

Sentence Reordering

Introduction

Sentence reordering or sentence jumble questions require a student to rearrange the given set of words and phrases to form a meaningful sentence. The sentences given in one question are generally based on a single idea. At times, they may even form a paragraph. Such exercises test a student's ability to construct a sentence using logic and the knowledge of grammar.

GRAMMAR CONCEPTS REQUIRED

Before answering such questions, a student should be thorough with certain rules and concepts in grammar. Some of the important ones are indicated below:

1. English language follows the sentence structure given by subject-verb-object.
2. Conjunction and preposition usage rules must be observed.
3. Rules for position of adverbs and adjectives must be followed.
4. The rules for using articles have to be followed.
5. Rules for modifiers (in terms of position) and parallelism (similar grammar structures) must be observed.

STEPS TO BE FOLLOWED

To answer questions based on sentence reordering, a student may follow the steps given below:

1. Locate the verb/s from the given set of words and phrases.
2. Identify a suitable subject for each verb. Place the subject before the verb.
3. Identify a suitable object for each verb. Place the object after the verb. This will give a basic framework for the sentence with the main subject, verb and object. (Do not worry if you cannot find an object for each verb.)
4. Identify the modifiers (articles, adjectives and adverbs). Analyse the basic framework of the sentence and place the modifiers as per the rules for their placement. For example, an adjective is normally placed before a noun.

5. Use the phrases (group of words) already given in the sequence to get clues to find the correct sentence.
6. Link the fragments of the sentence by placing the preposition and conjunction in their proper places.
7. Repeat the steps from 2 to 6 till all the given sentence jumbles are solved.

NOTE: It is not mandatory to arrange the words and phrases to make sentences in a sequential order. You may choose to order or arrange the easiest one first and then move on to the more difficult ones. This may, in fact, make the difficult ones easier to predict as the context becomes clearer.

Sentence Reordering Examples

Q. Look at the words and phrases below. Rearrange them to form meaningful sentences.

- (a) our section / short / to / welcome / that / celebrates / the / story
- (b) literary forms / we / of the / short story / is / most important / that the / believe / one
- (c) it / and should / reach / the / widest / can / possible readership
- (d) the / we / short / that / story / matters / believe

HOW TO SOLVE:

(a) In this set of words and phrases, there are two verbs, 'welcome' and 'celebrates'. Since, the preposition 'to' cannot be used with the verb 'celebrates' it will be linked to the verb 'welcome'. Now, the phrase 'welcome to' cannot take the object 'story' because the word 'story' will need an article. Thus, 'welcome to' will precede 'our section'. Also, 'short' is an adjective which should be used for 'story'. Since, an article comes before an adjective; the phrase will be 'the short story'. Hence, 'Welcome to our section that celebrates the short story.' will be the correct sequence.

(b) The verbs in this set of words and phrases are 'believe' and 'is'. The subject here could either be 'we', 'short story' or 'literary forms'. Since, 'short story' and 'literary forms' cannot 'believe' anything, 'we' is the correct subject for it. The verb 'believe' will take the conjunction 'that'. Thus, we have the phrase 'we believe that'. Now, the phrase 'short story' needs an article to complete it. In the given options, the article 'the' is used twice. If we use 'one of the' then the plural form of the object has to be used. Thus, 'one of the' will accompany 'literary forms' and 'short story' will be preceded by 'the'. Therefore, 'we believe that' will be followed by 'the short story'. Finally, we attach the adjective to the most suitable noun. Thus, in this case, 'most important' is attached to

'literary forms'. So the remaining words can be joined to form the sentence 'We believe that the short story is one of the most important literary forms'.

(c) Out of the given words and phrases, 'reach' is the main verb. Since, 'should' is preceded by the conjunction 'and', the phrase will be preceded by 'can'. This phrase, 'can and should', will link the verb to its subject. Here, the subject could either be 'it' or 'possible readership'. However, if we make the latter as the subject then 'it' will be the object. It will be incorrect to say 'the widest it'. So, 'it' has to be the subject. Lastly, we place the adjective 'the widest' in front of the object 'possible readership'. Now, the correct sentence will be 'It can and should reach the widest possible readership'.

(d) The verb in this sentence is 'believe'. The subject here could either be 'we', 'story' or 'matter'. Since, 'story' and 'matter' cannot 'believe' anything, 'we' is the correct subject. Now, 'short' is an adjective which should be used for 'the story'. Since, an article comes before an adjective, the phrase will be 'the short story'. Moreover, if the conjunction 'that' is placed after 'the short story' followed by 'matters' then the sentence will not be complete. Thus, 'that' will come after the verb and 'matters' will follow 'story'. Thus, the complete sentence is 'We believe that the short story matters'

Answer:

(a) Welcome to our section that celebrates the short story.

(b) We believe that the short story is one of the most important literary forms.

(c) It can and should reach the widest possible readership.

(d) We believe that the short story matters.