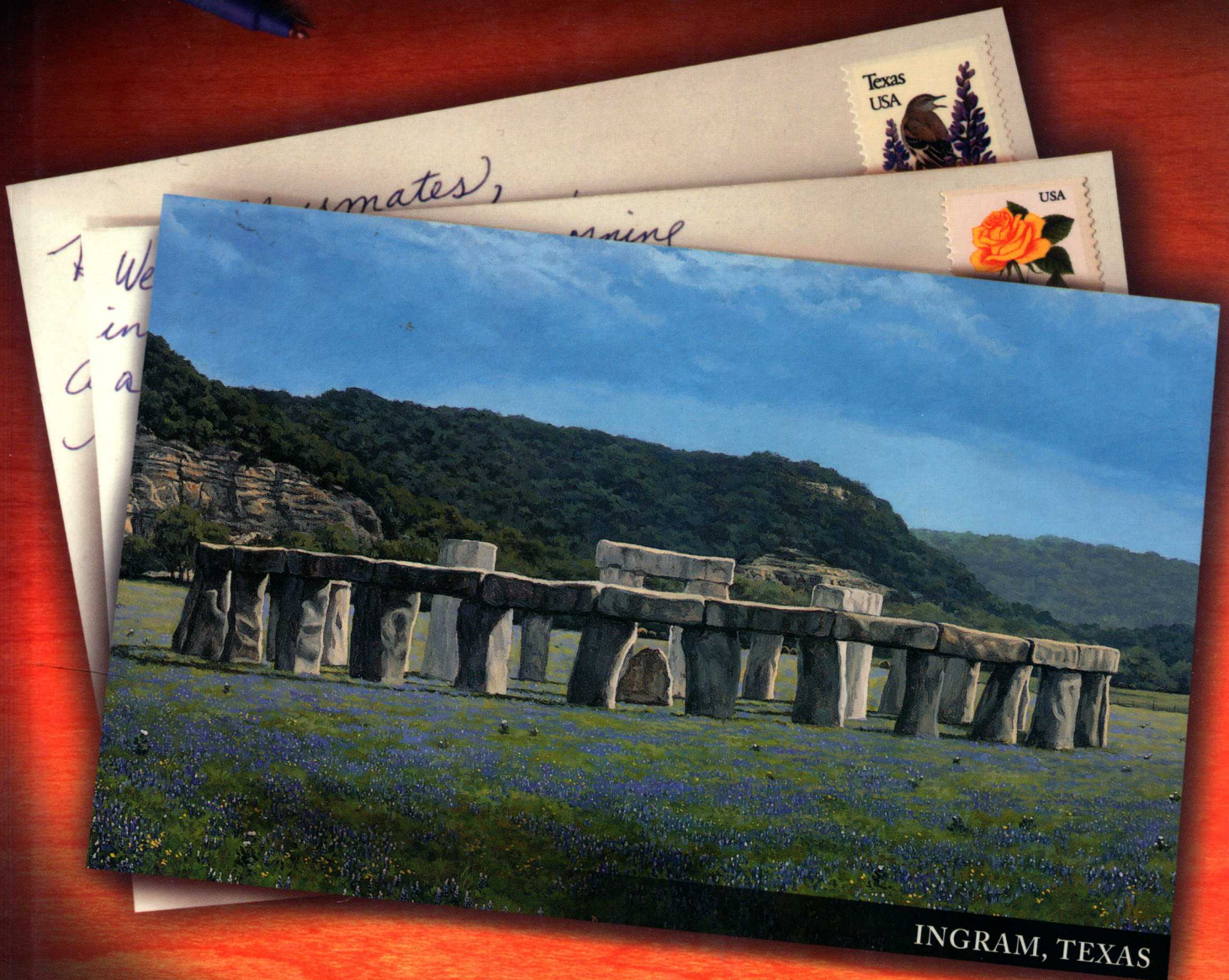


Prentice Hall **WRITING and GRAMMAR**

Communication in Action

Diamond Level (12)



