Advanced skills

Editing Set 3
Verb Tenses and Agreement

The Write Tribe

LIVEWORKSHEETS

ERRORS TO LOOK FOR

Section 3. Prepositions

One of the most common errors in test passages is the use of prepositions. Remember that they are always used with other words. They express some kind of relationship. For example,

- appearing after certain words to give the required meaning: e.g. look **for** = search.
- starting prepositional phrases: e.g. **in** the beginning; **after** the lesson.
- indicating time, place and direction: e.g. **at** six o'clock, **in** the field, **towards** me.

There are many other uses of prepositions, such as after adjectives (e.g. afraid **of**, pleased **with**). They can precede nouns and verbs.

Prepositions also help to give English its rhythm, which needs your attention because the rhythm of any language is unique and so different from any other language that you may be used to.

Study the usage in this passage, where the prepositions have been highlighted for you. At each usage, check why this preposition is used. Repeat your reading until you are sure you understand.

> **For** many millennia, the common belief was that the game **of** Go was invented **by** the Emperor Yao **around** 2250 BC. Modern historians find this account implausible **for** several reasons; a more likely explanation is that the game was developed as a tool **for** prediction **by** astrologers of the Chou dynasty **around** 1000 BC. They are known **to** have cast black and white counters **onto** a board marked **with** symbols. It is certain that the game was an established part **of** Chinese culture 2,000 years ago. Go was probably taken **to** Japan **about** 1,500 years ago, becoming popular **during** the Heian period (794–1185). The modern game began to emerge **in** Japan **with** the subsequent rise **of** the warrior (samurai) class.

Step 2

Now find and highlight **all** the prepositions in this passage.

> Sami Pandanary appeared **in** court **on** Thursday, accused **of** leaving his Towner Road apartment on 30 March in order to go to a local plaza. There he collected newspapers for several residents in his block of flats. He was arrested by a watchful police officer when he exited from the plaza. The prosecution is seeking a jail term of six weeks for the alleged breach of his stay-at-home notice (SHN). He was one of two Singaporeans charged last week. In a separate case, Lai Tun was convicted of breaching his SHN by leaving his home to visit another plaza to have a meal at his favourite stall. He will be sentenced on 6 May.

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Here are the articles that you should have found:

> Sami Pandanary appeared **in** court **on** Thursday, accused **of** leaving his Towner Road apartment **on** 30 March **in** order **to** go **to** a local plaza. There he collected newspapers **for** several residents **in** his block **of** flats. He was arrested **by** a watchful police officer when he exited **from** the plaza. The prosecution is seeking a jail term **of** six weeks **for** the alleged breach **of** his stay-at-home notice (SHN). He was one **of** two Singaporeans charged last week. **In** a separate case, Lai Tun was convicted **of** breaching his SHN **by** leaving his home **to** visit another plaza **to** have a meal **at** his favourite stall. He will be sentenced **on** 6 May.

Step 3

Importantly, read the passage above several times, noticing the prepositions and how they give the sentences rhythm.

Step 4

Now enter the correct preposition in the spaces in the passage below.

> **For** decades, scientists have been searching **for** the actual site where a huge meteorite crashed nearly 800,000 years ago. Its rocky remains have been found **in** places _____ Asia _____ Antarctica, but only recently has the crash site been located _____ Laos. _____ identifying the potential site _____ satellite imagery, researchers started _____ investigate the area and found lava dating _____ the time _____ the impact. Remains _____ the surrounding area had later dating. Gravity measurements indicated a crater _____ the lava. _____ finding the site _____ the asteroid strike, researchers have been able _____ reconstruct some _____ the chaos that would have followed the strike. _____ two kilometres wide, the meteorite would have created a crater larger than a modern city _____ just a few seconds. It would have sent boulders _____ the air _____ a speed faster than the speed _____ sound.

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 108

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TEST 21

Carefully read the text below, consisting of 12 lines, about the tragic result of an accident on the PIE.

