Study Guide for Verbal Admissions Test

General Instructions

- You have 30 minutes to complete this test.
- Solve the problem and indicate the most correct response among the answer choices provided.
Specific Instructions:

Sentence Correction

The problem presents a sentence, part or all of which is underlined. The sentence is followed by four distinct ways of phrasing the underlined words. In some of the problems, the first of the choices repeats the original phrasing, and the other three diverge from the original phrasing. Choose the most correct phrasing option, whether it be the original version or an alternative version.

This problem tests your ability to recognize grammatical correctness and effectiveness. You are expected to choose the answer that provides the clearest and the most exact interpretation of the speaker's intent, without ambiguity, awkwardness, grammatical error, or needless repetition.

Reading Comprehension

This group of problems refers to a passage of text. You are advised to read the passage and then choose the most correct response among the answer choices in each problem. All problems should be answered according to what is either stated or implied in the passage.

Critical Reasoning

Indicate the most correct response among the answer choices provided.
1. Critics of major hikes in cigarette taxes argue that such increases will spark a proliferation of illegal, black-market tobacco.

(A) increases will spark a proliferation of illegal, black-market tobacco  
(B) increases will be sparking an illegal proliferation of black-market tobacco  
(C) rising increases will spark a proliferation of growing black-market tobacco illegally  
(D) increases will spark an illegal proliferation of growing black-market tobacco

2. Between 1993 and 1997, in New York City, violent crime fell by 39% in central Harlem and by 45% in the once-terrifying South Bronx. Mayor Rudy Giuliani takes credit for this decrease, citing a “zero tolerance” policy that refuses to accept even tiny infractions of the law. By cracking down on graffiti, jaywalking, and littering, New York’s police department has created an atmosphere in which more dangerous criminals find it impossible to flourish.

Which of the following, if true, would most seriously challenge the “zero tolerance” policy?

(A) The people committing less serious crimes are the same people committing dangerous crimes.  
(B) Police officers spend more time handing out littering tickets and parking fines while areas prone to violent crime may be left vulnerable.  
(C) Making police officers personally responsible for crimes in their areas leads to increased accountability.  
(D) Between 1993 and 1997, documentation of non-violent crime increased
Questions 3-5 refer to the following.

The 1970 Clean Air Act Amendments led to the establishment of national maximum standards for atmospheric concentrations of sulfur dioxide. The legislation compromised the best interests of the environment, however, by imposing a “new source performance” standard applicable only to emissions from United States power plants built after 1971, thereby creating a strong incentive for utilities to extend the lives of old, dirty plants. In 1977, when Congress again amended the Clean Air Act, a “percent reduction” standard further discouraged the construction of more modern, cleaner plants by requiring flue gas desulfurization facilities—generally referred to as “scrubbers”—at every plant constructed after 1978.

The scrubber provision significantly reduced the advantage of low-sulfur coal as a means of compliance with the Clean Air Act and thus effectively imposed a lower emissions rate on new sources in the West than in the East. Scrubbing required western states to engage in costly cleanup of what was already clean local coal, and to bear a disproportionate share of cleanup costs since most of the new fossil-fueled capacity in the United States at that time was being constructed in western states. The legislation was viewed as a victory, however, for most Midwestern and Northeastern coal-burning utilities and their customers, since old plants generally remained lightly controlled.

It was not until 1990 that Congress ratified legislation to control sulfur dioxide emissions by a more equitable and reasonable standard. The legacy of the 1970 and 1977 Amendments, however, was evident even as late as that year. Over two-thirds of sulfur dioxide emissions by United States utilities in 1990 could be attributed to plants constructed more than twenty years earlier.

3. The primary purpose of the passage is to
(A) contrast the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1977 with their predecessors of 1970
(B) examine distinctions between the fossil fuel industry in the eastern United States and its counterpart in the western part of the country
(C) argue against the sulfur dioxide emission controls imposed by the federal government during the 1970’s
(D) discuss environmental and regional inadequacies of the 1970 and 1977 Clean Air Act Amendments
4. One can infer from the author’s use of the word “compromised” (line 2) that
(A) fossil fuel plants built prior to 1971 posed a greater environmental threat than plants built after 1971
(B) environmentalists conceded the inclusion of a “new source performance” standard in the 1970 Amendments order to win the fight for national sulfur dioxide emissions limitations
(C) flue gas “scrubbers” accomplished little in the way of sulfur dioxide reductions prior to 1977
(D) fossil fuel plants built before 1971 were subject to no sulfur dioxide controls under the 1970 Clean Air Act Amendments

5. The phrase “legacy of the 1970 and 1977 Amendments” (lines 19-20) refers to
(A) the outdated status of the Amendments by the time of their revision in 1990
(B) the bias of these Amendments against utilities in western states
(C) the role of these laws in discouraging the destruction of old, dirty fossil fuel plants
(D) the failure of these Amendments to reduce annual sulfur dioxide emissions

6. As of April of 1998, eleven American cities required companies receiving public funds to pay employees a “living wage” above the federal legal minimum wage. It is clear from this data that a person cannot afford to reside in one of these cities unless he or she earns more than the federal minimum wage.

