

GENERAL ENGLISH

Jumbled sentences

One of the important units of objective English test in English is sentence arrangement. This requires a sound knowledge of grammar, a command over the structure of sentences, an overall sense of composition and an ability to form a logical sequence of ideas behind sentences. In this test, one has to rearrange the parts of a sentence into a meaningful sentence or the sentences into a meaningful paragraph. In order to perform well in this section one has to read good books and newspapers. The questions that are given in this section have different patterns.

Now it is clear from the chart that, in a sentence, there can appear a subject, a verb, an object and qualifiers as well. One has to locate the qualifier and attach it to its subject.

Let us look at another example:

Lakhs of students

P. on an all India basis

Q. from all over India

R. which is held

S. appear in the examination by different organizations

a) PQSR

b) SRQP

c) QSRP

d) QSPR

1. Lakhs of students - subject
2. from all over India - qualifier of the subject (Q)
3. appear in the examination - verb(S)
4. which is held - qualifier of the verb (R)
5. on an all India basis - qualifier of which is held (P)
6. by different organizations - the last part

Thus the sequence is QSRP: S + Q + V + Q + Q + Q

The correct sentence, therefore is, 'Lakhs of students from all over India appear in the examination which is held on an all India basis by different organizations'.

The steps may be summarized as follows:

1. subject of the sentence
2. qualifiers of the subject, if any
3. verb

4. qualifiers of the verb, if any
5. object and
6. qualifiers of the object, if any.

This may be described as the Subject - Verb - Object + Qualifiers Location Technique.

2. Many sentences with the first and the last ones given

In the passage below the first and the last sentences are numbered 1 and 6. The rest four sentences are numbered as PQRS and they are not in correct sequence. Rearrange them.

1. There was once a hard working and poor, but well contended farm worker.
P. The farm worker buried the silver coins, under the ground.
Q. He used to work all day in his farm and enjoy the gifts of nature.
R. The village Sarpanch gave him a bag containing some silver coins to keep.
S. His rich Sarpanch took pity upon the farm-worker.
2. From that day the poor farm-worker's happiness vanished.

- a) SQPR b) QSPR c) RQPS d) QSRP

Method

Idea to sentence stepping (ITSS). A paragraph consists of sentences which are connected to one another logically and semantically. Thus, first of all, read every sentence carefully, discern the meaning of the passage, then form a sequence at the level of idea. Then arrange the sentences accordingly. On the basis of one's general knowledge, sense of language and ability to correlate ideas and structures clues can be found out.

In the above example, we can find many clues. The first sentence is given. It is about a farm worker. Now look at the alternatives. The second sentence must follow the first at the level of meaning and also at the level of structure.

- P. begins with the
- Q. begins with He
- R. begins with the
- S. begins with His

Now it is only the pronoun that can be used after the first sentence and thus the second sentence should be Q. To find the sequence of sentences that follows we have a clue in the last sentence. To see what made the farm-worker's happiness vanish we have to start with the sentence S as the second sentence. This is followed by R and than P. Thus the correct sequence

is QSRP and the answer is option D.

3. Several sentences without any definite beginning or end.

Rearrange the given six sentences, A, B, C, D, E and F, in the proper sequence so as to form a meaningful paragraph and then answer the questions given below.

A. Miss Sullivan arrived at the Keller home when Helen was seven.

B. The deaf and blind Helen learned to communicate verbally.

C. But, eventually, Miss Sullivan's effort was rewarded.

D. Before Helen Keller was two years old, she lost her sight and her hearing.

E. Miss Sullivan worked closely with Helen, her new student.

F. At times the teacher became frustrated.

1. Which sentence should come last?
2. Which sentence should come first?
3. Which sentence should come second?
4. Which sentence should come third?
5. Which sentence should come fourth?
6. Which sentence should come fifth?

The same method of arranging the paragraph first at the level of idea and then at the level of sentences should be followed. Since the first and last sentences are not given, the first step is to locate the first sentence.

First, find some clues. For instance, in this paragraph, we may find a clue in the reference to time. The paragraph is about Helen and Miss Sullivan. The first thing that happened in relation to time was the fact that Helen lost sight before she was two years old. Miss Sullivan arrived when Helen was seven years old. The other incidents took place later. Thus, it is logical that the first sentence should be D - the sentence telling us that Helen lost her sight before she was two years old. After that we can arrange other sentences according to the time sequence. The sequence is D A E F C B. All questions may be answered now.

1) B, 2) D, 3) A, 4) E, 5) F, 6) C

Practice test

The sentences given in each question, when properly sequenced, form a coherent paragraph. Each sentence is labelled with a letter. Choose the most logical sequence from among the given choices to construct a coherent paragraph.

1. A) To much of the labour movement, it symbolizes the brutality of the upper classes.
B) And to everybody watching, the current mess over fox hunting symbolizes the government's weakness.
C) To fox hunting's supporters, Labour's 1991 manifesto commitment to ban it symbolizes the party's metropolitan roots and hostility to the countryside.
D) Small issues sometimes have large symbolic power.
E) To those who enjoy thunde-ring across the countryside in red coats after foxes, fox hunting symbolizes the ancient roots of rural lives.

1) DEACB 2) ECDBA 3) CEADB 4) DBAEC

2. A) Once the police managed to capture him.
B) He robbed rich people again.
C) He was sent to prison for 10 years, but he managed to escape.
D) He helped the poor and the needy from the money so obtained.
E) The court which tried him found him to be guilty.
F) There was a dacoit who used to rob rich people.

1) DBFAEC 2) FECDBA 3) CEADFB 4) FDAECB

3. A) Passivity is not, of course universal.
B) In areas where there are no lords or laws, or in frontier zones where all men go armed, the attitude of the peasantry may well be different.
C) So indeed it may be on the fringe of the unsubmissive.
D) However, for the most of the soil-bound peasants the problem is not whether to be normally passive or active, but when to pass from one state to another.
E) This depends on an assessment of the political situation.

1) BEDAC 2) CDABE 3) EDBAC 4) ABCDE

ANSWERS: 1) 1, 2) 4, 3) 3