A large tailback of traffic occurred on the Pan-Island Expressway (PIE) today.	
This happened after an accident close the lanes leading to Changi Airport. In the	1. _____
accident, the man was killed when the lorry he was travelling in was involved in	2. _____
an accident with a car. Four other vehicle were involved in the pile-up and 12 other	3. _____
people – including the female driver of the car – was injured and taken by Singapore	4. _____
Civil Defence Force (SCDF) ambulances to Changi General Hospital (CGH).	5. _____
After a call for assistant was received at about 7.24am, four ambulances and one	6. _____
fire-bike were dispatch to the scene. A large police presence was also needed to	7. _____
deal with the traffic hold-up that occur at a busy time of the morning with workers	8. _____
and passengers all involved in the hold-ups. The authorities believed that no one	9. _____
actually missed any flights as a result of the incidence on this unusual occasion.	10. _____
Further reports will appear on this website as soon as clearer information arrives.	

TEST 22

Carefully read the text below, consisting of 12 lines, about a thief who stole tropical fish.

The prosecution claimed that the defendant was obsessed with any tropical fish.	
It was stated that he stole them from fish tanks and pond of homeowners. Over	1. _____
two years, it was said, he stole thousands of fish, only 40 of whom survived in the	2. _____
tanks in his apartment. In a statement to the police, the defendant has stated that the	3. _____
fish were waging a vendetta against him. That was why they die within a few weeks	4. _____
of arriving in his care – or, as the prosecution later said, his lack of care. The	5. _____
food stall assistant pleaded guilt to theft in a district court on Friday and was	6. _____
jailed with five months. Court papers state that he had committed the offences	7. _____
with a cleaning supervisor who worked in the same food centre as the defendant.	8. _____
The cleaning supervisor is being charged separate. The duo would drive around to	9. _____
find houses with tropical fish. Soon, the defendant would return to the houses.	10. _____
He did this during the early hours of the morning to steal the fish that he wanted.	

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TEST 23

Carefully read the text below, consisting of 12 lines, about a police search for a car thief.

A man led the police on two wild pursuits in three days, detectives alleged today. At about 11.40pm on Friday night, a Hyundai Sonata are stolen in Northville. The next morning, they was seen by police in Homerton and officers attempted to stop the vehicle, but it was allege that the driver kept going. The police set off in pursuit of the car, but had to abort the chase with safety reasons. They identified a person of interest after the pursuit, and yesterday they spotted him riding an off-road bike in Doubleview Drive. Officer attempted to stop the bike. However, the rider allegedly sped away, even riding on a footpath to escape. Eventually, he lost control of a bike in Westview and tried to run off. He was caught and taken into custody. In the hours since, the police had charged the 23-year-old Stratton man with stealing a motor vehicle, driving reckless and several other similar offences. These include lacking a licence to drive, reckless driving and failing to stop.	1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____ 4. _____ 5. _____ 6. _____ 7. _____ 8. _____ 9. _____ 10. _____

TEST 24

Carefully read the text below, consisting of 12 lines, about fears that handwriting is a dying art.

It seems that, slowly but surely, handwriting is fading away from our culture. The scratch of the pen is being replaced everywhere by an tap-tap of the computer keyboard – and it is not only the handwriting of character that is being digitally threatened. Composers increasingly write directly onto computer screens, and disciplines such as architecture that once depends on a 'good hand' are going the same way. Whether this matter depends on whom you speak to. Many writers and composers under 30 cannot understood the fuss. Typing is quicker, they say, and easier to correct. Compared with increasing poor handwriting, computer script is more legible. However, are we losing something valuable? For instance, there has long been a sense what the value of an idea should be mirrored in the care that goes onto its appearance on the page. That is, it is not just the choice of words, but how they look on the written page.	1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____ 4. _____ 5. _____ 6. _____ 7. _____ 8. _____ 9. _____ 10. _____

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TEST 25

Carefully read the text below, consisting of 12 lines, about Lee Wen's visit to the house of a friend of his father.

