

# GRAMMAR, SPELLING & PUNCTUATION TEST

## Study Guide

### Why the GSP?

Command of the language is essential in majors that include writing courses and in successful professional life after graduation. The GSP helps you determine if you have sufficient command of English basics to assure probable success in the curriculum and in professional writing careers.

### What is the test like?

The GSP consists of 100 multiple-choice questions in three categories: 33 questions cover grammar, 33 questions cover punctuation, and 34 questions cover spelling. The time limit is 90 minutes. Each question in the grammar and punctuation sections begins with a sentence that is usually awkward and undisciplined. The sentences may be written that way to conceal the flaws most of them contain. Your task is to correct each sentence when necessary, but not to try to improve it. Examples of questions are in the **Sample GSP Questions** section below.

### Who must take the test?

If you are seeking admission to the Advertising, Journalism, Media Studies, or Public Relations major in the School of Journalism & Media Studies, you must complete the GSP with a passing score.

### What is considered a passing score?

Effective September 14, 2019, the passing score is 77 or higher. Only correct answers are counted. You are not penalized for guessing. (Note: If you took the GSP test prior to September 14, 2019, the passing score is 80 or higher).

### How do I prepare for the GSP?

Media writing books that focus on grammar and punctuation include *When Words Collide* (L. Kessler and D. McDonald), *Working with Words* (Brooks, Pinson, Wilson), *Elements of Style* (*Strunk and White*), and *Eats, Shoots and Leaves* (Truss).

Websites:

[www.newsroom101.com](http://www.newsroom101.com)

[www.grammarbook.com](http://www.grammarbook.com) (Click on the drop-down menus titled "English Rules" and "Quizzes".)

### Do you have any tips that might help me pass the GSP?

First, remember that you are trying to correct sentences if they need it, not to improve the style of the sentences. Second, read the possible answers before you read the sentences in the

grammar and punctuation sections. Then, as you read the sentences, you can eliminate many of the proposed answers as incorrect.

### **If I don't pass, can I retake the test?**

You are allowed three attempts to pass the GSP test. Contact the [School of Journalism & Media Studies](#) if you are concerned about not passing.

## **SAMPLE GSP QUESTIONS**

### **GRAMMAR**

1. Robert seemed calm; he being in Michelle's apartment came as a shock to Mark, whom Robert had attempted to instruct in moral conduct.

- A. "Whom" should be replace with "who."
- B. "He being" should be replaced with "his being."
- C. "He being" should be replaced with "him being."
- D. "Had attempted" should be replaced with "was attempted."
- E. The sentence is correct as written.

2. Near the end of the meeting the council members behaved more like petulant school children rather than tolerant adults.

- A. "Like" should be replaced with "as."
- B. "Rather" should omitted.
- C. "Tolerant" should be replaced with "tolerable."
- D. "Behave" should be inserted after "children."
- E. The sentence is correct as written.

3. Neither of the coaches were willing to shake hands after the disastrous homecoming game this *year*.

- A. "Were" should be replaced with "was."
- B. "Willing" should be replaced with "willingly."
- C. "To" should be replaced with "too."
- D. "Disastrous" should be replaced with "disastrously."
- E. The sentence is correct as written.

### **PUNCTUATION**

4. Plato, the ancient Greek philosopher who wrote "The Republic," said the ideal 'king would give people "noble myths and lies."

- A. The comma after "Plato" should be omitted.
- B. There should be a comma after "philosopher."
- C. There should be a comma after "wrote."

- D. The comma after "Republic" should follow the quotation mark.
- E. The sentence is correct as written.

5. They were embarrassed to discover that the condominium they were trying to enter was Carol's, but Carol forgave them for the mistake because her condominium and their's were almost identical.

- A. There should be a comma after "discover."
- B. There should be a comma after "them."
- C. "Their's" should be replaced with "theirs'."
- D. "Their's" should be replaced with "theirs."
- E. The sentence is correct as written.

6. Mud choked the paths and sidewalks and destroyed flowers in gardens, it covered the steps and thresholds of the Spanish-style homes in the valley.

- A. There should be a comma after "sidewalks."
- B. The comma after "gardens" should be replaced with a colon.
- C. The comma after "gardens" should be replaced with a semicolon.
- D. The hyphen between "Spanish" and "style" should be omitted.
- E. The sentence is correct as written.

### **SPELLING**

7. A. pladitude  
B. platitude  
C. pladetude  
D. platedude

8. A. itinerant  
B. itinarent  
C. itenerant  
D. itenirent

9. A. salicious  
B. selescious  
C. salacious  
D. seliceous

10. A. consensus  
B. concensus  
C. concencus  
D. concensous