

2nd Year Skills List 2014-2015

FORMATTING & GRAMMAR RULES

- 1 -- DOUBLE SPACE; 12-pt type; use pen (not pencil)
- 2 -- No "gots" -- got only means "received" -- use other verbs for other actions
- 3 -- Stay in ONE TENSE (past or present; not both)
- 4 -- always put name, date, and draft number on papers
- 5 -- Use strong, active (not passive) verbs
- 6 -- If you use "if", you must use "were" (never "was" (I wish I were; if I were)
- 7 -- Spell out #'s < 100
- 8 -- no run-on sentences
- 9 -- answer the question in the topic sentence
- 10 -- No CONTRACTIONS in formal writing
- 11 -- No slang ("yuck," "stuff," "crap," etc.)
- 12 -- No "you" or "we" in formal writing
- 13 -- hyphenate (use hyphens between) words that make one adjective together: four-and-a-half, thirteen-year-old, sea-green
- 14 -- No "I think" -- the whole paragraph is what you think
- 15 -- who = people; that = things
- 16 -- use all five senses not just one
- 17 -- use citations from the text to illustrate each point
- 18 -- use poetic devices (similes, metaphors, alliteration, onomatopoeia, homophones, etc.) in prose
- 19 -- use a thesaurus for good words
- 20 -- draft in paragraphs; indent paragraphs (no extra space between them)

CITATIONS & ANALYTICAL (FORMAL) WRITING RULES

- 1 -- when writing about literature, stay in the present tense
 - 2 -- never say "in this book," or "in the story"
 - 3 -- use your own words [analysis] between citations. The paragraph should make sense (read it out loud) WITHOUT the quotes.
 - 4 -- never say "this quote shows" or "this means" after a citation
 - 5 -- NO VALUE JUDGEMENTS (this fantastic book; her excellent actions)
 - 6 -- titles of short stories, poems, essays, films in italics; underline novels
 - 7 -- set quotes up by telling who said it to whom, where, when
 - 8 -- page or line (poetry) number after quotes
 - 9 -- conclusion sentence to sum up each paragraph
 - 0 -- supporting paragraphs must refer back to thesis
 - 11 -- at least two quotes in each supporting paragraph
 - 12 -- write in complete sentences (no fragments -- even in citations)
 - 13 -- read your piece OUT LOUD to check for mistakes
 - 14 -- Conclusion paragraph should mention points in reverse order (than they are mentioned in the intro paragraph)
 - 15 -- p=page; pp=pages (don't use pg.)
 - 16 -- analyze symbols, tell how the meaning of the symbol relates to the meaning of the story
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21 -- don't start a sentence with "and," "but," "or," "nor," "for," "so," or "yet"

22 -- make verbs agree with their subjects (singular or plural?)

23 -- don't end a sentence with a preposition

24 -- No Articles, pronouns or verbs of being in Haiku

25 -- Never say "I believe" or "I think" -- the whole piece is what you think

26 -- Always use plain fonts, such as Times New Roman, Arial, or Palatino

27 -- Paragraphs must have 5 to 7 sentences

28 -- Put a comma after transition phrase

29 -- Must have a title that adds the story

Rules from an SAT II practice exam

would HAVE been is correct (NEVER "would of been") -
- this confuses students because the contraction (would've been) sounds like "would of been"

You take someone at face value. This is the correct IDIOM. You never take someone FOR face value.

The sum of THEIR operating apart. Always use a POSSESSIVE pronoun (THEIR >> not "them") before a participle (-ing form of a verb) or a gerund (-ing form of a noun).

type of "a" neighborhood is incorrect >> it should be, "for example, the type of neighborhood in which one grows up"

her isn't the most influential teacher >> she is. So, it would have to be SHE. (who was the most influential. . . finish the sentence to figure out the correct pronoun).

"right before her eyes" is redundant >> if it is FACING her, it IS right before her eyes.

Kirsten had the same question.

She said: Number 33: I thought that the revision of, "obstacles, advance themselves in America in spite of society's unjust treatment towards black people" sounded better than the correct revision of, "obstacles--for example, the unjust treatment of blacks in American society--nevertheless succeed". The second, correct answer sounds more informal and choppy to me.

You always want to END a sentence/a paragraph/an essay with the POINT you are making. In this case, "nevertheless succeed" is the point, not "society's unjust treatment towards black people."

"equally as good as" is simply incorrect. "AS GOOD AS" or "IS THE EQUAL OF" would be correct choices.