

ERRORS TO LOOK FOR

Section 5. Verb Participles

Another common error to expect is with the verb participles – that is, should the ending be *-ed* or *-ing*? There is likely to be at least one in every Test – and possibly more, so it is important to know about them.

Step 1 – Reminder

The problem you may have with verbs is that they are words with various endings. Students often do not “hear” the precise endings of English words. As with pronouns, you will find the correct ending if you understand the consistency in the passage.

Errors often occur when a participle is separated from its main verb. For example,

... had to be closing ... should have been ... had to be closed

... has already producing ... should have been ... has already produced

Notice the correct participles here and study why these are correct.

Roger was quickly **dispatched** to discover what had **happened** to Su. She had been last **noticed** when we were **looking** at the hippos. It appears that she had, for some reason, **wandered** off on her own. It was not long before they both **returned**. It seems that she had been so busy **listening** to her music on her headphones that she had not **realised** that the others were **moving** on to a new site, and then she had **taken** the wrong path afterwards. She had, it seems, been so **engrossed** in her music that she did not realise that we would be **looking** for her.

Step 2

Now find and highlight **all** the participles in the passage below.

That was only the beginning. We had **agreed** to meet at four o'clock at the entrance, but only half the class had **arrived** by that time. Those of us who had **gathered** by 4 pm were fine for a time because we were busy in our small groups talking about the creatures we had enjoyed watching and the fun we had experienced. It was not long though before we became agitated and were looking down the covered walk for signs of the others. After five minutes, most of the others had appeared and we were only a little irritated by their slow progress towards us. Four were still missing, so someone had then messaged one of them. The reply was more than irritating. They had only exited from the zoo and were setting off for home as they claimed they had not realised that we were all supposed to be meeting before we left!

Check again before you look at the correct forms on the next page.

O-Level English Editing Tests

Here are the participles that you should have found:

That was only the beginning. We had **agreed** to meet at four o'clock at the entrance, but only half the class had **arrived** by that time. Those of us who had **gathered** by 4 pm were fine for a time because we were busy in our small groups **talking** about the creatures we had **enjoyed watching** and the fun we had **experienced**. It was not long though before we became **agitated** and were **looking** down the covered walk for signs of the others. After five minutes, most of the others had **appeared** and we were only a little **irritated** by their slow progress towards us. Four were still **missing**, so someone had then **messaged** one of them. The reply was more than **irritating**. They had only **exited** from the zoo and were **setting** off for home as they claimed they had not **realised** that we were all **supposed** to be **meeting** before we left!

Step 3

Importantly, read the passage above several times, noticing the verb endings and making sure you understand why they are as they are.

Step 4

Now enter the correct form of the verb in the spaces in the passage below.

I had so **wanted** to enjoy that day because I was **hoping** to get to know my class better as we were all (GO) _____ to be together for another year. The main problem had (BE) _____ that the students who had (WALK) _____ around with me had (TEND) _____ to be those that I already (KNEW) _____ well for one reason or another. Ahmad had (BE) _____ in so much trouble over the year but he had (CHOOSE) _____ to be with me for much of the day. Denise had (ASK) _____ for help many times because she was (EXPERIENCE) _____ confidence problems, (THINK) _____ that anything she did must be incorrect. The students I did not know so well, like Jia Ling, had somehow (MANAGE) _____ to disappear to other parts of the zoo. Even at lunch, they had (SEAT) _____ themselves far away and had (SEEM) _____ to resent my (APPEAR) _____ near them. However, overall the visit had certainly (MAKE) _____ me happy as the class had (LAUGH) _____ more than I had (WITNESS) _____ before – and they all (SAY) _____ goodbye with a broad smile at the end.

Key Point

This is an important item of grammar to be aware of. If you miss it in tests or if you do not score 20/20 on this exercise, repeat Steps 2 and 3 using other passages of good English.

Answers: See page 109

TEST 41

Carefully read the text below, consisting of 12 lines, about a new way of collecting data about the weather.

Forecasting the weather requires huge amounts of data, from several sources. Collected by satellites and radar, for instance, data is before used by some of the world's fastest supercomputers to make predictions. However, low-tech tools are important to – especially old-fashioned rain gauges, which are nothing more than tubes with funnels fixed to places such as rooftops. Then, though, an exciting new method has being proposed – using the mobile-phone network. This can be done by measuring the strength of the microwave links that base stations use to talk to each other. The idea is technically elegance and practically useful. Even in rich country with well-financed weather forecasters, there are far more mobile-phone stations than rain gauges. That was truer still in poor countries, where a lack of finances means that rain gauges are quite often scarcity and radar often non-existent. Mobile phones are common in such places – a sign of things to come, perhaps.

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TEST 42

Carefully read the text below, consisting of 12 lines, about the new science of biomimetrics.

Biomimetics is a new science that uses applied designs from the natural world. It aims to solve problems in engineering, materials science, medicine and many other disciplines. For instant, studies of the iridescence in beetles and butterflies have led to brighter screens far cellular phones. One fascinating aspect of this new science is that, because all nature's sophistication, many of its clever devices use simple materials. The abalone, a type of sea snail, makes their shell from calcium carbonate – soft chalk. Yet, by creating walls of staggering, miniscule bricks, it forms an armour as tough as Kevlar, a material five times tougher then steel. A spider's web is made from seven kinds of silk, each a cocktail of proteins, weave by 600 spinning nozzles into resilient structures. At present, people cannot produce such intricate, but scientists are working on it so it may soon be solved. Modern microscopes and high-speed computers have enabled such advances.

