

PERT Writing Practice Test

Questions, Answers, and Feedback / Resources

This Practice Test is intended to simulate a full-length, online PERT Writing Test. Answers are presented at the end of the test, along with feedback and resources for additional practice.

Questions contained herein have been used or adapted with permission from Pearson Education, Inc. and taken from *Thinking Through the Test: A Study Guide for The Florida College Basic Skills Exit Tests*, 3rd edition.

DIRECTIONS: *Read the entire passage carefully, then answer the questions. (Note: Intentional errors may have been included in the passage.)*

(1) _____.

(2) In early autumn of 1991, two hikers working their way along the edge of a melting glacier in the high Alps of northern Italy found what seemed to be the weathered remains of an unlucky mountain climber. (3) Next to him were a bow and several arrows, a wooden backpack, and a metal ax. (4) It was a man clothed in hand-sewn leather, frozen in glacial ice. (5) A closer look turned up a leather pouch and other tools. (6) The “Ice Man” turned out to be a leftover from the Stone Age, a young hunter who may have died from exhaustion and exposure some 5,000 years ago. (7) Although scientists knew that the Ice man was ancient, they did not know where he was from. (8) In 1994, researchers reported that mitochondrial DNA from the Ice Man closely matched that of central and northern Europeans, not Native Americans. (9) DNA is unlikely to remain intact. (10) Currently, the Ice Man remains frozen in the anatomy department of the University of Innsbruck. (11) Continuing analysis of DNA may provide more clues about his place in human evolution. (12) Scientists have reported fossils of a 65-million-year old dinosaur fossil. (Adapted from Neil A. Campbell, Lawrence G. Mitchell, and Jane B. Reece, *Biology*, 3rd ed., San Francisco: Benjamin Cummings, 2000.)

1. Which of the following sentences, if inserted into the blank labeled number 1, would provide the best thesis statement for the entire passage?
 - A. Because it is difficult to obtain uncontaminated samples from fossils, DNA is very challenging.
 - B. Science advances by the ebb and flow of ideas.
 - C. The analysis of DNA from fossils provides an opportunity to learn about extinct life.
 - D. The discovery of the “Ice man” was highly publicized.

2. Which of the numbered sentences is NOT supported by sufficient details?
- A. 9
 - B. 2
 - C. 7
 - D. 3
3. Select the order of sentences 3, 4, and 5 that presents the details in the most logical sequence of ideas. If no change is necessary, select option A.
- A. Next to him were a bow and several arrows, a wooden backpack, and a metal ax. It was a man clothed in hand-sewn leather, frozen in glacial ice. A closer look turned up a leather pouch and other tools.
 - B. It was a man clothed in hand-sewn leather, frozen in glacial ice. Next to him were a bow and several arrows, a wooden backpack, and a metal ax. A closer look turned up a leather pouch and other tools.
 - C. Next to him were a bow and several arrows, a wooden backpack, and a metal ax. A closer look turned up a leather pouch and other tools. It was a man clothed in hand-sewn leather, frozen in glacial ice.
 - D. A closer look turned up a leather pouch and other tools. It was a man clothed in hand-sewn leather, frozen in glacial ice. Next to him were a bow and several arrows, a wooden backpack, and a metal ax.
4. Which numbered sentence is the LEAST relevant to the passage?
- A. 12
 - B. 2
 - C. 6
 - D. 8
5. DIRECTIONS: *Choose the most effective word or phrase within the context suggested by the sentence.*

Martin's English skills are strong, but his math skills are _____, for he hasn't passed more than one math exam this semester.

- A. impaired
- B. deficient
- C. sufficient
- D. invalid

6. DIRECTIONS: *Choose the sentence in which the modifiers are correctly placed.*

- A. They had a perfect view of the fireworks display sitting on the beach.
- B. Sitting on the beach was a perfect view of the fireworks display.
- C. Sitting on the beach, they had a perfect view of the fireworks display.

7. DIRECTIONS: *Choose the sentence that has no errors in structure.*

- A. Since my car broke down, I have to figure out how to get to school every day; my choices are to ride the bus, taking a cab, or borrow my aunt's car.
- B. Since my car broke down, I have to figure out how to get to school every day; my choices are riding the bus, taking a cab, or borrow my aunt's car.
- C. Since my car broke down, I have to figure out how to get to school every day; my choices are to ride the bus, take a cab, or borrow my aunt's car.

8. DIRECTIONS: *Choose the option that corrects an error in the underlined portion(s). If no error exists, choose "No change is necessary."*

In my house, there is always a task to be accomplished. Such as walking the dog, mowing the lawn, or planning a fishing trip.

