

**APPENDIX**  
**Capitalization, Punctuation, and Usage Content**  
**Exit level**

**I. CAPITALIZATION**

- A. Title used with the last name of a person (e.g., Congressman Alvarez)
- B. Letter opening (e.g., Dear Superintendent Mills:)
- C. First word in a letter closing (e.g., Yours truly.)
- D. Appropriate words in the title of a written work (e.g., "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening")
- E. Proper nouns (e.g., North Carolina, Vietnam War, Benton College)
- F. Proper adjectives (e.g., Mexican restaurant)
- G. First word in a direct quotation (e.g., "The meeting has been cancelled," he said.)

**II. PUNCTUATION**

- A. End punctuation
  - 1. Period
    - a. At the end of a declarative sentence (e.g., The Earth revolves around the sun.)
    - b. At the end of an imperative sentence (e.g., Please open the window.)
    - c. At the end of an abbreviation (e.g., U.S. for United States)
  - 2. Question mark at the end of a direct question (e.g., Did you know that mountains climbing can be dangerous?)
  - 3. Exclamation mark at the end of an exclamatory sentence (e.g., How beautiful the sunset is!)
- B. Commas
  - 1. In a series of words, phrases, or clauses\* (e.g., I looked for my book on the desk, under the bed, and in the closet.)
  - 2. Between independent clauses joined by a coordinating conjunction (e.g., Austin is the capital of Texas, and Sacramento is the capital of California.)
  - 3. To separate coordinate adjectives (e.g., It was a dark, cold December day.)
  - 4. To set off nonessential clauses and phrases (e.g., Armando Lopez, who is my neighbor, has been elected mayor of the city.)
  - 5. To set off nonrestrictive appositives and parenthetical expressions (e.g., This year we will read a novel by Ernest Hemingway, a famous American writer.)
  - 6. After the opening of a friendly letter (e.g., Dear Andrea,)
  - 7. After the closing of a letter (e.g., Sincerely yours,)
  - 8. Between the day and year in a date (e.g., February 14, 1939)
  - 9. Between city and state (e.g., Chicago, Illinois)
  - 10. Before a direct quotation (e.g., The referee asked, "Are both teams ready to play?")

\* The use of the comma before the word "and" in & series will not be tested.

- 11. To set off a name in direct address (e.g., I am sure, Mr. Sanders, that I will finish this history assignment on time.)
  - 12. After an introductory word (e.g., Yes, I agree with that opinion.)
  - 13. After a series of introductory prepositional phrases (e.g., In the middle of the afternoon, it began to rain.)
  - 14. After an introductory participial phrase (e.g., Traveling by airplane, we reached New York in four hours.)
  - 15. After an introductory dependent clause (e.g., After Joe graduates from high school, he will join the Air Force.)
- C. Semicolon
    - 1. To separate independent clauses not joined by a coordinating conjunction (e.g., Martina works at a local store every day after school; she is saving money for college.)
  - D. Apostrophe
    - 1. In possessives (e.g., Eric's homework, the students' lockers)
    - 2. In contractions (e.g., you'll)
  - E. Colon
    - 1. After the opening of a business letter (e.g., Dear Sir or Madam:)
    - 2. Before a list of words or phrases (e.g., These are my favorite sports: basketball, baseball, and tennis.)
    - 3. Between the hour and minutes expressing the time (e.g., 11:30)
  - F. Quotation Marks
    - 1. At the beginning and end of a direct quotation from a text or speech (e.g., Tony said, "My family is going to Mexico on vacation this summer.")

**III. USAGE**

- A. Agreement
  - 1. Subject-verb agreement (Simple subjects, compound subjects, subjects separated from the verb by an intervening phrase, and indefinite pronoun subjects must agree with the verb in person and number. Example of error: One of my brothers are going to camp. Correction: One of my brothers is going to camp.)
  - 2. Pronoun-antecedent agreement (Pronouns must agree with their antecedents in person and number. Example of error: Each of the boys showed the teacher what they had written. Correction: Each of the boys showed the teacher what he had written.)
- B. Verbs
  - 1. Appropriate tense (Example of error: The Vietnam War ends in April 1975. Correction: The Vietnam War ended in April 1975.)
  - 2. Correct form of tense of irregular verbs (Example of error: I have wrote you many letters this year. Correction: I have written you many letters this year.)
  - 3. Shifts in tense (Example of error: Because Aaron studied for the test, he received a good grade. Correction: Because Aaron studied for the test, he received a good grade.)

### C. Pronouns

1. Subject pronouns (A subject pronoun must be used for the subject of a sentence or clause. Example of error: Neither Rosa nor her won the prize. Correction: Neither Rosa nor she won the prize.)
2. Object pronouns (An object pronoun must be used for the object of a verb or preposition. Example of error: My mother met my sister and I for dinner. Correction: My mother met my sister and me for dinner.)
3. Possessive pronouns (A possessive pronoun must be used to show possession and must be formed correctly. Example of error: Them's hobbies included basketball and computer games. Correction: Their hobbies included basketball and computer games.)

### D. Adjectives/Adverbs

1. Comparative and superlative forms (Examples of errors: beautifuler, beautifullest Corrections: more beautiful, most beautiful.)
2. Usage (Adjectives must be used to modify nouns or pronouns, and adverbs must be used to modify verbs, adjectives, or other adverbs. Example of error: Talk quiet. Correction: Talk quietly.)
3. Double negatives (Only one negative word should be used to negate a single thought in a sentence. Example of error: We can't hardly wait for vacation to start. Correction: We can hardly wait for vacation to start.)