for**
- 9. Which sentence contains a comma splice?**
- A. I planned to attend the seminar, my boss wouldn't approve.**
 - B. I planned to attend the seminar; my boss wouldn't approve.**
 - C. I planned to attend the seminar. My boss wouldn't approve.**
 - D. I planned to attend the seminar, and my boss wouldn't approve.**
- 10. Which sentence demonstrates correct subject-verb agreement with a plural subject?**
- A. The dogs eat the dog food.**
 - B. The dogs eats the dog food.**
 - C. The dog eats the dog food.**
 - D. The dog eat the dog food.**

Answers

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1. B
2. B
3. D
4. A
5. C
6. D
7. A
8. A
9. A
10. A

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Explanations

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1. Which sentence correctly fixes a dangling modifier?

- A. Crawling on the wall, the cat was startled by a giant spider.
- B. Crawling on the wall, a giant spider startled the cat.**
- C. The cat crawled on the wall, and a giant spider startled.
- D. The cat, crawling on the wall, was startled by a giant spider.

A dangling modifier happens when an introductory phrase doesn't clearly describe the noun that follows, making it look like the wrong thing is doing the action. In the intended scenario, the spider is the one crawling on the wall, and that action is what startles the cat. The sentence that fixes this places the modifying phrase right next to the spider: Crawling on the wall, a giant spider startled the cat. This makes it crystal clear that the spider is the one performing the crawling, so the sentence isn't misleading about who is doing what. The other options miss that clarity in one way or another. A version that starts with the cat doing the crawling would imply the cat is the one creeping on the wall, which changes who is performing the action and keeps the modifier tied to the wrong noun. A sentence that ends abruptly with "startled" is incomplete and not grammatically complete. And a form that sets off the cat with a nonessential phrase still treats the cat as the one crawling, altering the intended meaning.

2. Which sentence uses that to introduce an essential clause?

- A. Jennifer visited the city, where she went to college.
- B. Jennifer visited the city that she went to college.**
- C. Jennifer visited the city which she went to college.
- D. Jennifer visited the city that she went to college.

That introduces a restrictive (essential) relative clause. In this sentence, the clause that she went to college defines exactly which city Jennifer visited—it's identifying the city in a way that is necessary to understand which one is meant. No comma comes before that, signaling that the information is essential to the noun it modifies. The other options either use a nonessential detail (where with a comma, adding information about the city rather than defining it) or use which in a way that isn't the standard way to introduce an essential clause in American usage. So this sentence correctly uses that to introduce an essential clause.

3. Which sentence uses they're correctly?

- A. Their going to the park.
- B. They're going to the park.
- C. Theyre going to the park.
- D. There's going to the park.**

The main idea is choosing the correct contraction for they are. They're is the contraction of they are, used when the subject "they" is doing the action. In this sentence, a group of people is the subject and the action is going to the park, so the natural form is they're going to the park. The other forms don't fit. Their is a possessive pronoun used to show ownership, which doesn't apply to the action of going. Theyre is a common misspelling (missing the apostrophe) and isn't considered correct. There's is a contraction for there is (or there has), which would not convey who is performing the action of going.

4. Which sentence demonstrates correct parallel structure?

- A. Victoria likes swimming and riding her bike.**
- B. Victoria likes to swim and riding her bike.**
- C. Victoria likes swimming and to ride her bike.**
- D. Victoria likes swimming and to riding her bike.**

Parallel structure is keeping the same grammatical form when you list two activities after a verb like likes. After likes, both items should match in form. The sentence that uses two gerunds—swimming and riding—keeps the same form for both activities, and “riding her bike” is a gerund phrase that stays parallel with “swimming.” This balanced, consistent structure sounds natural and correct. The other options mix forms: one uses an infinitive not parallel to the gerund, another pairs a gerund with an infinitive, and another combines a gerund with an awkward form like “to riding.” These mismatches disrupt the rhythm and grammatical harmony of the sentence.

5. Which word completes 'The change had a noticeable ___ on the schedule'?

- A. affect**
- B. impact**
- C. effect**
- D. consequence**

The key idea is choosing a noun that names the result of a change. After “had a noticeable,” you want a noun that fits the idea of the change producing something on the schedule. The natural choice is effect, because the phrase “have an effect on” is an established way to describe how one thing changes another’s outcome. Affect is a verb, so it doesn’t fit the blank here. Impact can be a noun, but in this sentence the more standard, everyday wording is “noticeable effect,” which sounds more natural for describing the result on the schedule. Consequence is a noun too, but it’s a heavier term and less common in this particular construction; it’s less idiomatic to say “a noticeable consequence on the schedule.”

