

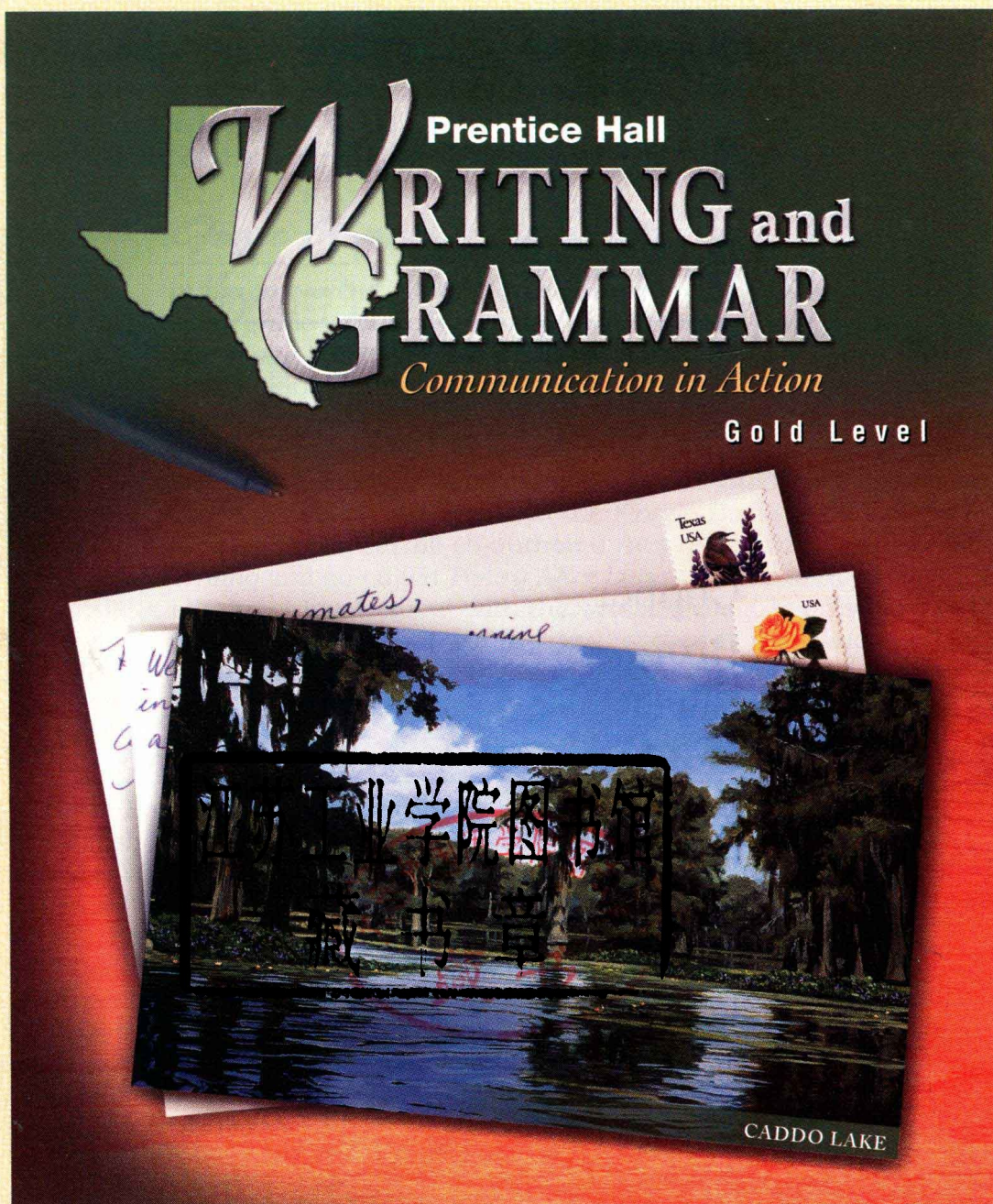
# Prentice Hall *W* RITING and *G* RAMMAR *Communication in Action*

Gold Level (9)

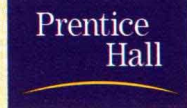


CADDO LAKE





**Gold Level**



Upper Saddle River, New Jersey  
Needham, Massachusetts  
Glenview, Illinois





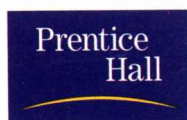
# WRITING and GRAMMAR

Copper  
Bronze  
Silver  
**Gold**  
Platinum  
Ruby  
Diamond

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# **Program Authors**

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.