Lee Wen parted from Marina with tears, but the journey to Johor amused him.	
By the time he met Mr Chan, he was resigned yet cheerful. Leave their luggage at	1. _____
the hotel with the porter, Mr Chan set out to walk with Lee Wen to the house. It took	2. _____
them little more than five minutes, and, when they reach it, Lee Wen suddenly	3. _____
remembered the gate. It was red and five-barred: it swing both ways on easy	4. _____
hinges; and it was possible, even forbidden, to swing backwards and forwards on	5. _____
it. They walked through the garden of the front door. This was only used by	6. _____
visitors and on special occasions, such as where Mr Masood went off to	7. _____
Singapore or comes back. The traffic of the house took place through a side-door,	8. _____
and there was a back door as well for the gardener and for beggars and tramps. It	9. _____
was a fairly large house for the neighbourhood with cream walls and the red roof.	10. _____
A porch protected the front door, and the windows had many small panes.	

TEST 26

Carefully read the text below, consisting of 12 lines, about how concrete of the future may be able to patch up its own cracks.

Till this day, concrete remains the world's most widely used building material.	
Although, it is prone to cracks, which means that structures need to be reinforced	1. _____
with steel. Cracks result from the aggressively chemicals it may contain, getting	2. _____
into the concrete and corrodes it. Now, scientists have developed experimental	3. _____
concrete that patch up cracks by itself. This new material contains limestone-	4. _____
producing bacteria, which is activated by corrosive rainwater working its way into	5. _____
the structure, whereby using water to its advantage. This could potentially extend	6. _____
the service life of any concrete used, with considerable cost savings as a	7. _____
result. The work is taken place at Delft Technical University. It is the brainchild	8. _____
of microbiologist Henk Jonkers and concrete technologist Eric Schlangen, who	9. _____
have both made contributions to a research on this material over many years.	10. _____
Dr Jonkers hopes to start commercialising the system within the next three years.	

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TEST 27

Carefully read the text below, consisting of 12 lines, about a sudden decision to spend a family weekend in Malaysia.

The three ran off together in great excitement, leaving their mothers talking.	
They were discussing how they will divide the necessary arrangements for the	1. _____
holiday. Previously, they dispersed to their own apartments, with the exception of	2. _____
Nan, who, forbidden to exert herself, remained where she was until joined by her	3. _____
husband, when he has made the reservations. It was a great happiness to them to	4. _____
be together after his long separation. Meanwhile, Mr Chang and Edward had	5. _____
walked out into the garden, and were sit under a tree in earnest conversation.	6. _____
"Talking tiresome business, I suppose," remarked Zoe, who had re-appeared to	7. _____
pick up the mobile phone she had forgot. "Yes, no doubt; but we must have	8. _____
patience with them, dear, though it is very necessary, you see," Nan answered	9. _____
immediately, with the smile. Then Zoe ran up to her room, still very excited.	10. _____
She sorted through the clothes that she might take with her on the planned trip.	

TEST 28

Carefully read the text below, consisting of 12 lines, about a tragic accident.

A family's life together was ended before it had begun, in an accident last week.	
An expectant mother and father is killed in a hit-and-run car crash on their way to	1. _____
the hospital to have their baby delivered. The couple were travelling in the back	2. _____
of a taxi what was struck by a speeding BMW. The force of the accident ejected	3. _____
the father-to-be from the car. The BMW driver and a passenger flee from the	4. _____
scene on foot. First responders had to cut the roof away the taxi to release the	5. _____
driver and the mother-to-be. Miraculously, members of an ambulance service	6. _____
were able to deliver the couple's son at the scene until taking him to hospital in a	7. _____
serious condition. The parents were pronounced dead on arrive at the hospital, but	8. _____
the child has survived. At least two other people were reported injury in the crash,	9. _____
which occurred shortly after midnight, and the police are still investigating the case.	10. _____
They are unsure of the cause, which was still under scrutiny early on Sunday.	

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