MANHATTAN PREP

Sentence Correction Supplement

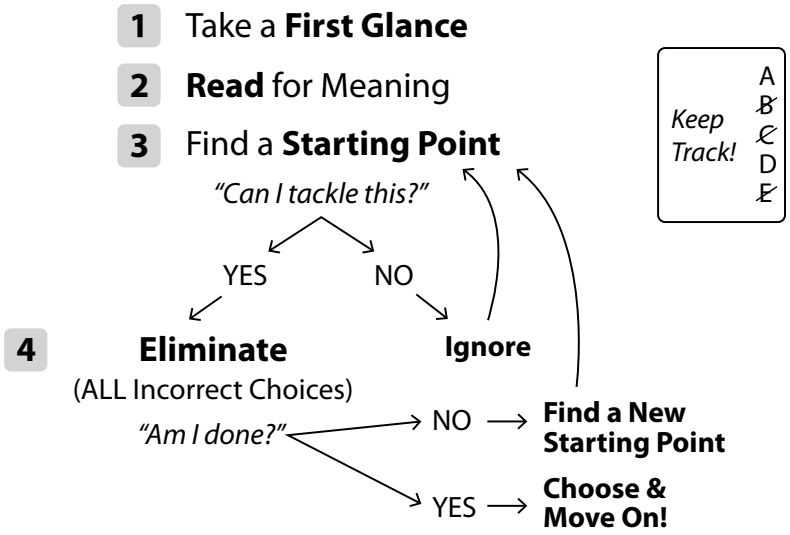
Read this chapter in place of the chapter 1 in your *Sentence Correction Strategy Guide*. (Do not read chapter 1 in your guide.)

The SC Process

Because the other two verbal question types, Critical Reasoning (CR) and Reading Comprehension (RC), require so much reading, you're going to have to move quickly on Sentence Correction (SC). In fact, you'll need to average just 1 minute 20 seconds per SC.

As a result, you'll need a standard process to help you work through any SC question efficiently and effectively.

Here's the basic process:



Let's try the process out with an example.

> Although William Pereira first gained national recognition for his movie set designs, including those for *Reap the Wild Wind* and *Jane Eyre*, future generations remember him as the architect of the Transamerica Tower, the Malibu campus of Pepperdine University, and the city of Irvine.
>
> (A) including those for *Reap the Wild Wind* and *Jane Eyre*, future generations remember
>
> (B) like that for *Reap the Wild Wind* and *Jane Eyre*, future generations will remember
>
> (C) like those for *Reap the Wild Wind* and *Jane Eyre*, future generations remembered
>
> (D) including that for *Reap the Wild Wind* and *Jane Eyre*, future generations remembered
>
> (E) including those for *Reap the Wild Wind* and *Jane Eyre*, future generations will remember

1. Take a First Glance

The underline is relatively short. It begins right after a comma and the first word is *including*.

The first word of the five answers will *always* contain at least one difference, so glance down the first word of each choice. The "split," or difference, here is *including* vs. *like*.

The word *including* is used to introduce examples. The word *like* is used to indicate a similarity between two or more things. Keep these in mind as you move to your next step.

2. Read the Sentence for Meaning

While you read the sentence, you're going to keep an eye out for both grammar and meaning issues. The name of the step emphasizes *meaning*, though, because most people forget to think about what the sentence is trying to say.

A sentence can be grammatically correct and yet illogical or ambiguous:

> Anne and Millie went to the movies in her car.

Wait a minute… whose car did they take? Anne's? Millie's? Someone else's? The sentence is unclear.

What does the William Pereira sentence say?

The sentence begins with a contrast word (*although*), so make sure the rest of the sentence does convey a contrast. Although he gained recognition for one thing, he was remembered for other, quite different things. That basic meaning does make sense.

Step 3. Find a Starting Point

Your First Glance can help you out here. Why does the sentence mention the two films? They represent examples of Pereira's movie set designs, so those examples should be introduced using the word *including*, not the word *like*.