- A. accomplished; such as,
- B. accomplished, such as
- C. accomplished such as;
- D. No change is necessary.

9. DIRECTIONS: *Choose the option that corrects an error in the underlined portion(s). If no error exists, choose "No change is necessary."*

When my mother first came to the Unites States. She could not speak a word of English; she struggled with the language for a long time, but today she communicates in English very well.

- A. States, she
- B. English, she
- C. time but,
- D. No change is necessary.

10. DIRECTIONS: *Choose the option that corrects an error in the underlined portion(s). If no error exists, choose "No change is necessary."*

Because of the heavy rains from the tropical storm that is moving through the area,

A

neither the grass nor the flowers needs any more water, but the weather service predicts

B

C

five more inches of rain within the next three hours.

- A. are
- B. need
- C. predict
- D. No change is necessary.

11. DIRECTIONS: *Choose the option that corrects an error in the underlined portion(s). If no error exists, choose "No change is necessary."*

Even though each of the children forgot a few of their lines, the audience clapped its

A

B

hands eagerly to show its appreciation for the performance.

C

- A. his or her
- B. their
- C. their
- D. No change is necessary.

DIRECTIONS: *Read the entire passage carefully, then answer the questions. (Note: Intentional errors may have been included in the passage.)*

(1) _____.

(2) First of all, it may be difficult to meet the emotional needs of the child. (3) The demands of working and maintaining a home may be so overwhelming that a child's emotional needs may not be met adequately. (4) Telling a child that he or she is loved and demonstrating that love with quality time are ways to express love. (5) It also may be hard for the single parent to provide proper supervision for the child. (6) Making arrangements for the child's care and supervision is difficult and costly and may take a large share of the budget. (7) _____ because women tend to make less money than men, households headed by women can experience financial difficulties. (8) Finally, the single parent may experience unfulfilled emotional and sexual needs. (9) Unmet emotional needs can develop because of the lack of time to seek a relationship. (10) Because most single parents wish to hide their sexual involvement from their child, finding a time and place can present problems. (11) Divorce is not shameful as it used to be years ago. (12) It is important that single parents have sufficient financial, material, and emotional support to meet their own and their child's demands. (Adapted from David J. Anspaugh and Gene Ezell, *Teaching Today's Health*, 7th ed., San Francisco: Pearson, 2004.)

12. Which of the following sentences, if inserted into the blank labeled number 1, would provide the best thesis statement for the entire passage?

- A. There are over 11 million single parents in the United States.
- B. Divorce has many effects on a family.
- C. A single parent may experience a variety of problems.
- D. More than 15 million children are unsupervised from 3 to 8 p.m., which causes juvenile crime.

13. Which of the following sentences provides detailed support for sentence 6?

- A. Seventy-eight percent of mothers with 6-13 year olds work full time.
- B. Full-time daycare often costs as much as college tuition at a public university, yet one out of three families with young children earn less than \$25,000 per year.
- C. Parents who receive child support have higher incomes.
- D. Many custodial parents have no provisions for health insurance and health care costs.

14. Which is the best placement for the sentence below to make the sequence of ideas clearer?

- A. Before sentence 4.
- B. After sentence 10.
- C. After sentence 4.
- D. Before sentence 8.

15. Which word or phrase, if inserted into the blank in sentence 7, would make clear the relationship of ideas between sentences 6 and 8?

- A. In addition,
- B. Nevertheless,
- C. Then,
- D. Incidentally,

16. DIRECTIONS: Choose the option that corrects an error in the underlined portion(s). If no error exists, choose "No change is necessary."

Bryan would of shared an apartment with his girlfriend, but his mom did not feel good
A B
about the idea and advised against it.
C

- A. would have
- B. well
- C. adviced
- D. No change is necessary.

17. DIRECTIONS: Choose the most effective word or phrase within the context suggested by the sentence.

When they play tennis doubles, Sean prefers to play the net position; _____, Rob likes the baseline position better.

- A. finally
- B. in addition
- C. similarly
- D. on the other hand

24. DIRECTIONS: *Choose the option that corrects an error in the underlined portion(s). If no error exists, choose “No change is necessary.”*

She was the only female, that I have ever known to choose a male-dominated career,
A B
automotive engineering.
C

- A. female that
- B. known, to
- C. career; automotive engineering.
- D. No change is necessary.

25. DIRECTIONS: *Choose the sentence that is correctly punctuated.*

- A. Lila asked when the research papers were due.
- B. Lila asked when are the research papers due.
- C. Lila asked when the research papers were due?

