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## **NYSTCE-ATAS Certification Exam**



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## Question: 1

Which choice correctly fills in the blank in this sentence?  
The runt of the litter is the\_\_\_\_\_ of the four puppies.

- A. Small
- B. Smaller
- C. Smallish
- D. Smallest

**Answer: D**

Explanation:

Grammatically, these adjectives follow a logical progression showing increasing degrees of the attribute: the original is small (a); the comparative, indicating more small, is smaller and is used to compare two things and the superlative, indicating most small, is smallest (d). Smallish (c) is also an adjective based on small, but not comparative or superlative: rather, it indicates approximation, i.e., sort of small or somewhat small.

## Question: 2

Of these choices, which one is a complete sentence and not a fragment?

- A. "Coming soon to a location near you."
- B. "The best and brightest in our nation."
- C. "Leave them alone."
- D. "Everybody who registers to compete."

**Answer: C**

Explanation:

This is a complete sentence with an implied subject (you), verb, and object. Choice (a) is a sentence fragment with a verb, adverb, preposition, article, object and preposition, but no subject. Choice (b) is a fragment with subjects and a prepositional phrase, but no verb. Choice (d) is a fragment as it has a subject modified by a dependent clause containing a verb, but the subject has no accompanying verb to create the necessary independent clause.

## Question: 3

In the following, what choice is an example of a run-on sentence?

- A. I know what you mean I have had the exact same experience.
- B. Time flies when we are busy, and we are busy all of the time.
- C. They live on a mountaintop: they can see the city from there.
- D. Jim watched the football game, but Jerry was not interested.

**Answer: A**

Explanation:

This is a run-on sentence because it contains two independent clauses, but no connection or division. To be correct these can be divided into two sentences by a period: remain one sentence divided by a semicolon: or be joined by a comma and a coordinating conjunction, e.g., "because," "since," or "as." Choice (b) correctly divides two independent clauses with a comma plus coordinating conjunction "and." Choice (c) correctly divides two independent clauses with a semicolon. Choice (d) correctly connects two independent clauses with a comma and coordinating conjunction 'but.'

### Question: 4

Among these, which one shows correct sentence division?

- A. While the Japanese bow the Americans shake hands.
- B. The children played while the grandparents watched.
- C. His car could not be fixed he had to buy another one.
- D. We write in English words they write computer code.

**Answer: B**

Explanation:

This sentence is correct: "while," as a subordinating conjunction, introduces the subordinate (dependent) clause. However, when the subordinate clause comes first (a), a comma should separate it from the following independent clause. The run-on sentence (c) needs a semicolon to divide it: a comma plus a coordinating conjunction like "so" (or a semicolon plus "therefore," "thus," "hence," etc. plus a comma): or a period, making two sentences. Run-on (d) needs either a period, a semicolon, or a comma plus a conjunction like "and" or 'But (Shorter sentences can omit the comma or conjunction.)

### Question: 5

Which of these sentences is punctuated correctly?

- A. Run and play now children.
- B. Marietta has her hands full: she has ten children.
- C. You may not like it, however, that is the way it is.
- D. We got along well; and we became good friends.

**Answer: B**

Explanation:

Sentence (a) omits a comma before "children" to indicate the first part is addressing them. Without the comma, they become the object of the verb "play." Sentence (b) is punctuated correctly: a semicolon separates independent clauses when the second one explains or completes the first. Sentence (c) incorrectly uses a comma before "however" instead of a semicolon. Conversely, sentence (d) incorrectly uses a semicolon before "and" instead of a comma.

### Question: 6

Of the following sentences, which has correct punctuation?

- A. We are, by the way, quite concerned.
- B. She is, for your information an expert.
- C. They did on the other hand, plan first.
- D. Why, you are the first, to mention this.

**Answer: A**

Explanation:

Phrases that interrupt the flow of a sentence ("by the way/" in this case) should be set off by commas. Sentence (b) has the first comma, but omits the second to set off "for your information." Sentence (c) has the second comma, but omits the first to set off "on the other hand." A comma should follow an introductory word like "Why," but there should be no comma after "first" (d).

### Question: 7

Among these choices, which sentence(s) are accurately punctuated?