Step 4: Eliminate all Incorrect Choices

Scan down the options. Answers (B) and (C) both use *like*; eliminate them.

Repeat!

You've only tackled one issue and you still have three choices left, so find another starting point and repeat steps 3 and 4. After a repetition or two, you'll either get down to one answer or get stuck. Either way, pick an answer and move on to the next problem.

If you spot an issue but don't know how to deal with it, ignore it and look for some other issue instead.

Now, where are you going to find these new Starting Points? You have two main options:

1. Tackle errors that you spotted in the original sentence.
2. Compare the remaining answer choices vertically, looking for differences, or splits. If you know how to tackle a particular split, do so!

In the Pereira example, you might note that the answers split on *that* vs. *those*. What is at the heart of that difference?

The two words are pronouns, but one is singular and one is plural. The pronoun is intended to refer back to the plural word *designs*, so the singular *that* is incorrect. Eliminate answer (D).

Now, you're down to (A) and (E). Compare the two answers directly. The only difference is at the end: *remember* vs. *will remember*. Pereira first gained recognition for one thing, but the author postulates that *future generations* are going to remember him for something else. The future tense, *will remember*, fits that meaning.

Eliminate (A) and pick (E).

The First Glance

Your first glance at a problem is, by definition, quick and superficial, but—if you get good at this step—you can pick up some very useful clues that will help you read the original sentence with an idea already in mind of what the sentence may be testing.

For SC, pay attention to three issues during your first glance:

Clue	Possible Implication
Is the underline very short? Very long?	Very long underlines often signal issues with sentence structure, meaning, modifiers, and parallelism. Very short underlines (< 5 words) may lead you to compare the answers in full before reading the original sentence.
What is the first underlined word? What is the word right before?	The nature of the first underlined word (or the word just before) can give you a clue about one of the issues tested in the sentence. For example, if the word <u>has</u> is the first underlined word, the sentence is likely testing either Subject-Verb Agreement or Verb Tense, since *has* is a verb.
What are the differences among the first word or two of each answer?	There will always be at least one difference at the beginning of the answers (as well as one at the end). It's easy to glance down the first word or two of each answer, so do so. If the first word switches between *has* and *have*, for example, then you know the sentence is testing singular vs. plural. Now, you can actively look for the relevant subject when you read the original sentence.

After you've studied SC for a few weeks and tried some problems from any of the three *Official Guide* books published by the test makers, you can add a First Glance drill to your study regimen. Find some lower-numbered (easier) problems that you've already tried in the past. Give yourself a few seconds (no more than 5!) to glance at a problem, then look away and say out loud what you noticed in those few seconds.

Afterwards, look at the full problem and remind yourself what it tests. Did your First Glance unearth any of those issues? Examine the first underlined word, the one just before, and the first words of each choice more carefully, and ask yourself whether there are any clues you missed. If so, write them down on a flash card:

(front)	(back)
When I see:	I'll think:
and	Parallelism: X and Y X, Y, and Z Could be: a list, a modifier, compound subject or verb, two independent clauses

Sometimes, there are no good clues at the First Glance level, so don't expect that this strategy will always help you. Still, don't skip this step. Good clues typically exist for more than 50% of problems, so this quick step is quite valuable.

Read the Sentence for Meaning

Your default strategy is to read the entire original sentence all the way to the period, noting possible grammar or meaning issues along the way. The non-underlined portion contains very valuable information that can help you decide how to proceed. When you're done, you'll decide which issue to tackle first. If you think you've spotted an error in the original, verify your thinking, then cross off answer (A) as well as any other answers that repeat that same error.

You might, though, choose to break this strategy for one very good reason: you spot an early error in the original sentence and you are 100% sure that you've found a definite error. In that case, go ahead and eliminate (A) immediately and glance through the remaining answers to eliminate any with that same error. At that point, though, return to the original sentence and finish reading it, keeping an eye out for any additional errors that you could use to eliminate other answers.

