



Key ELA Grammar Topics – **Precise Language** SHSAT Level Practice

1. Read this sentence:

Physicists, when moving at close to the speed of light, pronounce that a person will age very slowly or not at all.

Which change results in the most precise language?

- A. Many say that time moves slowly for a person traveling near the speed of light.
- B. The scientific consensus of light speed travel explains why time comes to a halt relative to a still frame of reference.
- C. When you travel near light speed, a person will not age relative to a fixed frame of reference.
- D. The Theory of Relativity indicates that time progresses slowly for a person moving at close to the speed of light.

2. Read this sentence:

Charles can throw the football like you have never seen before.

Which change results in the most precise language?

- A. Charles, the quarterback, has unique arm strength that allows him to throw the football in a perfect spiral for over 60 yards.
- B. Our quarterback can hit the receiver in the numbers from 50 yards away every time.
- C. Charles is an amazing quarterback.
- D. Charles, the quarterback, can toss a football such as you have never seen.

3. Read this sentence:

The Citizens United ruling is one of those that political professionals use to line their pockets with money.

Which change results in the most precise language?

- A. People in politics use the Citizens United ruling to raise more campaign donations.

- B. Politicians raise an alarming amount of money from corporations as a result of the Citizens United ruling.
- C. People in politics use Citizens United as a justification to sell out to corporate interests.
- D. Everyone in politics is being influenced by corporate interests as a result of the Citizens United ruling.

4. Read this sentence:

The golfer swung one of those sticks with a big head to hit the ball a really long way.

Which change results in the most precise language?

- A. As a result of the swing, the golf ball went 300 yards.
- B. The professional golfer swung the club to drive the ball over 300 yards.
- C. The professional golfer swung the head of the driver to hit the tiny, white golf ball over 300 yards.
- D. The golf ball sailed 300 yards after connecting with the head of the graphite driver.

5. Read this sentence:

If you do not carefully save the information presented by the teacher, then you may not do well on the important quiz.

Which change results in the most precise language?

- A. Good note-taking is an essential skill to get good grades.
- B. It is essential to take good notes of the professor's lecture in order to get an A on the final exam.
- C. It is important to take good notes of the professor's lecture in order to avoid getting a D on the final exam.
- D. The best way to take good notes in class is to use a recorder.

6. Read this sentence:

Certain SUVs are made to mix comfort with practicality.

Which change results in the most precise language?

- A. Some sport utility vehicles combine luxury features and all wheel drive capabilities.
- B. Auto companies design sport utilities to be practical and also luxurious.

C. BMW, Mercedes, and Land Rover are behaving practically when they design and market their sport utility vehicles with comfortable luxury features.

D. BMW, Mercedes, and Land Rover design sport utility vehicles with leather seats, top end stereo systems, and other luxury features in addition to engineering quality safety features.



Answer Key

1.(D)

The Theory of Relativity indicates that time progresses slowly for a person moving at close to the speed of light.

Option A refers to "many" which is less specific than the subject physicist in the original sentence. Option B provides a vague subject - scientific consensus of light speed travel. What exactly is that? Further, option B introduces a still frame of reference which is an idea not in the original sentence. The precise sentence should be consistent with the original sentence and not introduce new ideas. The same mistake occurs in option C and the subject "you" is not specific. Option D indicates the specific theory, relativity, and its consequence - time moves slowly for a person traveling close to light speed.

2.(A)

Charles, the quarterback, has unique arm strength that allows him to throw the football in a perfect spiral for over 60 yards.

Option A is the most precise and detailed. It indicates the quarterback named Charles is unique - consistent with "like you have never seen before" - because he can throw a perfect spiral 60 yards. In this case, the extra detail explains why his throw is unique so it is consistent with the original sentence. Option B is detailed, but it does not indicate that the specific skill of hitting the numbers at 50 yards is unique or something never before seen. Option C is too imprecise and lacks details. Option D is similar to the original sentence.

3.(B)

Politicians raise an alarming amount of money from corporations as a result of the Citizens United ruling.

Option B addresses and corrects the imprecise elements of the original sentence. "One of those" is vague and unnecessary. Who are "political professionals"? What is "line their pockets with money"? Option B eliminates the reference to "one of those" and it indicates the subject is "politicians" who are "raising an alarming amount of money from corporations". "Everyone" in option D is an imprecise subject and the verb "influence" is equally uncertain and fails to mention money. The subject of option C is also imprecise and it introduces a new idea that politicians are selling out. While "selling out" may be inferred, it is new information not in the original sentence. Option A also has the same imprecise subject as option C.

4.(C)

The professional golfer swung the head of the driver to hit the tiny, white golf ball over 300 yards.

Option B is more precise than the original sentence, but option C is even more precise. Options A and D fail to mention the subject taking the action - the golfer. They do not completely encapsulate all the ideas of the original sentence.

5.(C)

It is essential to take good notes of the professor's lecture in order to avoid getting a D on the final exam.

Options A and D change the sentence meaning. The correct answer must be consistent with the statements of the original sentence. Nowhere does the original statement say note-taking is an *essential* skill (option A). Option D suggests a *best way* to save information presented by the teacher without mentioning the consequence that a student's grades will depend on the ability to save the information. Options B and C incorporate both the idea to record the teacher's lecture and the consequence that grades depend on it. Neither sentence uses the subject "you" which is vague and not essential. However, option B uses a less precise word choice. The result of good lecture notes according to the original statement is avoiding bad grades, not getting good grades. The difference is subtle, but distinct. Option B also uses the word *essential* and the original sentence indicates saving the lecture *may* be useful rather than *essential*. Precise language is not only more specific and detailed. It is most consistent with the ideas expressed in the original sentence.

6.(D)

BMW, Mercedes, and Land Rover design sport utility vehicles with leather seats, top end stereo systems, and other luxury features in addition to engineering quality safety features.

Option D is the most specific and consistent with the original sentence.