- A. Many people believe this is true. But, the facts show it is a myth.
- B. Many people believe this is true; but, the facts show it is a myth.
- C. Many people believe this is true, but the facts show it is a myth.
- D. Many people believe this is true but the facts show it is a myth.

**Answer: C**

Explanation:

When joining two independent clauses within one sentence via a coordinating conjunction like "but," a comma should precede the "but." These two clauses can also be correctly divided into separate sentences. However, there should not be a comma or any other punctuation following "But" when it begins the second sentence (b). Conversely, omitting punctuation before "but" within the same sentence (d) is incorrect.

### Question: 8

The punctuation is correct in which of the following sentence versions?

- A. 'Wow! How great to see you! where have you been?'
- B. 'wow! how great to see you! where have you been?'
- C. 'Wow! how great to see you! Where have you been?'
- D. 'Wow! How great to see you! Where have you been?'

**Answer: D**

Explanation:

The first letter of the first word in any sentence must always be capitalized, no matter what that word is. This includes the first word of a new sentence within a quotation, as in this example, which contains separate sentences following the exclamation "Wow!" Choice (a) capitalizes only the first new sentence, choice (b) capitalizes neither new sentence, and choice (c) capitalizes only the second new sentence.

### Question: 9

Which of these versions of the sentence capitalizes all words correctly?

- A. She hoped to practice her Japanese in Tokyo, though many citizens wanted to practice their English.
- B. She hoped to practice her Japanese in Tokyo, though many citizens wanted to practice their English.
- C. She hoped to practice her Japanese in Tokyo, though many citizens wanted to practice their English.
- D. She hoped to practice her Japanese in Tokyo, though many citizens wanted to practice their English.

**Answer: B**

Explanation:

Proper nouns, e.g., the name of the city Tokyo, always have capitalized initial letters. Not only proper nouns, but also verbs, adjectives, and other parts of speech derived from proper nouns—e.g., "Japanese" and "English"—also always have their first letters capitalized. Option (a) fails to capitalize these language names, option (c) fails to capitalize the city name, and option (d) fails to capitalize all of these.

### Question: 10

In which of the following choices do all words have proper capitalization?

- A. The queen of England is Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.
- B. The Queen of England is her majesty queen Elizabeth II.
- C. The Queen of England is her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.
- D. The queen of England is her majesty queen Elizabeth II.

**Answer: A**

Explanation:

Formal titles of people, positions, occupations, etc. that come before or after proper names are capitalized. However, nouns naming positions and/or occupations are not capitalized as their titles are. Therefore, choice (a) is correct. Choice (b) incorrectly capitalizes the noun "queen" at the beginning and fails to capitalize the titles "Her Majesty" and "Queen [Elizabeth II]." Choice (c) incorrectly capitalizes the noun "queen" and fails to capitalize "Her" in the title. Choice (d) fails to capitalize the proper noun "England and the title words "Her Majesty" and "Queen."

### Question: 11

In the context of each of these sentences, which commonly shared word is correctly spelled?

- A. The police officer was sighted for improper conduct.
- B. The police officer was sighted pursuing the suspects.
- C. The police officer sighted the motorist for a violation.
- D. The police officer sighted several instances for proof.

**Answer: B**

Explanation:

In this sentence, "sighted" means seen and is spelled correctly. In option (a), the word should be spelled "cited" and means officially summoned to appear in court or issued a citation (ticket). In option (c), it should also be "cited," with the same or similar meaning as option (a). In option (d), it should again be spelled "cited," but in this case it means made reference to as examples, support, confirmation, or proof.

### Question: 12

Which version spells all words correctly in the context of the sentence?

- A. I new you meant slightly used when you said knew.
- B. I knew you meant slightly used when saying knew.
- C. I new you meant slightly used when you said new.
- D. I knew you meant slightly used when you said new.

**Answer: D**

Explanation:

The spelling "knew" indicates the past tense of the verb "to know"; the spelling "new" indicates the adjective meaning novel, recent, original, not old, etc. These two meanings cannot be spelled alike or interchangeably. Choice (a) misspells both words: choice (b) misspells only "new" as "knew/": and choice (c) misspells only "knew" as new."

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