26. DIRECTIONS: *Choose the option that corrects an error in the underlined portion(s). If no error exists, choose “No change is necessary.”*

My doctor's magazine subscriptions must have run out because the most recent Reader's
A B
Digest, Time, and Sports Illustrated are from the Fall of 2004.
C

- A. Doctor's
- B. Readers digest
- C. fall
- D. No change is necessary.

27. DIRECTIONS: *Choose the sentence that is correctly punctuated.*

- A. We brought towels, water, chairs and snacks to the beach but forgot sunscreen.
- B. We brought towels, water, chairs, and snacks to the beach but forgot sunscreen.
- C. We brought towels, water, chairs and snacks to the beach, but forgot sunscreen.

28. DIRECTIONS: *Choose the sentence that is correctly punctuated.*

- A. The best student in class, my friend Kimberly, gets good grades on all of her essays.
- B. The best student in class my friend Kimberly, gets good grades on all of her essays.
- C. The best student in class, my friend Kimberly gets good grades, on all of her essays.

29. DIRECTIONS: *Choose the option that corrects an error in the underlined portion(s). If no error exists, choose "No change is necessary."*

After Ashley finished her shopping at the mall, she could not find her car, and she
A B
realized that it was stole.
C

- A. finish
- B. finds
- C. stolen
- D. No change is necessary.

30. DIRECTIONS: *Choose the word or phrase that best completes the sentence.*

Matt was going to major in electrical engineering, _____ when he found out the number of math course he would have to take, he changed his mind.

- A. or
- B. for
- C. nor
- D. but

ANSWERS to the PERT Writing Practice Test

1. Identifies a [thesis statement](#).
Answer: C
Explanation: Choice C is the best topic sentence for the passage. The authors use the Ice Man as an example to illustrate how DNA was used to find out information about him.
2. Recognizes [adequate support provided by generalized and specific evidence](#).
Answer: A
Explanation: No examples or other support is provided for the sentence
3. Arranges ideas and supporting details in a [logical pattern](#).
Answer: B
Explanation: the pattern follows chronological order, describing the Ice Man and the items found along with him.
4. Identifies supporting material that is relevant or [irrelevant to the thesis statement](#).
Answer: A
Explanation: Sentence 12 adds information about a dinosaur fossil; however, it is neither supported by nor connected to the main idea of the passage.
5. Chooses the appropriate word or expression in context.
Answer: B
Explanation: The word “deficient” means lacking or inadequate.
6. Uses [modifiers](#) correctly.
Answer: C
Explanation: A modifier must have a word to modify. If not, it “dangles.” Choice C places the modifier before the subject, “they,” which clearly shows who was “sitting on the beach.”
7. Recognizes [parallel structure](#).
Answer: C
Explanation: This sentence contains a list. When listing items in a sentence, be sure that each of the items is written in the same grammatical structure. The list could contain all words, all phrases, all clauses, or all sentences. Each of the items in the list in Choice C begins with the base form of a verb: ride, take, and borrow.
8. Avoids [fragments, comma splices, and fused sentences](#).
Answer: B
Explanation: Determine first whether the sentence has any of these problems: is incomplete (a fragment), has a comma separating two independent clauses (a comma splice), or lacks appropriate punctuation between two independent clauses (fused). The underlined portion of the sentence is the last word of the first sentence and the first word of a new sentence. The second word group is the sentence is a fragment. Choice B corrects this fragment by replacing the period with a comma.

9. Avoids [fragments, comma splices, and fused sentences](#).

Answer: A

Explanation: Determine first whether the sentence has any of these problems: is incomplete (a fragment), has a comma separating two independent clauses (a comma splice), or lacks appropriate punctuation between two independent clauses (fused).

Choice A corrects the error, which is a fragment: “When my mother first came to the United States.” This dependent clause begins the sentence, so it should be followed by a comma.

10. [Subject and verb agreement](#)

Answer: B

Explanation: This question tests a reader’s ability to determine whether the subject of an independent or dependent clause agrees with its verb. This error tests a reader’s knowledge of the rule for subject-verb agreement when *neither* and *nor* are used as subjects. In this situation, the word after “nor” determines the form of the verb. In this sentence, “flowers” follows *nor*. Because “flowers” is plural, the verb must be plural in form, “need.”

11. [Pronoun and antecedent agreement](#).

