

HSPT Tutoring

Sessions designed to prepare students for the High School Placement Test on 6 December 2008.



Outline for the lesson

- Analogies — illustrate the speed of the test and that section *That section gives 16 second per question — moves fast!*
- Review the sections of the test (p. 23-29) *See below — identify your strengths and weaknesses.*
- Test taking strategies for HSPT (this page) *See below — Don't panic that morning — the test is supposed to be hard.*
- Algebra problems (separate handout) *Attached to this .pdf.*
- Math word problems — taxes, discounts, percents, travel, recipes, scale, averages (this page, and separate page) *See below*
- Word prefixes (separate handout) *Attached to this .pdf — learning a bunch of new words in a month is unreasonable. Word prefixes might help to decode a few more words.*
- Language section keys (this page, and separate page) *See below — they like to test some very specific language conventions. A simple review of these prepares you for a good bunch of prospective questions.*

Section	Types of questions	# and time
<i>Verbal Skills</i>	Analogies, synonyms, logic, verbal classification, and antonyms	60 questions, 16 minutes (16 seconds/question)
<i>Quantitative Skills</i>	Number series, geometric comparison, non-geometric comparison, number manipulation	52 questions, 30 minutes (34 seconds/question)
<i>Reading</i>	Comprehension, vocabulary	62 questions, 25 minutes (24 seconds/question)
<i>Mathematics Concepts</i>	Concepts, problem-solving	64 questions, 45 minutes (42 seconds/question)
<i>Language</i>	Punctuation, capitalization, usage, spelling, composition	60 questions, 25 minutes (25 seconds/question)

Test taking strategies for HSPT

- Write out problems, answers. Don't try to only think it out in your head.
- Cross out answers that are wrong. Write in the booklet and on scratch paper.
- Work quickly but fully (not rush).
- DON'T PANIC.
- Put an answer in each blank. There is no penalty for wrong answers.

HOW TO SET UP THESE WORD PROBLEMS

Taxes *Simple interest on a loan or sales tax*

Often computed as a reverse question (X paid \$10 in sales tax on an item...)

Discounts *They will provide the sale %, or the amount of the discount.*

Percents *Fairly straight-forward questions, % of a group say*

Travel *The classic math word problem: "If Bob leaves Albuquerque at Noon, traveling at 60 miles per hour, and Jim leave Abilene at 1 p.m., traveling at 80 miles per hour, at what time will they meet?**

******* The final section – Language – has a number of fairly specific language conventions that they are looking for. It helps to remember again what those things are; once you review them, you can be looking for them.**

Capitalization

Whenever you see a capitalized word, they are getting you to show whether you know which words need to be capitalized and when. Look before and after to see if those words need to be capitalized.

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Punctuation

Commas
Semi-colons
Colons
Quotation marks

Again, you need to look over those whenever you encounter one to see if it was used correctly.

Can vs. may

“Can,” when it is used in a question, invokes ability. *Bill, can you see the mountain lion?*

“May,” when it is used in a question, invokes permission. *May I use the bathroom?*

Their, they’re, there

Their = plural possessive they’re = they are contraction there = place

Too, to, two

Too = also, extra to = preposition two = 2

Apostrophes

Make sure that the apostrophe serves a purpose, to either shorten the word (had not becomes hadn’t) or indicate possession (the dog’s dish).

Whose vs. who’s

Whose = possessive of who who’s = who is

Whose car is blocking the lane? Who’s the new guy?

You’re vs. your

You’re = you are your = second person possessive

You and me vs. you and I

For example, read this sentence. *The doctor called for Sheila and I.* This sounds correct, almost more formal. The test for correctness is to drop the other person, Sheila in this case. *The doctor called for I.* That is clearly wrong. *The doctor called for Sheila and me.*

Should’ve not should of

This is based solely on sound. ‘ve sounds like “of,” when in fact the word is a contraction: should have. It shortens to should’ve

Everyone & his/her not everyone & their

This is a special case question. The word everyone is in fact singular, though it sounds plural. *Everyone should run for his or her car when the alarm sounds.*

Doubly negatives: can’t hardly

Most of us easily catch the easy ones (He didn’t do nothing all day.) The above example is challenging because “hardly” is not a full negative, in a sense. Still it is a negative and the sentence He can’t hardly breathe

Tricky plurals

Children is plural already, so possessive is children’s, not childrens’

Everyone – seems plural, but is singular.