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TEST 43

Carefully read the text below, consisting of 12 lines, about a science fiction film classic.

Tron is a classic sci-fi film from the 1980s, when computers were uncommon. Few even worked with a computer, let alone owned one. In the film, the principal character (Kevin Flynn) is sucked into a digital universe inhabited by human-looking 'programmes'. In the dark, labyrinthine underworld strip-lit by humming neon and edged by fantastical landscapes, Flynn is involved in gladiatorial bouts to the death. His fate depends on his skills as the video game expert. At the time, filmgoers are mesmerised by *Tron's* dazzling, pioneering effects. They felt that their whole world had changed – which, in many cases, it had. *Tron* became part of its culture, with references to it in a wide range of places, from Punk Rock at TV shows like *Family Guy*. Eventually, there had to be a sequel, but it was 2010 before *Tron: The Legacy* followed Flynn's son in further exciting adventures. In this film, he entered the world his father had been trapped in for 20 years.

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TEST 44

Carefully read the text below, consisting of 12 lines, about the piece of rock that saw off the dinosaurs.

65 million years ago, something crashed into the Earth, destroying all dinosaurs. The cause is now thought to have been a speeding comet, rather than an asteroid. Researchers now believe that the 180-kilometre-wide Chicxulub crater in Mexico was carved out by the smaller object than previously thought. Many scientists consider a large and relative slow-moving asteroid to have been the likely culprit. The space rock left a global layer of sediments containing the chemical element iridium in concentrations much higher than elsewhere on Earth, leading to the conclusion that it must have come from outer space. For this comparatively small space rock to have produced a 180-kilometre-wide crater, it must have been travelling relatively quickly. Before, the team decided that the most likely cause were one of the long-period comets that travel around the Sun. Amazingly, it takes such comets thousands of years to complete one orbit of the Sun.

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TEST 45

Carefully read the text below, consisting of 12 lines, about two friends choosing a rental apartment and moving in.

We met the next day as arranged, and inspected the rooms at No. 8 City Street. He had spoke of them at our meeting. They consisted of a couple of comfortable bedrooms and a single large airy sitting room, cheerful furnished and illuminated of two broad windows. So desirable in every way were the apartments, and so moderate do the terms seem when divided between us, that the bargain was concluded on the spot, and we at once entered into possession of the property. That very evening, I moved my things round from the hotel, and on the following morning Wee Liam follow me with several boxes and bags. For a day or two, we were busy employed in unpacking and laying out the property to the best advantage. That done, we gradually begun to settle down in our new home over the following weeks. I am happy to report that he was certainly not the difficult man to live with. He was so quiet in his ways that I rarely heard him, and his habits were regular.

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TEST 46

Carefully read the text below, consisting of 12 lines, about accidents involving ships in Singapore waters.

An accident at sea involving a ferry and a coaster craft occurred just last week. It raises the question of whether the seas around Singapore is safe enough, being the second in a few days. While five of the crew members on board the smaller craft were rescued, it was some days after the body of a missing seaman was located, even though search and rescued operations were enacted immediately. This is another tragedy, one that heavily concerns me. I had passed through the Singapore Strait many times. Accidents happening, especially in heavy traffic areas, such as those to the north and west of Singapore. Despite the excellent control of maritime traffics in the area, many accidents are caused when ships are in the hurry because delays cause a loss of money to the owners. With many ships waiting to enter the port, it is likely that workers may rushed what they do. This is when accidents are most likely, either due to human or technical errors.

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TEST 47

Carefully read the text below, consisting of 12 lines, about jigsaw puzzles.

Jigsaws can be regarded as part of our wider interest in shapes and patterns. Jigsaws can be found in all cultures and at all times. There were puzzles to suit all ages and abilities, from simple wooden jigsaws for toddlers and the complicated scenes that can test the limits of the most experience enthusiast. Jigsaws these days come in all shapes and sizes or can even be reversible. For some, jigsaws present the opportunity to enjoy the challenge of make order out of the chaos of oddly shaped pieces in a range of colours. Whenever your age, there is always satisfaction to be had in their completion. Although, there are those who see them differently. They see jigsaws as the complete waste of time that might be better spent on more fruitful activities such as studying. Jigsaws, they argue, are for lonely people who had nothing better to do than spend time playing with cards. They say that the pieces will end up on a shelf where they will remain forever.

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TEST 48

Carefully read the text below, consisting of 12 lines, about a new theory as to why the Neanderthals died out.

Neanderthals were a primitive form of a closely related species of humans. They coexisted and interacted briefly with our species until becoming extinct 28,000 years ago, in part due to an ice age. A study of their skulls suggest that they became extinct because they had largest eyes than our species, requiring them to use more of their brains to process visual informations. By contrast, the larger frontal brain regions of *Homo sapiens* gave them better thinking skills, leading to the creation of warmer clothes and the develop over time of larger social networks. When they left Africa, they had to adapt to the longer night and murkier days of Europe. The result was that Neanderthals evolve larger eyes and a larger visual processing area. Similarly, the humans that stayed in Africa, who were our far-distant ancestors, have no need for larger eyes, evolved their frontal lobes instead. This gave them higher-level thinking so they could cope with those darker nights.

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