Which of the following, if true, would most seriously weaken the conclusion drawn above?

(A) A recent study by an independent organization concluded that the federal minimum wage is adequate to the cost of living in over 95% of United States municipalities.
(B) Over one hundred thousand residents of the eleven cities in question reported a wage rate below their city’s “living wage” on their tax returns for 1998.
(C) Companies that receive public funding are, in general, less able to pay high wages than companies that are funded entirely by private capital.
(D) In the eleven cities referred to in the passage, the average cost of living is more than 50% higher than the average cost of living in the United States as a whole.

7. Phytoplankton blooms in fertilized patches of ocean can photosynthesize large quantities of carbon dioxide, thus reduce the flow of greenhouse gases to the atmosphere.

(A) can photosynthesize large quantities of carbon dioxide, thus reduce
(B) where large quantities of carbon dioxide are photosynthesized, thus reduce
(C) that photosynthesize large quantities of carbon dioxide reduces
(D) can photosynthesize large quantities of carbon dioxide and thus reduce
8. According to Professor Edward N. Wolff of New York University, the net worth of the richest 1% of United States households is twice as great as the national debt. Therefore, these wealthiest households should donate exactly one half of their net worth to the government in order to cancel the national debt.

Which of the following assumptions does the author make in his argument?

(A) It is within the authority of United States citizens to mandate the redistribution of the wealth of its most affluent households.
(B) The United States would be unlikely to drift further into debt if the current national debt were instantaneously cancelled.
(C) It is incumbent upon the wealthiest members of a nation's population to allocate their money toward the benefit of its poorest members.
(D) The United States stands to benefit from a cancellation of the national debt.

9. The Wellstone-Ramstad bill requires that a health-care insurer fund addiction treatment for their customers just as they would fund treatments of other major illnesses.

(A) that a health-care insurer fund addiction treatment for their customers just as they would fund treatments of other major illnesses
(B) a health-care insurer to fund addiction treatment for their customers just as they would fund treatment of another major illness
(C) that a health-care insurer fund addiction treatment for its customers just as it would fund treatments of other major illnesses
(D) a health-care insurer that it should fund addiction treatment for its customers just as it would fund treatment of another major illness

10. Physicist James Trefil estimates that, at any given moment, the foam from breaking waves cover between 3 and 4 percent of the earth’s surface, an area equal to the area of the entire North American continent.

(A) the foam from breaking waves cover between 3 and 4 percent of the earth’s surface, an area equal to the area
(B) the foam from breaking waves covers between 3 to 4 percent of the earth’s surface, an area equal as that
(C) the foam from breaking waves covers between 3 and 4 percent of the earth’s surface, an area equal to that
(D) between 3 to 4 percent of the earth’s surface is covered by the foam from breaking waves, equal to the area
Questions 11-12 refer to the following.

The median project manager salary at Computer Technologies is $80,000, whereas the median project manager salary at Design Engineering is $92,000. Since seniority is the only determinant of salary at both companies, a new project manager could expect to earn a higher salary at Design Engineering than he or she could expect to earn at Computer Technologies.

11. Which of the following statements, if true, would most significantly strengthen the conclusion drawn in the passage above?

(A) No project manager at Design Engineering earns less than the lowest-paid project manager at Computer Technologies.
(B) Design Engineering will pay out $331,000 more than Computer Technologies in new project manager salaries this year.
(C) The median project managing experience at Computer Technologies is 14.5 years, whereas the median at Design Engineering is 13.5 years.
(D) The median salary among first-year project managers is $2500 lower at Computer Technologies than it is at Design Engineering.

12. Which of the following statements, if true, would most seriously weaken the conclusion drawn in the passage above?

(A) The average age of a project manager at Design Engineering is 48.3 years, whereas the average age at Computer Technologies is 42.8 years.
(B) In an effort to retain experienced employees, Computer Technologies offers a bonus of $5,000 to each of its new project managers, payable over two years.
(C) The average project manager salary at Design Engineering is slightly lower than the average project manager salary at Computer Technologies.
(D) Individual salaries at each company increase at different but constant rates, so third-year project managers can earn more at Computer Technologies than at Design Engineering, but seventh-year project managers can earn more at Design Engineering than at Computer Technologies.

