

English Grammar Notes

English in placement assessments is usually rule-based. Focus on common errors.

Subject-verb agreement

Singular subject takes singular verb.

- Correct: He writes.
- Wrong: He write.

Plural subject takes plural verb.

- Correct: They write.
- Wrong: They writes.

Trap: words between subject and verb

Correct:

The list of items is ready.

Subject is **list**, not **items**.

Since vs For

- Since: point of time
- For: duration

Correct:

- I have lived here since 2020.
- I have lived here for 3 years.

Wrong:

- I have lived here for 2020.
- I have lived here since 3 years.

Tenses

Present perfect

Use for past action connected to present:

I have completed the task.

Past perfect

Use when one past action happened before another:

She had left before I arrived.

Future

I will complete it tomorrow.

Articles

- **a** : before consonant sound
- **an** : before vowel sound
- **the** : specific item

Examples:

- a university, because sound is “yu”
- an hour, because h is silent
- the Sun, the Earth

Prepositions

Common pairs:

- good at
- interested in
- depend on
- prefer X to Y
- superior to
- different from
- capable of
- fond of
- angry with a person
- angry at a thing/situation

Active and passive voice

Active:

The manager approved the request.

Passive:

The request was approved by the manager.

Pattern:

object + helping verb + past participle + by + subject

Direct and indirect speech

Direct:

He said, "I am tired."

Indirect:

He said that he was tired.

Common backshift:

- am/is → was
- are → were
- have → had
- will → would
- can → could

Para-jumbles

Method:

1. Find opening sentence: introduces topic, no pronoun dependency.
2. Find pronoun links: he, she, it, this, they.
3. Find connector links: however, therefore, moreover.

4. Find conclusion sentence.

Reading comprehension

Method:

1. Read question first.
2. Scan passage for keywords.
3. Answer only from passage.
4. Avoid outside knowledge.

Vocabulary shortcuts

When unsure:

- Use prefix/suffix meaning.
- Check tone: positive, negative, neutral.
- Remove options with opposite tone.

Common roots:

- bene = good
- mal = bad
- bio = life
- geo = earth
- tele = far
- micro = small
- macro = large