Less vs. fewer

If you can’t count it, use less. If you can count it – like items, 1, 2, 3, ... – use fewer.

I have fewer dollar bills now that there are kids in the house.

I have less trouble with teens than with two year olds.

-est (the superlative) vs. -er (the comparative)

Use –est when the list has three or more. Your sister is the oldest of three children.

Use –er when the list has only two. You are the younger of the two people in the room.

Practice problems. Do the first step only, which is isolate the variable, the n . Check your work. Then, move on to changing the equation to be a single variable, by multiplying (or dividing) both sides by the same number. Remember our example

$6 \times 6 = 3 \times 12$ (or $36=36$) can be expressed as the same thing, but only if you do the same thing to each number $6(2) \times 6(2) = 3(2) \times 12(2)$ (or $72=72$). If I do this multiplying (or dividing) to only one side, I'm upsetting the balance and the equation can't be solved.



Section 5 also has these one variable equations in them. However, they are expressed as straight number sentences, not in words.

1/3 of what number is 4 times 5	1/4 of what number after taking away 6 leaves 4 more than 10
3 times what number adding 3 is 6 times 7	3 times what number after adding 5 leaves 7 times 8
1/6 of what number is 4 times 8	3 times what number after taking away 4 leaves 4 times 9
1/3 of what number after adding 1 is 1 times 1	1/7 of what number after adding 5 leaves 4 more than 15

Fold page along this border ▼ Quiz your knowledge of word prefixes.

Root or Prefix	<i>My guess</i>	Meaning	Examples
a, an		not, without	atheist, anarchy, anonymous apathy,
ab		away from	absent, abduction, aberrant,
ante		before	anteroom, antebellum, antediluvian
anti, ant		against, opposite	antisocial, antiseptic, antithesis,
auto		self	automobile, automatic, autograph,
bene		good, well	benefactor, beneficial, benevolent,
cede, ceed, cess		to go, to yield	succeed, proceed, precede, recede,
chron		time	chronology, chronic, chronicle
circum		around	circumnavigate
con, com		with, together	convene, compress, contemporary,
de		from, down, away	detach, deploy, derange, deodorize
dia		through, across, between	diameter, diagonal, dialogue dialect
e, ex		out, away, from	emit, expulsion, exhale, exit,
hyper		over, above	hyperactive, hypertensive,
hypo		below, less than	hypotension, hypodermic,
in, im		not	inviolate, innocuous, intractable,
inter, intro		between	international, intercept, intermission,
intra		within, into	intranet, intracranial, intravenous
mal		bad, badly	malformation, maladjusted, dismal,
mega		great, million	megaphone, megalomaniac
meta		beyond, change	metaphor, metamorphosis
micro		small	microscope, microprocessor,
mis		bad, badly	misinform, misinterpret
multi		many	multitude, multipartite, multiply,
neo		new	neologism, neonate, neoclassic
non		not	nonferrous, nonabrasive, nondescript
omni		all	omnipotent, omnivorous, omniscient

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per		through, intensive	permit, perspire, perforate, persuade
peri		around	periscope, perimeter, perigee,
poly		many	polytheist, polygon, polygamy,
re		back, again	report, realign, retract, revise, regain
retro		backwards	retrorocket, retrospect, retrogression,
sanct		holy	sanctify, sanctuary, sanction,
scrib, script		to write	inscription, prescribe, proscribe,
sect, sec		cut	intersect, transect, dissect, secant,
semi		half	semifinal, semiconscious
spect		to look	inspect, spectator, circumspect,
sub		under, below	submerge, submarine, substandard,
super, supra		above	superior, suprarenal, superscript,
syn		together	synthesis, synchronous, syndicate
tele		distance, from afar	television, telephone, telegraph,
theo, the		God	theology, theist, polytheist
therm, thermo		heat	thermal, thermometer, thermocouple,
trans		across	transoceanic, transmit, transport,
un		not	uncooked, unharmed, unintended
vita		life	vital, vitality, vitamins, revitalize

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