6. Which sentence uses you're correctly?

- A. Your going to love this movie.**
- B. You are going to love this movie.**
- C. Your are going to love this movie.**
- D. You're going to love this movie.**

The key idea here is using the correct form of you’re/your when you mean “you are.” In this sentence, the intended meaning is “you are going to love this movie,” so the contraction you’re is the right choice because it stands for you are and keeps the sentence smooth and natural. The possessive determiner your belongs with a noun (your car, your idea), but here there’s no noun after it, so your going to love this movie isn’t grammatical. Similarly, your are is an incorrect mash of the two forms. So the contraction that fits the structure and meaning is you’re.

7. What are the present, past, and past participle forms of 'read'?

- A. Read, Read, Read**
- B. Read, Red, Read**
- C. Reads, Read, Read**
- D. Reading, Read, Read**

In English, irregular verbs can keep the same spelling across different tenses while changing pronunciation. For the verb read, the present (base form) is read (pronounced reed). The past tense is also spelled read, but pronounced red. The past participle is again read, used in perfect tenses like have read. So the sequence Read, Read, Read uses the same spelling for all three forms, which is correct. For example: I read every day; I read yesterday; I have read many books. Other options fail because they change the spelling or use a different form like reads (present for he/she/it) or reading (present participle), which don't match the asked forms.

8. A festival was contemporary with the launch.

- A. with**
- B. of**
- C. to**
- D. for**

The main idea is expressing simultaneity with the right preposition after "contemporary." When two things are from the same time period, English uses "contemporary with" to link them and show they occurred in the same era. So "A festival was contemporary with the launch" correctly means the festival and the launch happened at the same time. The other options don't convey that same sense of overlap in time. "Contemporary of" isn't the standard pairing here, and "contemporary to" is rarely used and sounds off in this construction. "Contemporary for" doesn't relate to timing at all. So the best choice is the preposition that signals simultaneous timing: with.

9. Which sentence contains a comma splice?

- A. I planned to attend the seminar, my boss wouldn't approve.**
- B. I planned to attend the seminar; my boss wouldn't approve.**
- C. I planned to attend the seminar. My boss wouldn't approve.**
- D. I planned to attend the seminar, and my boss wouldn't approve.**

A comma splice happens when two independent clauses are joined only by a comma, with no coordinating conjunction. Here, the two parts—"I planned to attend the seminar" and "my boss wouldn't approve"—could each stand alone as sentences, so linking them with just a comma creates a splice. Using a semicolon or a period between the two thoughts fixes it, and adding a coordinating conjunction after the comma (like "but" or "and") also makes the connection correct. The other sentences either separate the ideas with a period or properly connect them with a semicolon or a comma plus a conjunction, so they're not comma splices.

10. Which sentence demonstrates correct subject-verb agreement with a plural subject?

A. The dogs eat the dog food.

B. The dogs eats the dog food.

C. The dog eats the dog food.

D. The dog eat the dog food.

In the present simple, verbs must match the subject in number. For a plural subject, the verb remains in its base form without -s. The plural subject here is "The dogs," so the correct pairing is "eat," not "eats." The sentence that uses this correct pairing is: "The dogs eat the dog food." The other options slip up by either adding -s to a verb with a plural subject or using a singular subject with the base form. For example, "The dogs eats the dog food" shows a mismatch because a plural subject should take the base form, not the -s form. "The dog eats the dog food" is correct for a singular subject, but it doesn't demonstrate agreement with a plural subject. And "The dog eat the dog food" pairs a singular subject with the base form, which is incorrect.

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Next Steps

Congratulations on reaching the final section of this guide. You've taken a meaningful step toward passing your certification exam and advancing your career.

As you continue preparing, remember that consistent practice, review, and self-reflection are key to success. Make time to revisit difficult topics, simulate exam conditions, and track your progress along the way.

If you need help, have suggestions, or want to share feedback, we'd love to hear from you. Reach out to our team at hello@examzify.com.

Or visit your dedicated course page for more study tools and resources:

<https://actconventionsofstandardeng.examzify.com>

We wish you the very best on your exam journey. You've got this!

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