

Punctuation Practice Exam; choose the best answer for each question.

1 . The new president of Denton's software manufacturing locality, in addition to his fellow bureaucrats, has little background in administration.

- a. "president" should be replaced with "President."
- b. "Denton's" should be replaced with "Dentons'."
- c. The comma before "in" should be omitted.
- d. Both commas should be omitted.
- e. The sentence is correct as written.

2. Buttressing the claims of the group of philanthropists was its mission statement; to protect and serve for the betterment of humanity.

- a. The semicolon should be replaced with a colon.
- b. "Its" should be replaced with "their."
- c. "Its" should be replaced with "it's."
- d. A comma should be placed before "and."
- e. The sentence is correct as written.

3. "I can't decide," Joan reflected over her latte, "if the book sounds less like interestingly devastating non-fiction or more like pulp fiction vis-à-vis one crazed out guy with a particularly bad case of employee revenge."

- a. "Like" should be replaced in both references with "as."
- b. "Less" and "more" should be omitted.
- c. "Pulp fiction" should be hyphenated.
- d. "Crazed out" should be hyphenated.
- e. The sentence is correct as written.

4. Suffice to say, the Society for the Preservation of Grasslands was comprised solely of members from the Midwest; Jim Frock, Iowa; Susan Bay, Minnesota; and Timothy Sax, Kansas.

- a. "Solely" should be spelled "soley."
- b. The semicolons after "Iowa" and "Minnesota" should be replaced with commas.
- c. The semicolon after "Midwest" should be replaced with a comma
- d. The semicolon after "Midwest" should be replaced with a colon.
- e. The sentence is correct as written.

5. "Come students," Dr. Apsimle beckoned, "we all know it: jargon—
—that beast of a language that 'is not meant to obfuscate but demarcate'".

- a. The comma after "beckoned" should be omitted.
- b. "Jargon" should be replaced with "archaic words."
- c. The period at the end of the sentence should be before the single quotation mark.
- d. The period should be after the single quotation mark and before the double quotation mark.
- e. The sentence is correct as written.

6. All mothers who hear such a contrived excuse are justified in taking action—especially when they are being patronized by their children.

- a. There should be a dash after "patronized."
- b. There should be a comma before "who" and after "excuse."
- c. There should be a comma after "especially."
- d. "Mothers" should be replaced with "Mother's."
- e. The sentence is correct as written.

7. Superman is quite capable of saving a person in distress but his powers are limited by his susceptibility to the eerily green gemstone, Kryptonite.

- a. "Eerily" and "green" should be hyphenated.
- b. The comma before "Kryptonite" should be omitted.
- c. There should be a comma before "but."
- d. The comma after "gemstone" should be replaced with a dash.
- e. The sentence is correct as written.

8. Stealing babies' toys during Christmas time though ruthless, is a lucrative business for the common peddler.

- a. "Babies'" should be replaced with "baby's."
- b. There should be a comma after "time."
- c. The comma after ruthless should be omitted.
- d. There should be a hyphen between "Christmas" and "time."
- e. The sentence is correct as written.

9. After laying eyes on the stylishly-clad poodle, Jody realized that it was time she confront her senile grandmother.

- a. The hyphen between "stylishly" and "clad" should be omitted.
- b. The comma after "poodle" should be omitted.
- c. There should be a comma after "Jody."
- d. There should be a colon after "confront."
- e. The sentence is correct as written.

10. Orson Wells astonished an early twentieth-century audience when he stated frantically over the radio waves, "Aliens have invaded Earth... This is the war of the worlds."

- a. There should be a hyphen between "radio" and "waves."
- b. There should be a hyphen between "early" and "twentieth."
- c. "Earth..." should be replaced with "Earth...."
- d. There should be a comma after when.
- e. The sentence is correct as written.

11. Cell phone service is rife with age-old difficulties, people will soon come to realize that PCS service is the wave of the future.

- a. There should be a comma before "that."
- b. The hyphen between "age" and "old" should be omitted.
- c. The comma after "difficulties" should be replaced with a semicolon.
- d. The comma after "difficulties" should be replaced with a colon.
- e. The sentence is correct as written.

12. Upon further examination of his Ford truck, Buddy was amazed when he realized that the "fender bender" had, in fact, not damaged it's fender at all.

- a. The comma after "truck" should be omitted.
- b. There should be a comma after "that."
- c. The double quotation marks around "fender bender" should be replaced with single quotation marks.
- d. "it's" should be replaced with "its."
- e. The sentence is correct as written.

13. Some of Stevie's favorite bands—Radiohead, Ani Difranco, and Bright Eyes, attract skepticism from her less cultured friends.

- a. "Stevie's" should be replaced with "Stevies."
- b. The dash after "bands" should be replaced with a colon.
- c. The comma after "Eyes" should be replaced with a dash.
- d. There should be a hyphen between "less" and "cultured."
- e. The sentence is correct as written.

14. Why, after so many hours of deliberation, did she decide that she wanted to be called the "grammar hammer"?

- a. The comma after "Why" should be omitted.
- b. There should be a comma after "called."
- c. There should be a dash after "deliberation."
- d. The question mark should be placed after "hammer" inside the quotation marks,
- e. The sentence is correct as written.

15. On June 19, 1215 in Runnymede, England, King John was forced by noblemen to sign the Magna Carta, which is a document that forever changed the system of government.

- a. The comma after "Carta" should be omitted.
- b. The comma after "England" should be omitted.
- c. There should be a comma after "1215."
- d. There should be a comma after "John."
- e. The sentence is correct as written.

16. What many people do not know about stewardesses (who should now be referred to as flight attendants), is that they are protected by federal law.

- a. The comma after "attendants)" should be omitted.
- b. There should be a comma before "(who."
- c. There should be an apostrophe after "stewardesses."
- d. There should be a colon after "attendants)."
- e. The sentence is correct as written.

17. The police officer, when he saw the carnage, stated in a rather insensitive manner that "the boy should never have ridden his bike in the middle of the road."

- a. There should be a comma after "that."
- b. The comma after "carnage" should be omitted.
- c. The quotation marks should be omitted.
- d. There should be a colon after "manner."
- e. The sentence is correct as written.

18. To qualify for the "Little Miss Baby" beauty pageant, the child must be a six- to eight-month-old infant.

- a. There should be a semicolon after "pageant."
- b. There should be a colon after "pageant."
- c. "Six-" should be replaced with "six."
- d. There should be a comma after child.
- e. The sentence is correct as written.

19. "Run over to the refrigerator James, and snag a cold brewsky for me," the young man declared.

- a. "The young man declared" should be put in parentheses.
- b. The comma after "me" should be replaced with a period.
- c. There should be a comma before "James."
- d. The comma after "James" should be omitted.
- e. The sentence is correct as written.

20. Unfortunately, though, unethical politicians will continue to be elected as long as the populace remains aloof—aloof to the goings-on of the government.

- a. The comma before "though" should be omitted.
- b. The hyphen between "goings" and "on" should be replaced with a dash.
- c. There should be a comma before "as long as."
- d. "Government" should be capitalized.
- e. The sentence is correct as written.