Either way, read the entire original sentence so that you can spot overall issues with meaning or sentence structure. If you don't, you'll be much more likely to fall into a trap.

To drill yourself on meaning, pull out your *Official Guide* again and look at some problems you've done in the past. Read only the original sentence (not the answers), then look away and try to articulate aloud, in your own words, what the sentence was trying to say. (You don't need to limit your rephrase to a single sentence.)

Do actually talk out loud. You'll be able to hear the conviction in your own voice when you do know what the sentence is trying to say, and you'll also know if you don't really know what the sentence means.

In the latter case, examine the problem again. Either you just didn't understand it or there was actually a meaning issue in that sentence. Which is it? Check the solution: does it say that there is a meaning problem? If so, then great—you should have had trouble rephrasing it. If not, then the explanation itself may help you to understand what the sentence was trying to say. (If you don't like the official solution, you can find many *Official Guide* solutions in our *GMAT Navigator*™ program.)

Find a Starting Point

Most of the time, you'll have to find multiple starting points on SC problems—one of the annoying things about this problem type. There are two primary ways to find a starting point: as you read the original sentence and as you compare answers.

To drill the latter skill, open up your OG again and look at some problems you have done before. This time, do NOT read the original sentence. Instead, cover it up.

Compare the answers and, using the differences that you spot, try to articulate all of the issues that the problem is testing (but not the answer itself).

You usually won't be able to pick an answer, but you can often tell *what* is being tested even when you can't tell *how* to answer. For example, you might see a verb switching back and forth between singular and plural. If the subject isn't underlined, then you can't know which verb form is required (because you haven't read the sentence!), but you do know that subject-verb agreement is at issue.

When you're done, read the underlined portion of the sentence or check the solution. How good were you at figuring out what the problem was testing? What clues did you miss? Consider making flash cards for those clues.

Eliminate All Incorrect Choices

One of the most annoying moments in SC occurs when you've narrowed the answers down to two… and then you don't know how to decide. When this happens to you, don't waste time going back and forth repeatedly, agonizing over the choices. Pick one of the two and move on.

Afterwards, learn how to make that choice next time. Add the following analysis to your overall review of SC problems:

1. Why is the right answer right? Why are each of the four wrong answers wrong?
2. How would someone (mistakenly) justify *eliminating* the right answer? What is the trap that would lead someone to cross the correct one off?
3. How would someone (mistakenly) justify *picking* any of the wrong answers? What is the trap that would lead someone to pick a wrong answer?

When you learn how you (or someone) would fall into the trap of thinking that some wrong answer looks or sounds or feels better than the right one, you'll be a lot less likely to fall into that same trap in the future.

"Best" Does Not Mean Ideal

Sentence Correction questions ask for the best option of *those given*, not the best option in the *universe*. Sometimes you may feel—and rightly so—that all the answers, including the right one, "sound bad." Correct GMAT Sentence Correction answers never break hard grammatical rules, but these answers can sound formal or even awkward. Your task is to evaluate the given answer choices, not to create the ideal sentence. Never rewrite the sentence in your own words.

The GMAT exploits the fact that the English you hear is often riddled with grammatical mistakes. Thus, your ear may not be trained so well to catch the errors that the GMAT cares about. To surpass the limitations of your ear, compare the given answer choices to each other, using principles of sound grammar and clear meaning to determine the best *available* option.

Using This Book

Throughout this guide, you will encounter both Right and Wrong examples that will teach you the precise differences:

Wrong: The value of the stock ROSE by a 10% INCREASE.
Right: The value of the stock INCREASED by 10%.

Don't just glance over those examples. Cement the wrongness of the Wrong options in your brain by crossing them out as you read.

Wrong: ~~The value of the stock ROSE by a 10% INCREASE.~~ *Redundant! Rise OR increase, not both*
Right: The value of the stock INCREASED by 10%.

Finally, of course, you'll need to learn how to handle both grammar and meaning. Read on! The rest of this guide will turn you into a Sentence Correction master.