Verbal Study Guide
Questions 13-15 refer to the following.

Those who oppose genetically modified organisms (GMO’s) are often unthinking in their arguments. Solutions devised for one failing are attacked for making another worse. Put a gene into a plant to make it infertile, so the change is incapable of “escaping,” for instance, and you are accused of stopping seed-planting for next year. Or make a plant insect-proof, and you are accused of encouraging a more resistant strain of insect. These issues are too important, many appear to believe, for logic and science to play a part. That said, the intelligible objections to GMOs need to be addressed, not merely dismissed. The objections are that GMOs are bad for the environment and that they are bad for human health.

If genetically modified organisms are bad for the environment, it is likely to be in the same ways as normal agriculture. They may tip the balance further in farmers’ direction by allowing them to capture the maximum amount of sunlight falling on fields, and then to keep most of the resulting plant material for their own use. That means less for wildlife—and so less wildlife. Yet, although preserving wildlife is a laudable aim, it is better done explicitly, and not by expecting farmers to act against their interests. Besides, many GMOs require less in the way of pesticides and herbicides, which should bring significant environmental benefits.

As for human health, the panic in Britian obscures the fact that there is simply no good evidence that the technology used to create GMOs is damaging in any way. That does not mean that individual products will never be unhealthy. But it does mean that GMOs should be approached on a case-by-case basis. There may be scope for giving people more information through labeling; and it would help if genetically modified food offered more obvious advantages to consumers than a redder tomato. But blanket bans or moratoriums would be harmful, for even the limited range of genetically modified crops that is now available is starting to offer real and concrete advantages.

13. The author’s primary purposes is to

(A) explain why objections to genetically modified organisms need to be addressed
(B) discuss economic implications of genetically modified organisms
(C) promote widespread use of genetically modified organisms in agriculture
(D) explain why genetically modified organisms are beneficial to mankind and should be used at the expense of wildlife
14. The author discusses all of the following EXCEPT
(A) two intelligible objections to genetically modified organisms
(B) significant environmental benefits of genetically modified organisms
(C) the inconsequential nature of objections to genetically modified organisms
(D) the definite advantages to using genetically modified organisms in agriculture

15. One can infer from the author's use of the phrase "laudable aim" (line 14) that
(A) the potential impact of genetically modified organisms on wildlife should not be considered
(B) the potential impact of genetically modified organisms on wildlife should be considered
(C) wildlife should be preserved even at the cost of developments that may promote human health
(D) the preservation of wildlife will bring significant environmental benefits

16. Capitalizing on its principal advantage of insularity, Britain would remain largely aloof above the conflicts of Europe between 1509 and 1945, intervening only when hegemony threatened the Continent.
(A) would remain largely aloof above the conflicts of Europe between 1509 and 1945
(B) was remaining largely aloof from the conflicts of Europe between 1509 and 1945
(C) remained aloof largely above Europe's conflicts between 1509 and 1945
(D) remained largely aloof from the conflicts of Europe between 1509 and 1945]

17. Although the Japanese are generally credited with perfecting the anagama kiln, the original design actually was brought to Japan from Korea, perhaps as early as the fifth century.
(A) was brought to Japan from Korea, perhaps as early as the fifth century
(B) having been brought to Japan as soon as the fifth century, it was actually Korean
(C) having brought it to them perhaps as soon as the fifth century from Korea
(D) had been brought to Japan perhaps as early as the fifth century from Korea
18. Taiwan continues to compete fiercely with China in its bid for official recognition by African governments, offering low-interest loans and medical assistance to depressed economies, and even having authorized personal cash payments to African national leaders.

(A) even having authorized
(B) it authorized even
(C) even authorizing
(D) it had even authorized

19. Dr. Stanley Prusiner has suggested that brain disorders (such as "mad cow disease") are caused by proteins called prions, which when malformed cause disease. Misshapen prions can transmit disease from one organism to another in the same way viruses do. Consistent with Prusiner's hypothesis is the idea that the process by which a malformed prion protein subverts a healthy one is so finely tuned that each malformation is copied faithfully along the chain of infection.

According to the information presented above, one can conclude which of the following?

(A) that prions exist, only, as misshapen proteins
(B) that all brain disorders are caused by misshapen proteins
(C) that brain disorders may be caused and transmitted through the replication of malformed prion proteins
(D) that misshapen proteins are transmitted from organism to organism through casual contact

20. Of all the vestiges of nineteenth century colonialism in the modern world, the long-standing acquiescence of New Caledonia to French rule is perhaps the more difficult for comprehension.