Prentice Hall **WRITING and GRAMMAR** *Communication in Action*

Diamond Level



Diamond Level

Prentice
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Upper Saddle River, New Jersey
Needham, Massachusetts
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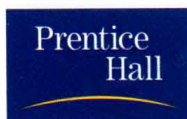
WRITING and GRAMMAR

Copper
Bronze
Silver
Gold
Platinum
Ruby
Diamond

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The program authors guided the direction and philosophy of *Prentice Hall Writing and Grammar: Communication in Action*. Working with the development team, they contributed to the pedagogical integrity of the program and to its relevance to today's teachers and students.

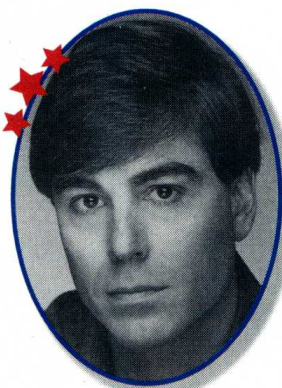
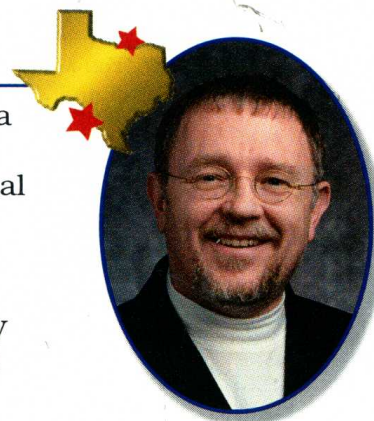


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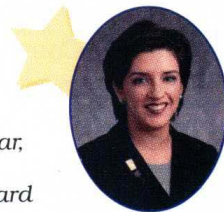


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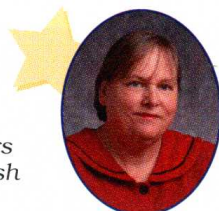
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CONTENTS

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How does *Prentice Hall Writing and Grammar: Communication in Action* help with TAAS and TASP test preparation?

The Texas Test Preparation pages are designed to help you approach the TAAS and TASP tests with confidence.

Overview

- Explains the skills tested
- Describes the questions asked

Test-Taking Strategies

- Provide proven techniques for answering questions on grammar, usage, and mechanics
- Offer tips for responding to a writing prompt
- Provide proven reading techniques
- Offer tips for answering multiple-choice questions

Standardized Test Preparation Workshop

- Provides skills instruction and practice
- Offers a sample of the Standardized Test Preparation Workshops that you will find throughout your *Prentice Hall Writing and Grammar* textbook

TAAS and TASP Self-Diagnostic Tests

- Help you become familiar with the form of the questions
- Provide you with an opportunity to test your mastery of the reading and writing skills

Diagnostic Chart

- Matches each question to the type of skills assessed
- Refers you to the appropriate chapters and Standardized Test Preparation Workshops in your *Prentice Hall Writing and Grammar* textbook for further instruction and practice

Overview: TAAS/TASP English Language Arts

What do these tests measure?

The TAAS and TASP standardized tests in English Language Arts are *not* tests on specific reading selections you have studied in the classroom. Rather, each of these tests measures your skills in general: comprehension and analysis skills, grammar skills, proof-reading skills, and writing skills.

Why is it important to develop these skills?

The areas targeted in these examinations help you develop needed communication, critical thinking, and problem-solving abilities. These skills are necessary for success in life.

What questions are asked?

While the TAAS and TASP formats differ slightly, each test is composed of reading and writing sections.

The *reading portion* of each test consists of several reading passages followed by multiple-choice questions. The questions are designed to test your understanding of the passage. They are also designed to test your ability to think clearly and to reason logically about the information that the passage contains.

The *writing portion* of each test consists of two parts. In one part, you are asked to write a composition on a certain topic. In the other part, you are asked to identify or correct the writing errors in several short passages by answering multiple-choice questions.