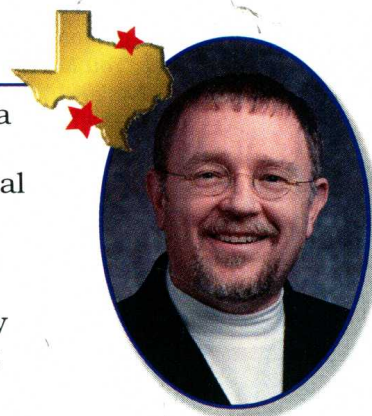


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In her forty-year career, Joyce Armstrong Carroll, Ed.D., has taught on every grade level from primary to graduate school. In the past twenty years, she has trained teachers in the teaching of writing. A nationally known consultant, she has served as president of TCTE and on NCTE's Commission on Composition. More than fifty of her articles have appeared in journals such as *Curriculum Review*, *English Journal*, *Media & Methods*, *Southwest Philosophical Studies*, *Ohio English Journal*, *English in Texas*, and the *Florida English Journal*. With Edward E. Wilson, Dr. Carroll co-authored *Acts of Teaching: How to Teach Writing* and co-edited *Poetry After Lunch: Poems to Read Aloud*. Beyond her direct involvement with the writing pedagogy presented in this series, Dr. Carroll guided the development of the Hands-on Grammar feature. She co-directs the New Jersey Writing Project in Texas.

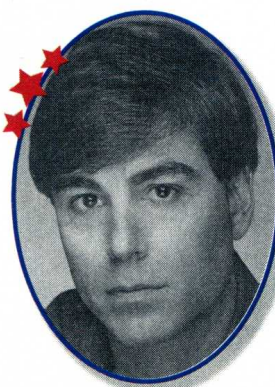
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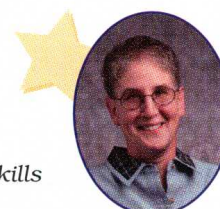
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# **Texas Test Preparation**

## **C O N T E N T S**

- ▶ How does *Prentice Hall Writing and Grammar: Communication in Action* help with TAAS test preparation? . . . . .TX 7
- ▶ Overview: TAAS English Language Arts . . . . .TX 8
- ▶ TAAS Test-Taking Strategies . . . . .TX 9
- ▶ Sample Standardized Test Preparation  
Workshop: Identify Facts, Details, and Sequential Order  
. . . . .TX 12
- ▶ TAAS Self-Diagnostic Test . . . . .TX 14
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## How does *Prentice Hall Writing and Grammar: Communication in Action* help with TAAS test preparation?

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

### Overview

- Describes the TAAS test format
- Describes the questions asked
- Explains the skills tested

### 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 Self-Diagnostic Test

- Helps you become familiar with the form of the questions
- Provides 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 English Language Arts**

## **What is the TAAS test?**

The TAAS English Language Arts test is *not* a test on specific reading selections you have studied in the classroom. Rather, it measures your skills in general: comprehension and analysis skills, grammar skills, proofreading skills, and writing skills.

## **Why is it important to develop these skills?**

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

## **What questions are asked?**

The *reading* portion of the test consists of five to seven reading passages followed by multiple-choice questions. The reading passages may be up to 600 words long, with questions designed to test your ability to understand, to think clearly, and to reason logically about the information that the passage contains.

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

## **What skills are tested?**

You are tested on specific objectives, or skills, that you have developed in the classroom.

In *reading*, the objectives include:

- Word Meaning
- Summarization
- Inferences and Generalizations
- Point of View, Propaganda, Fact and Nonfact
- Supporting Ideas
- Relationships and Outcomes

In *writing*, these are your objectives:

- Write a composition for a specific purpose and audience, with ideas that develop, support, and elaborate the central idea.
- Recognize sentence construction, English usage, and the use of spelling, capitalization, and punctuation within the context of a written passage.