(A) is perhaps the more difficult for comprehension
(B) is probably the most difficult to comprehend
(C) is perhaps the most difficult for comprehension
(D) is probably the more difficult to comprehend

21. Many in Western societies believes that censorship in the Muslim world will be endemic and severe, but that censorship in the West can be just as prevalent an entity, albeit more polished and decentralized.

(A) believes that censorship in the Muslim world will be endemic and severe, but that
(B) believes that censorship in the Muslim world is endemic but severe, and
(C) believe that censorship in the Muslim world will be endemic and severe, but that
(D) believe that censorship in the Muslim world is endemic and severe, but
22. As of March of 1998, according to the National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse, 21% of violent offenders in state prisons committed their crimes under the influence of alcohol alone. By contrast, only 3% of violent offenders committed their crimes under the influence of crack cocaine alone. To reduce violent crime, therefore, the government should redirect the money it devotes to fighting crack cocaine consumption, and should apply it to reducing alcohol consumption instead.

Which of the following, if true, would most seriously weaken the conclusion provided in the passage above?

(A) Alcohol consumption is more socially acceptable than crack cocaine consumption, so a campaign against alcohol consumption would be less effective, in terms of dollars spent per capita, than a campaign against crack cocaine consumption.

(B) An additional 8% of violent offenders who were not under the influence of any substance at the time of their offenses were imprisoned for crimes relating to the crack cocaine trade.

(C) Studies indicate that a greater number of violent crimes are prevented as a result of government campaigns against crack cocaine consumption than are prevented as a result of campaigns against alcohol consumption.

(D) Alcoholics are less likely to commit violent crimes than are crack cocaine addicts.

- END OF TEST -
KGSM Verbal Study Guide Answers (22 problems)

Explanations

Question 1 (Sentence Correction)

Choice (A) is correct because the sentence is grammatical and idiomatic as it is. In choice (B) will be sparking is the future progressive form of the verb, in which the “be” and the suffix “ing” indicate continuation of an action that has already begun, action not indicated in the first part of the sentence; the verbs argue and spark should agree in tense. In choice (C) rising and increases are redundant, as are proliferation and growing. Choice (D) contains combinations of the errors in verb tense parallelism and redundancy present in choices (B) and (C). Also, illegal is an adjective that modifies the tobacco; if it were supposed to modify growing, it would be correct in its adverbial form, illegally.

Question 2 (Critical Reasoning)

Choice (B) is correct because it significantly more police attention were give to petty offenses then high crime areas might receive less attention. Choice (A) strengthens the policy because if criminals were punished for non-violent crimes they might not be free to commit more serious offenses. Choice (C) strengthens the policy because making officers accountable might increase the number of arrests. Choice (D) suggests that increased documentation means more arrests were made for non-violent crimes.

Question 3 (Reading Comprehension)

Primary purpose is another term for main idea, in which case the correct answer, choice (D), would need to sound like a summary, a short, comprehensive description of the passage’s main idea. Choices (A) and (B) focus on details in the passage, and choice (C) contains information that is not in the passage.

Question 4 (Reading Comprehension)

It compromised the environment because it encouraged the use of old plants (those built before 1971) rather than the building of new plants because the older plants had fewer restrictions; choice (A) is the best choice. Choice (B) is incorrect because environmentalists are not even mentioned in the passage. Choice (C) is incorrect because, according to the passage, scrubbers were not used before 1977. Choice (D) is incorrect because the passage indicates that plants built before 1971 were subject to less stringent sulfur dioxide standards.
Question 5 (Reading Comprehension)

A legacy is something received from the past; according to the passage, the laws discouraged the production of new, cleaner plants by not enforcing the standards on the old plants; therefore, choice (C) is correct. In choice (A) outdated is not the same as a legacy. In choice (B) the Amendment's bias toward the eastern states only existed in the 1977 Amendment, not that of 1970. Regarding choice (D), the passage does not state that sulfur dioxide emissions were not reduced. The percent reduction standard only affected plants built after 1978 and had nothing to do with the 1970 Amendment.

Question 6 (Critical Reasoning)

The point of the passage is that residents need to make more than the federal legal minimum wage in order to afford to reside in one of the 11 cities. If over 100,000 residents of these cities report a wage rate below their city's living wage then the argument is weakened; choice (A) would most seriously weaken the conclusion. Choices (B) and (D) contain irrelevant information, and choice (C) strengthens the argument.