What objectives are tested?

In *reading*, the objectives include word meaning; main idea; supporting details; summarization; relationships and outcomes; inferences and generalizations; point of view; propaganda; fact and nonfact. In *writing*, your objectives are to write a composition to a specific purpose and audience, with ideas that develop, support, and elaborate the central idea and recognize sentence construction, English usage, and the use of spelling, capitalization, and punctuation within the context of a written passage.

TAAS/TASP Test-Taking Strategies

TAAS

Writing: Part 1

In the first part of the writing section, you will be asked to read passages that include errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics and to answer multiple-choice questions that require choosing the best way to correct each mistake. You will also be asked to complete a sentence with the correct word or words from among four multiple-choice answers.

SOME GRAMMAR AND USAGE SKILLS TESTED	MECHANICS SKILLS TESTED
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • subject-verb agreement • verb tense • verb forms • sentence fragments • run-on sentences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • spelling • capitalization • punctuation

Test-Taking Tips for Answering Questions on Grammar, Usage, and Mechanics

- Eliminate the choices you know are incorrect.
- Look for mistakes in capitalization, punctuation, and spelling, as well as for major grammatical errors. For example, you may be asked to identify the correct use of commas with items in a series and the correct use of apostrophes to show possession.
- If asked to identify the correct verb form or tense, pay attention to the forms and tenses of other verbs in the sentence.
- Remember that some sentences contain no errors and, therefore, you must choose *No error* or *Correct as is*.

Writing: Part 2

In the second part of the writing section, you will be asked to write an essay or a letter, drawing from your life experiences, readings, attitudes, and opinions. You will be given a specific writing topic called a **writing prompt**. The writing prompt will explain a situation, tell you who the audience is, and describe your purpose for writing.

The **purpose for writing** may be *persuasion* (expresses an opinion) or *classification* (informs by classifying ideas in a logical way).

Tips for Responding to a Writing Prompt

- Write your rough draft on pages provided in your test booklet.
- Revise and proofread your draft; transfer your final copy to the test answer pages.
- Analyze the writing prompt. Notice the topic (subject); purpose (persuasion or classification); audience (reader); and form (essay or letter).
- Wherever possible, use concrete, specific details to support ideas, such as examples, comparisons, and anecdotes.
- Use transitional words that suit the purpose, such as *at first*, *then*, and *finally*.

Reading

In the reading section, you will be asked to read passages and answer multiple-choice questions about the content. You will be tested on such skills as:

- determining word meaning
- summarizing
- identifying main idea and supporting details
- making inferences and generalizations
- perceiving relationships and recognizing outcomes
- recognizing points of view, propaganda, and fact and nonfact

Reading Techniques

- Preview the questions or question stems before you read the passage.
- As you read, write the question number next to the part of the passage that addresses the question.
- As you read, mark the passage for important ideas and details.
- Look for highlighted or **bold** type, headings, and topic sentences.
- Notice main ideas and important relationships.
- Check the passage to confirm the accuracy of your answers.

Tips for Answering Multiple-Choice Questions

- Look at every choice; you may not select the best one if you stop reading.
- Eliminate answers that are obviously incorrect.
- Note all-inclusive words such as *always*, *every*, *all*, and *never*, which can make statements false by ignoring exceptions.
- Look for qualifying words such as *many* and *sometimes*, which can make statements true by acknowledging exceptions.

TASP

The purpose of the TASP test is to assess the reading and writing skills first-year students should have if they are to perform effectively in Texas colleges and universities. You must take the TASP, or an approved alternative test, to graduate from high school.

Effective Writing

In this section of the test, you will be asked to read several short passages and answer multiple-choice questions on effective writing. For helpful strategies, please refer to the ***Tips for Answering Questions on Grammar, Usage, and Mechanics***.