# **TAAS** **Test-Taking Strategies**

## 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 by choosing from among four multiple-choice answers.

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

### 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 or the correct use of apostrophes to show possession.
- Remember that some sentences contain no errors; therefore, you must choose *No error* or *Correct as is*.

#### Sample Test Items

#### Answers and Explanations

<p>When the first day of spring arrived, the girls (1) to the baseball field.</p> <p>A race</p> <p>B raced</p> <p>C races</p> <p>D will race</p>	<p>The correct answer is <b>B</b>. The action is in the past. Notice that the other verb in the sentence, <i>arrived</i>, is in the past tense.</p>
<p>They washed one more car. After they finished, Sean gathered the sponges detergent, and towels.</p> <p>A Spelling error</p> <p>B Capitalization error</p> <p>C Punctuation error</p> <p>D No error</p>	<p>The correct answer is <b>C</b>. Commas are required to separate items in a series.</p>



## Sample Test Item

## Answer and Explanation

The boys did not leave the fishing pond.  
Until, the sun had set behind the hill.

- A The boys did not leave. The fishing pond until the sun had set behind the hill.
- B The boys did not leave the fishing pond until the sun had set behind the hill.
- C The boys did not leave the fishing pond until, the sun had set behind the hill.
- D Correct as is

The correct answer is **B**. The sentence fragment should be combined with the first sentence without punctuation.

## 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 readings or 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.
- describe your purpose in writing.

The **purpose for writing** may be

- Persuasion (expresses an opinion)

**EXAMPLE:** Your school district is considering a proposal that would require all students to wear school uniforms. What is your position on this proposal? Write a letter to the school board stating your position and supporting it with convincing reasons. Be sure to explain your reasons in detail.

- Classification (informs by classifying ideas in a logical way)

**EXAMPLE:** There are both good and bad things about homework. Write a composition for your teacher explaining both what is good about homework and what is bad about it. Be sure to present your ideas in detail.



## Tips for Responding to a Writing Prompt

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

## 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 skills such as:

- determining word meaning
- summarizing
- identifying supporting ideas
- 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.
- To help distinguish between a summary and a main idea, note that a summary will have more details and will be longer than a main idea.
- To help determine a main idea, count the sentences in a paragraph that mention the same “subject.”
- 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.



# Sample Standardized Test Preparation Workshop

## Identify Facts, Details, and Sequential Order

Standardized test questions often measure your ability to recall facts and details and the sequential order in which information is presented. Often, this type of writing is nonfiction and may be instructional—it may teach you about something or how to do something. As an educated reader, you should be able to recall important facts and details and the order in which the steps are performed. The following are methods that can help you:

- Read or skim the entire passage to determine the main or general idea.
- Search for facts and details that seem important to the main idea.
- If the text is teaching a process, note the order of information carefully.
- Check for any missing information, skipped steps, or incomplete explanations.

The following sample test item will give you practice with these types of questions.

### Test Tip

Look for words that mark order, such as *first* and *next*. Look for clues about what details to look out for in a paragraph by noting carefully the topic sentence.

### Sample Test Item

### Answer and Explanation

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

Before you plant sunflower seeds, select a sunny area with good drainage. Since sunflowers are large and tall, space the seeds out about 12 to 18 inches. Push the seeds into the ground about a half inch. Keep the soil very moist until the seeds sprout.

1. What should you do after you plant sunflower seeds?

- A. Search for a sunny area.
- B. Water the soil.
- C. Space the seeds out 12 to 18 inches.
- D. Push the seeds into the ground about a half inch.

The correct answer is **B**. The passage mentions that you should keep the soil moist after the seeds are planted. To make the soil moist, you would have to water the seeds.



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

Hummingbirds are brightly colored little birds whose wings flutter so quickly they make a humming sound. A hummingbird's diet consists mainly of nectar and small insects. To attract hummingbirds to your garden this summer, plant flowers that are red, orange, pink, and yellow—their favorite colors. Although hummingbirds like most flowers, they are particularly fond of lilies, morning glories, impatiens, and petunias. Hummingbirds will only visit your garden when flowers are in bloom, so plant flowers that bloom at different periods in the summer or that stay in bloom throughout the summer.