Answer: A

Explanation: In the sentence the pronoun “their” is incorrect. “Their” is a plural pronoun, but the word it refers to, “each” (the subject of the sentence) is singular. The correction is “his or her.” “His or her” is used because the reader does not know the gender of the children, so both the masculine and feminine forms of the pronoun are used separated by “or” to indicate it could be either gender.

12. Identifies a thesis statement or [topic sentence](#).

Answer: C

Explanation: The passage explains the various problems a single parent may experience.

13. Recognizes adequate support provided by generalized and [specific evidence](#).

Answer: B

Explanation: Sentence 6 points out that child care can be costly. Choice B provides information about the cost of full-time day care compared to family income.

14. Arranges ideas and [supporting details](#) in a logical pattern.

Answer: C

Explanation: This detail supports the sentence before it, sentence 4, which says that spending quality time with a child is a demonstration of love. This sentence gives an example of quality time as “interacting with the child, actively listening and talking with him or her.”

15. Recognizes effective [transitional devices](#) within the context of the passage.

Answer: A

Explanation: Sentence 7 adds to the point made in sentence 6, so “in addition” is appropriate and effective.

16. Recognizes [commonly confused or misused words or phrases](#)
Answer: A
Explanation: “Would have” is the grammatically correct form. Speakers who hear the contraction “would’ve” sometimes mistake the contracted form of “have” as “of.”
17. Uses [coordination and subordination](#) effectively
Answer: D
Explanation: The sentence contrasts the two positions that each person prefers in doubles tennis, so “on the other hand” is the appropriate choice to coordinate these two sentences.
18. Uses standard [verb forms](#).
Answer: C
Explanation: The past perfect verb tense is formed by combining “had” and the past participle verb form of “become”: had + become.
19. Avoids inappropriate [shifts in verb tense](#).
Answer: A
Explanation: The sentence begins with the verb in the present tense but the verb shifts to the past in the second independent clause. The verb in the independent clause after the semi-colon is also in the past tense. To keep the verb tense consistent in the sentence, the first verb must be changed to the past tense, “cooked.”
20. Uses proper [case forms](#).
Answer: C
Explanation: An object pronoun cannot be used as a subject. The second independent clause in the sentence is compound; that is, it consists of two independent clauses joined by a comma and a coordinating conjunction. The subject follows the coordinating conjunction “but.” The subject is “three,” but a pronoun is used as part of the subject “three.”
21. Uses [adjectives and adverbs](#) correctly.
Answer: B
Explanation: “Patient” is an adjective, but in this sentence “patient” does not modify any noun in the sentence. The adverb “patiently” corrects the error and answer the question, How did the frog wait?
22. Uses appropriate [degree forms of adjectives and adverbs](#).
Answer: D
Explanation: The sentence compares more than two things, so the superlative form must be used: loud, louder, loudest. (Loudliest and loudlier are not words.)
23. Uses [standard spelling](#).
Answer: C
Explanation: “Inconvenience” is spelled correctly. A useful hint in spelling out difficult words is to break the word down into individual syllables: in-con-ven-i-ence.

24. Uses [standard punctuation](#).

Answer: A

Explanation: No comma should appear before a relative pronoun, in this case “that,” which begins an essential dependent clause. The dependent clause “that I have ever known” is essential to the meaning of the sentence. (Hint: a comma is *almost* never placed before or after “that.”)

25. Uses [standard punctuation](#).

Answer: A

Explanation: The sentence contains an indirect question correctly punctuated with a period at the end of the sentence.

26. Uses [standard capitalization](#).

Answer: C

Explanation: Seasons are not capitalized, unless part of a proper name.

27. Uses [standard punctuation](#).

Answer: B

Explanation: Place a comma between items in a list or series. A series is made of three or more items; the items can be words, phrases, or clauses. In this case, commas should separate each item in the list, including the last item that is joined by “and.”

28. Uses [standard punctuation](#).

Answer: A

Explanation: use commas to set off words that interrupt a sentence. They may appear at the beginning, in the middle, or at the end of a sentence. Interrupters can be single words, phrases, or other clauses. The interrupter can be removed from the sentence without loss of meaning or creating a grammatically incorrect sentence.

29. Uses [standard verb forms](#).

Answer: C

Explanation: The past participle form of the verb “steal” is “stolen.”

30. Uses [coordination](#) to join two independent clauses.

Answer: D

Explanation: The first independent clause tells what Matt had planned to study. The second independent clause sets up the contrast between his original plan and his decision to change that plan. Choice D is a coordinating conjunction that expresses contrast.

Coordinating conjunctions can be remembered with the following mnemonic:

FANBOYS (For, And, Nor, But, Or, Yet, So).