

# Test of English – The Subsections Explained

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The English Language Comprehension Section of the Faculty Recruitment Test is designed for the duration of 30 minutes (i.e. half an hour). The section contains four separate subsections:

- Reading Comprehension
- Sentence Completion
- Sentence Equivalence
- Grammar

## **I. Reading Comprehension Questions:**

The first subsection contains Reading Comprehension Tasks. The Reading Comprehension Tasks are designed to measure your understanding of texts and passages. You will need to be able to read to:

- Find information, while scanning text for key facts and important information
- Understand
  - o the general topic or main idea and identify major points,
  - o vocabulary in context, and
  - o pronoun references<sup>1</sup>
- Understand the relationship between the ideas discussed in the passage

### Description:

A total of 6 questions will be spread between 2 passages (~3 questions for each passage). Each question will have four (4) answer options, only one of which would be correct, in the traditional multiple-choice format.

You would be best advised not to spend more than 10 minutes on this section.

The passages will cover a variety of different subjects. You should not be concerned if you are unfamiliar with a topic. The passage contains all the information needed to answer the questions.

### Reading Question Types:

1. *Synonyms / Antonyms Questions (Vocabulary Questions)*–Questions in this category test your understanding of word usage in the context of the passage. Each passage will have at least ONE question of this type.
2. *Entity Detection Questions* – Questions in this category test your ability identify key information or important points in the passage. Each passage will have at least TWO questions of this type.

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<sup>1</sup>Pronoun references: The nouns that pronouns refer to in a passage.

## II. Sentence Correction Questions:

This subsection of the test are designed to measure your ability to use English accurately and effectively, so the answer you select should be both grammatically correct and the most effective (concise, clear, and not awkwardly phrased) of the choices. The questions test your knowledge of grammar, style, and overall sentence structure in written English.

You will need to be able to:

- identify and rectify the mistakes in a given sentence
- Follow the requirements of standard written English, with attention to grammar, choice of words, and sentence construction.
- Choose the answer that produces the most effective sentence
- This answer should be clear and exact, without awkwardness, ambiguity, redundancy, or grammatical error.

### Description:

This subsection will have a total of 5 questions. Each question will have four (4) answer options, only one of which would be correct, in the traditional multiple-choice format.

You would be best advised not to spend more than 5 minutes on this section.

### Sentence Correction Question Types:

1. *Subject – Verb Agreement* – these questions will require you to locate the subject of a sentence and its verb and to ensure that they match.
2. *Verb Tense Accuracy / Consistency* – these questions will ask you to keep verb tense consistent through a sentence.
3. *Idioms* -Idioms are simply common ways of saying things in English, often having to do with prepositions. You would need to identify the inaccuracy in the idiom or in the usage of the idiom.
4. *Parallelism* – in these questions, you want the related parts of your sentence to be parallel, or matching. This error is especially common in lists.

*Example:* I loved to sing, to dance, and acting. (Incorrect)

I loved to sing, to dance and to act. (Accurate)

5. *Pronoun Usage* - Pronouns stand in for nouns, and the nouns they stand in for are called antecedents<sup>2</sup>.

*Example:* Sarah and Julie took her dog for a walk. (In this sentence, whose dog is it? What is the antecedent of 'her'? Sarah or Julie? There's no way to tell for sure what the antecedent of 'her' is. The correct version of the sentence would clarify this for the reader (for example, "Sarah and Julie took Julie's dog for a walk").

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<sup>2</sup>A word can refer to an earlier noun or pronoun in the sentence. An antecedent is a word for which a pronoun stands. (ante = "before") The pronoun must agree with its antecedent in number.

### III. Sentence Equivalence Questions:

Like Sentence Completion questions, Sentence Equivalence questions test the ability to reach a conclusion about how a passage should be completed on the basis of partial information, but to a greater extent they focus on the meaning of the completed whole.

Sentence Equivalence questions consist of a single sentence with just one blank, and you will need to be able to find two choices that lead to a complete, coherent sentence while producing sentences that mean the same thing.

#### Description:

This subsection will have a total of 3 questions. Each question will have six (6) answer options, TWO of which would be correct, either of which will fit the blank. The words you choose, when plugged into the sentence, must create the same meaning; essentially, this means that the words must be synonyms. Also, the two words must both produce a sentence with the SAME overall meaning.

You would be best advised not to spend more than 5 minutes on this section.

#### Sample Question:

Vittal unknowingly \_\_\_\_\_ the thief by holding open the elevator doors and ensuring his escape.

- a. coerced
- b. proclaimed
- c. abetted
- d. sanctioned
- e. solicited
- f. incited

Explanation: The blank describes what Vittal has done against societal norms i.e. support the actions of an anti-social element. **Coerced** – means to obtain (something) from someone by using force or threats. **Proclaimed** – means to announce officially or publicly. **Solicited** – means to ask for or try to obtain (something) from someone. Therefore, the correct answers would be (c) **abetted** – meaning to assist, encourage, urge, or aid, usually an act of wrongdoing and (f) **incited** – meaning urge or persuade (someone). (d) **sanctioned** – means to give official permission or approval for (an action) may seem like a close one. However, pay attention to the sentence itself, as **sanction** could also mean impose a sanction or penalty on.

#### **IV. Grammar Questions:**

This subsection is designed to measure your understanding of English grammar i.e. whether you know how to put words together in a sensible order and add the right endings; how to produce combinations of sounds and letters that others can understand. This is a simple section focusing on your understanding of the various aspects of the grammar and syntax of the English language.

##### Description:

This subsection will have a total of 6 questions. Each question will have four (4) answer options, only one of which would be correct, in the traditional multiple-choice format.

You would be best advised not to spend more than 5 minutes on this section.

##### Grammar Question Types:

1. *Tenses*
2. *Subject verb agreement*
3. *Prepositions& articles*
4. *Conjunctions*