21 English: precision, concision and consistent style

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____ **Total: 13 marks**

KEY WORDS formal register • redundancy • concision • evidence • register • diction

Objective

- Remove redundancy while retaining necessary qualifications
- Select precise words suited to the meaning in context
- Maintain a passage's tone and level of formality

Original public practice; marks below are classroom self-check points, not official criteria.

1 Key knowledge and worked examples

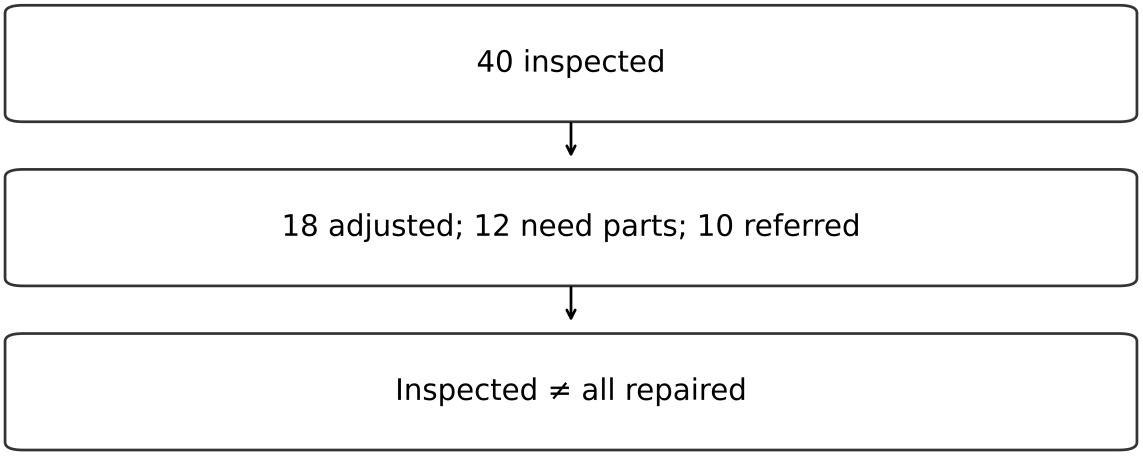
Use context to decide what a sentence must communicate. Concision removes duplication, not distinctions. In a trial with limited evidence, words such as approximately or during the first week may be essential. Replace a vague noun or verb with a precise choice supported by the passage rather than a more impressive word with a different meaning.

Common redundancies include repeat again, a total sum and return back. Some repeated words instead create a deliberate rhetorical pattern or distinguish terms. Compare complete meanings, not word counts alone. A concise option that deletes the subject, reverses the relationship or removes a necessary condition is not a good revision.

Style covers tone and language suited to purpose and audience. An informative report normally uses measured, specific language; a personal narrative may use informal wording consistently. There is no rule that the most formal option always wins. Detect sudden slang, inflated diction or emotional judgement that conflicts with the passage's established voice.

Use the stem's editing goal to decide whether an item concerns precision, economy or style. Read every option in its complete sentence, including unchanged text. Prefer an exact verb such as postponed over a loose phrase when the context supports delay rather than cancellation. Avoid introducing an unsupported opinion through a supposedly stylish adjective.

Concision removes repetition while preserving meaning. "Recorded the outcomes and wrote the results down" repeats the same act here. Formal register uses measured claims, but it must not erase an essential limit such as "during the trial".



Worked steps: 40 inspected → 18 adjusted; 12 need parts; 10 referred → Inspected ≠ all repaired

Worked example. Original report: “During the two-week trial, volunteers recorded the temperature every morning. They repeated the measurements again at noon. The second readings were approximately two degrees higher. This totally awesome discovery proves the room is always hotter after lunch.” Revise to “They repeated the measurements at noon” and “The noon readings were approximately two degrees higher during the trial.” The second revision restores a measured tone and the limited finding. It does not say that all afternoons or all rooms behave alike. “Postponed” fits a meeting moved to Friday; “cancelled” would change its status.

■ Practice material

Original continuous editing passage – A place to mend

[P1] On the first Saturday of each month, a group of volunteers opens a repair table in the public library. [S1] The project began when librarian Noor noticed a row of broken desk lamps outside a nearby building. [S2] Some needed specialist work, but others had loose switches or damaged cables. [S3] Noor did not want untrained visitors to try unsafe electrical repairs. [S4] She invited a qualified repairer to explain which items the group could inspect and which should go to a professional. The first session accepted only battery-powered objects, with damaged batteries excluded. Visitors registered their items and described the faults before any work began.