Reading

The reading section consists of approximately 40 multiple-choice questions matched to about 7 reading selections of approximately 300 to 750 words each. The selections represent a variety of subject areas and are similar to reading materials (e.g. textbooks, manuals) that you are likely to find in your first year of college.

Tips for Answering Reading Comprehension Questions

- Read all the questions or question stems quickly once.
- As you read, write the question number next to the part of the passage that addresses the question.
- Stop to answer the question as you read unless the question requires knowledge of the entire passage.
- Don't let an unfamiliar word throw you. Just keep going; the meaning may become clear as you read on, and you can then come back to the question.

Writing Sample

In this section of the test, you will be asked to write a multiple-paragraph writing sample of about 300 to 600 words on an assigned topic. Your writing sample will be scored on the basis of how well you express, organize, and support your opinions and ideas.

Test-Taking Strategies for Completing the Writing Assignment

- Think about how you will organize what you plan to say.
- Be sure to write about the assigned topic.
- Use multiple paragraphs.

Sample Standardized Test Preparation Workshop

Understand Complex Written Directions

Your ability to understand written directions is often measured on standardized tests. Questions about directions tend to focus on specific details, such as the sequence of steps or the materials needed for a specific step. Other questions may focus on the reasons that certain steps follow others or the reasons for doing a step in a certain way.

You should always try to picture each step in your mind as you read it. In addition, try to think about *why* that step was placed in that particular place in the sequence. If the passage does not number the steps in the directions, it will be helpful for you to do that yourself to keep track of the sequence.

The sample test item that follows will give you practice in answering these types of questions.

Test Tip

Look for signal words that explain sequence (*first, next, before, then, finally*) or the reason for doing something (*so, so that, to, in order to*).

Sample Test Item

Answer and Explanation

Directions: Read the passage, and then answer the question that follows.

To get from Johnson High School to the football stadium, drive west on 6th Street, making sure to stay in the right-hand lane. Then, turn right on Bloomfield Drive (just after the hardware store) and go about a mile. Turn left at the first street past the gas station. This is Stadium Street. The stadium is straight ahead of you. Finally, look for signs directing you to the south parking lot.

1 What should you be looking for as you drive on Bloomfield Drive?

- A a hardware store
- B the stadium
- C a gas station
- D 6th Street

The correct answer is **C**, a gas station, which is mentioned as a landmark to help you find Stadium Street.

Practice 1 **Directions:** Read the passage, and then choose the letter of the best answer to each question.

Alex was put in charge of painting the table for his little sister's room. He was given the following instructions.

PAINTING THE NURSERY TABLE

First, shake or stir the paint to mix it well, and then paint the table with the base color, almond white. It will probably need a second coat; wait three hours and paint it again.

After the base coats have dried overnight, use a pencil and ruler to draw a 12" x 12" checkerboard pattern in the middle of the table. Be sure to measure carefully so that the squares are even. If you make a mistake, use the pencil's eraser.

Now, take the small bottle of purple paint. Squeeze a small amount into a paper cup and, using a fine-tipped paintbrush, carefully paint alternating squares of the checkerboard.

After the purple squares have dried, repeat the procedure with the pink paint, so that the entire checkerboard is alternating squares of pink and purple. Allow the paint to dry overnight.

The next day, using a sponge brush, put on a layer of artist's varnish. Let the varnish dry for 3–4 hours, and put on a second coat. After this coat dries overnight, the table will be ready to use.

- 1 After which day will the table be ready to use?
 - A the first day
 - B the second day
 - C the third day
 - D the fourth day
- 2 What is the first thing Alex should do?
 - F Paint the table almond white.
 - G Use a pencil and ruler to draw a checkerboard.
 - H Shake the paint to mix it well.
 - J Let the base coat dry overnight.
- 3 Which two steps could Alex switch in the order without changing the outcome?
 - A painting the squares pink and then purple
 - B painting the checkerboard and then varnishing
 - C putting on the base coat and then drawing the checkerboard
 - D mixing the base coat and then painting the table
- 4 What will the table look like when Alex is finished?
 - F pink, with a purple and white checkerboard
 - G purple, with a pink and white checkerboard
 - H almond white, bordered with a pink and purple checkerboard
 - J almond white, with a pink and purple checkerboard
- 5 Why should Alex let the purple paint dry before painting the pink squares?
 - A to better see what the purple squares will look like
 - B to keep the two paints from mixing together
 - C to make sure the border does not get purple paint on it
 - D to allow the base coat to dry properly