You can also buy a special hummingbird feeder that might lure hummingbirds. Fill the feeder with a mixture of sugar and water and red food dye. Some hummingbird feeders are made of red plastic, so you don't need the dye. The birds tend to be shy, so hang the feeder a distance from your house at first. Once hummingbirds start to use the feeder, you can move it closer to your porch or patio. Keep in mind that the sugar-and-water mixture provides hummingbirds with energy but no nutrition. Flowers are still your best bet for providing the birds with a proper diet.

- 1** If you put up a hummingbird feeder in your yard and hummingbirds do not use it, what could be the problem?
  - A** The feeder may be too close to the house.
  - B** The color of the feeder may be too bright.
  - C** The feeder may be too high off the ground.
  - D** The sugar-and-water mixture may be too strong.

- 2** If you want to attract hummingbirds to your garden, which of the following should you try first?
  - F** Fill a container with honey and put it on your patio.
  - G** Plant white flowers that bloom throughout the summer.
  - H** Plant brightly colored flowers such as morning glories.
  - J** Hang a hummingbird feeder from a tree away from people.
- 3** What important information has been left out of the directions for attracting hummingbirds?
  - A** what to put in the feeder
  - B** what size flowers to plant
  - C** where to plant the flowers
  - D** what to hang the feeder from
- 4** What is the problem with feeding hummingbirds only a sugar-and-water mixture?
  - F** It attracts insects.
  - G** It is not nutritious.
  - H** It contains food dye.
  - J** It has a strange odor.
- 5** Why is it important to plant flowers that bloom all summer?
  - A** to keep the birds coming during the whole summer
  - B** to make sure the garden has a variety of summer colors
  - C** to make it unnecessary to color the sugar and water in the summer
  - D** to attract more insects to the garden during the summer



# **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 SA-1, SB-1, SC-1, and from 1 to 34 on a separate sheet of paper, and write the letter of the correct answer next to each number.

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

### SAMPLE A

Did you know that Ray Bradbury does not drive a car and has never flown? Yet his fantastic imagination allows his readers to enter all kinds of strange worlds.

He (SA-1) many awards for his science-fiction stories, including the World Fantasy Award and the Grand Master Award. An astronaut has even named a lunar landmark, *Dandelion Crater*, after Bradbury's book *Dandelion Wine*.

SA-1    A are winning

C was winning

B has won

D have won

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

### SAMPLE B

Although fairy tales have long been popular among children, it is beleived that they were originally meant for adults. Most fairy (SB-1) tales have several versions from different times and countries.

For example, there were found to be 345 versions of Cinderella from places such as China, Ireland, and North America.

SB-1    A Spelling error

C Punctuation error

B Capitalization error

D No error

**GO ON** 



Read the 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."

**SAMPLE C**

The California Gold Rush lured thousands to seek fabulous wealth. Eager prospectors dropped everything. To try to strike it  
(SC-1)  
rich. Most prospectors were men in their twenties from the eastern United States, but people came from all over the world to try their luck. Because of the Gold Rush, California's immigrant population grew to become the largest in America.

- SC-1**   **A** Eager prospectors. Dropped everything to try to strike it rich.
- B** Eager prospectors dropped everything to try. To strike it rich.
- C** Eager prospectors dropped everything to try to strike it rich.
- D** Correct as is





## **TAAS Self-Diagnostic Test (continued)**

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

Walt Whitman loved to attend the opera, which (1) in his day. Living in New York, (2) was able to hear many of the great singers of that time. One night at intermission, Whitman met someone from a New Orleans newspaper. The man hired Whitman to come to his southern city to work as a journalist for (3) paper. This trip (4) some of the poems in *Leaves of Grass*.

In *Leaves of Grass*, Whitman describes "America's busy, teeming, intricate whirl." This poem (5) Whitman's joyous view of the American spirit. In the poem, people take pride in tasks that build the future and (6) an exuberance of skill and purpose.

1 **A** were popular

**B** would be popular

**C** was popular

**D** would have been popular

2 **F** he

**G** it

**H** they

**J** you

3 **A** his

**B** their

**C** they're

**D** it's

4 **F** did inspire

**G** inspired

**H** will inspire

**J** was going to inspire

5 **A** will celebrate

**B** have celebrated

**C** will have celebrated

**D** celebrates

6 **F** demonstrate

**G** demonstrated

**H** will demonstrate

**J** have demonstrated

**GO ON** 