[P2] At the entrance, two volunteers record each visitor’s name and item. This record helps the group reunite objects with their owners. A blue card goes beside an object awaiting inspection; a white card marks one ready for collection. The cards do not certify safety or guarantee a repair. They simply show where an item is in the process. [S5] The library’s logo was designed many years ago. Beside the cards, a sign asks visitors to stay while their object is examined. Staying allows owners to explain an intermittent fault that might not appear immediately. It also gives them a chance to learn a simple maintenance habit.

[P3] Space soon became a problem. The repair table shared an alcove with readers who wanted a quiet place to work. During the first two sessions, a visitor log recorded six

complaints about conversation near the alcove. Noor proposed moving the table into a meeting room. The room could hold fewer people, so a move alone would not solve the problem. The group introduced short arrival windows and kept two spaces for visitors without bookings. [S6] This totally amazing system fixed every problem forever. In fact, one visitor still waited outside, and the group had to improve the signs leading to the room. The log recorded one noise complaint during the next two sessions; attendance also fell, so the group did not attribute the whole reduction to the move.

[P4] Volunteers were careful about how they described success. An object leaving the table might work again, need another part, or require professional attention. They recorded these outcomes separately. During the trial, forty objects were inspected. Eighteen worked after a permitted minor adjustment, twelve needed a part, and ten were referred elsewhere. Counting all forty as repaired would hide important differences. [S7] The volunteers recorded the outcomes and wrote the results down in their record. Noor used the figures to decide which spare parts might be useful at later sessions. She did not use them to promise that any particular object could be repaired.

[P5] The project now has a practical aim: help visitors make an informed next decision about a broken object. For some, that means a working lamp. For others, it means knowing when further work would be unsafe or too costly. The group plans to keep the arrival windows for another trial and ask readers whether noise remains a problem. It will also compare attendance and waiting times before adding more spaces. A repair table succeeds through careful limits as well as useful repairs.

2 Practice

2.1 Most concise equivalent of “returned back to the room”? [1]

- **A** returned to the room
- **B** left the room
- **C** stayed in the room
- **D** returned away from the room

2.2 For a measured trial report, which wording fits? [1]

- **A** Everyone obviously loved the finding
- **B** The observed difference was small
- **C** The result was ridiculously amazing
- **D** The experiment was an epic win

2.3 A meeting moved from Monday to Friday was _____ rather than cancelled. [1]

2.4 Removing “during the trial” always improves concision. [1]

3 Exam-style questions

Use the complete original case context in section 1.

3.1 Revise S7 concisely, preserving what the volunteers did. Explain whether deleting all recordkeeping information would be equivalent. [3]

3.2 Replace S6 with a measured sentence consistent with P3. Explain both the style and factual problems in the original. [3]

3.3 Compare “forty objects were inspected” with “forty objects were repaired”. Can repaired replace inspected merely because it is shorter? Identify the counts that prevent this. [3]

Solutions

Accept equivalent correct methods and supported interpretations. The marks check reasoning; they are not an official grade.

2.1 A – Return already expresses going back. B reverses direction; C changes movement into staying; D is an unclear and contradictory alteration. Only A removes redundancy while retaining return.

Correct response linked to the given case.

2.2 B – Measured wording fits an informative report without unsupported judgement. A invents universal approval; C and D use exaggerated informal evaluation rather than reporting a measured difference.

Correct response linked to the given case.

2.3 postponed – The event still occurs, at a later time.

Correct response linked to the given case.

2.4 False – It may remove an essential limit on the finding.

Correct response linked to the given case.

3.1 "The volunteers recorded the outcomes." Deleting the whole sentence would remove the act of recording; concision should remove duplicated meaning, not the information itself.

Sound conclusion or proposed method. Relevant supporting steps or textual evidence. Accurate conditions, checks or qualification.

3.2 "The arrival windows improved scheduling, but one visitor still waited outside." The original's "totally amazing" is informal and unsupported, while "every problem forever" contradicts the remaining wait and sign changes. The revised benefit is limited to the reported arrangement.

Sound conclusion or proposed method. Relevant supporting steps or textual evidence. Accurate conditions, checks or qualification.

3.3 No. Only eighteen worked after a permitted minor adjustment; twelve needed parts and ten were referred elsewhere. Inspected describes all forty, while repaired would falsely assign one successful outcome to all of them. Precision controls word choice.

Sound conclusion or proposed method. Relevant supporting steps or textual evidence. Accurate conditions, checks or qualification.