TAAS Self-Diagnostic Test

Writing: Part 1

Directions:

Mark the letters for your answers on a bubble sheet if your teacher provides one; otherwise, number from 1 to 15 on a separate sheet of paper, and write the letter of the correct answer next to the number.

Read each passage, and choose the word or group of words that belongs in each space. Mark the letter for your answer.

Many people who grew up in the 1970's have (1) memories of doing the hokey pokey and other dances at the roller rink on Friday nights. In fact, indoor roller-skating rinks (2) common since the 1930's, but enthusiasm for skating really surged in the 1970's when the (3) of polyurethane wheels allowed for more intricate maneuvers. Since then, even faster, (4) skates, in-line skates, have gained popularity. Similar in design to ice skates, (5) were widely used in the late 1980's and 1990's, both indoors and out. It seems likely that skating will continue to (6) in popularity for the foreseeable future.

1 A fonder

B fond

C fondly

D fondest

2 F having been

G will have been

H are

J have been

3 A introducing

B introduced

C introduction

D introduces

4 F more agile

G mostly agile

H most agile

J agiler

5 A this

B their

C they

D it

6 F growing

G have grown

H grew

J grow

GO ON 

Read each passage, and decide which type of error, if any, appears in each underlined section. Mark the letter for your answer.

The largest creature to ever inhabit our planet was not a
(7)
Dinosaur. In fact, this enourmus creature exists today, although
(8)
its future is uncertain. The blue whale, whose gray and white
skin appears light-blue underwater, may grow as large as ninety-
five feet. Although these sea creatures are gigantic, they are not
(9)
dangerous to humans. They eat huge quantities of krill and fish,
straining them out of mouthfuls of water with wide, fringed,
(10)
plates that hang from the roof of the mouth. Hunted almost to
extinction from the 1930's to the 1960's for oil, meat, and other
products, the blue whale is now protected and classified as an
(11)
endangered species.

- 7 A Spelling error
B Capitalization error
C Punctuation error
D No error
- 8 F Spelling error
G Capitalization error
H Punctuation error
J No error
- 9 A Spelling error
B Capitalization error

- C Punctuation error
D No error
- 10 F Spelling error
G Capitalization error
H Punctuation error
J No error
- 11 A Spelling error
B Capitalization error
C Punctuation error
D No error



TAAS Self-Diagnostic Test (continued)

Read each passage. Some sections are underlined. The underlined sections may be one of the following:

- Incomplete sentences
- Run-on sentences
- Correctly written sentences that should be combined
- Correctly written sentences that do not need to be rewritten

Choose the best way to write each underlined section, and mark the letter for your answer. If the underlined section needs no change, mark the choice "Correct as is."

Dolphins are one of the most appealing animals, they are
(12)
playful and intelligent. One quality that endears dolphins to humans is their ability to communicate with one another. They
(13)
make almost constant noise. A combination of clicking sounds and whistles. The clicking sounds are actually short pulses of about 300 sounds per second. The clicks, are not a form of
(14)
true communication, are used to create echoes that locate fellow dolphins, food, and other objects. Dolphins do communicate with a whistling sound, which is actually a squeal used to communicate alarm and possibly other emotional states. Dolphins have been
(15)
trained. They have been trained to understand and even to "speak" a few human words. The easy trainability of dolphins and their communication with one another have led to the conjecture that they might be capable of learning a language and communicating with humans. Most experts agree, however, that although dolphins are extremely intelligent animals, their communications are not complex enough to qualify as a true language.

GO ON 