Question 7 (Sentence Correction)

Choice (D) is correct because blooms can photosynthesize . . . and thus reduce shows the actions are parallel and that one leads to the other. In choice (A) reduce would need to be reducing without the use of the conjunction and. Choice (B) is in the passive voice, and it contains the incorrect form of reduce for its construction. Choice (C) is incorrect because it says the fertilized patches of ocean . . . photosynthesize, which is not possible.

Question 8 (Critical Reasoning)

According to the passage, the richest 1% of United States households are worth, collectively, an amount equal to twice the sum of the national debt, and if these households would contribute half of their net worth the national debt would be canceled. The assumption made herein is that the United States stands to benefit from a cancellation of the national debt, choice (D). There is no indication that canceling the debt would prevent further debt, as indicated by choice (B). Choice (A) is not appropriate because nothing in the passage indicates that citizens would be making such decisions. In choice (C) the focus is on the financial status of the people and not on the national debt.
Question 9 (Sentence Correction)

This sentence and choices (A) and (B) all contain errors in pronoun agreement; an insurer is singular and its pronouns, their and they, are plural. A noun and a pronoun or a pronoun and its antecedents should agree in number. Choice (D) is awkward and not idiomatic. Choice (C) is the grammatically correct version.

Question 10 (Sentence Correction)

Choice (A) contains an error in subject/verb agreement in the foam...cover. In choice (B), an area as that is awkward and something is equal to something else, as in the correct choice, choice (C), where the subject and verb also agree in number, the foam...covers. In choice (D) the phrase at the end of the sentence modifies “3 to 4 percent of the earth’s surface” and, therefore, needs to be as close as possible to the word “surface.”

Question 11 (Critical Reasoning)

Choice (D) is the only choice that compares new project managers at Computer Technologies to new project managers at Design Engineering, and the salary details contained therein strengthen the conclusion. Choice (A) supports the conclusion but does not strengthen it significantly, and (C) relates to the distribution of project manager experience, and no information in the passage pertains to this distribution. Choice (B) offers no indication of how many new project managers will be at either corporation.

Question 12 (Critical Reasoning)

Choice (A) concerns project managers’ ages, and according to the passage seniority is the only determining factor for salary; age does not necessarily correlate to experience. Regarding choice (B), there is no indication in the text as to the difference between starting salaries at the two companies, so even considering the signing bonus the Computer Technologies salary could still be lower. Since the distribution of the managers’ seniority is not given, information regarding average salary would not affect the conclusion; this eliminates choice (C). Choice (D) most seriously weakens the conclusion because if the third-year salary at one company is lower, the first-year salary has to be lower as well.
Question 13 (Reading Comprehension)

Choice (A) most accurately summarizes the purpose of this excerpt. Choice (B) is incorrect because the passage contains no information about possible economic implications. Choice (C) is incorrect because the passage states that GMOs should be approached, individually, on a case by case basis. Choice (D) does not accurately represent the author’s statements about preserving wildlife.

Question 14 (Reading Comprehension)

Choice (D) is the correct answer because its statement is the only one not discussed in the passage.

Question 15 (Reading Comprehension)

Since a laudable aim would a goal that would be appealing but not necessary, choice (B) most accurately represents the inference; choice (A) states the opposite. Choice (C) represents an extreme interpretation, and choice (D) does not concern the goal.

Question 16 (Sentence Correction)

Since aloof means removed or distance in interest, choice (D) is correct, containing prepositions that reflect this meaning and simple past verb tense; neither the conditional verb tense would remain nor the past progressive verb tense was remaining is appropriate for a statement about an action that happened and was finished in the past. Choice (C) is not as idiomatic as choice (D) and the preposition above, although seemingly consistent with aloof is not as representative in its meaning.

Question 17 (Sentence Correction)

Choice (B) contains errors in verb tense and punctuation (it was actually Korean is an independent clause and should stand on its own, separated from the rest of the text by a period or a semicolon). Choice (C) is awkward because there is no way of knowing who brought it to them, and having and as soon as are incongruous. In choice (D) the verb form had been brought (past perfect) implies that the bringing of the kiln happened before something else happened in the same specific period of time, which is not indicated in the passage. Choice (A) is correct with its past-tense verb.
Question 18 (Sentence Correction)

Choice (C) is the best choice because authorizing is the verb form parallel to the sentence’s other main verb, offering. A sentence having verbs that are not parallel, as would be the case with choices (A) and (B), and (D), is not as idiomatic and easy to understand as one with parallel verbs. Use of non-parallel verb forms creates additional errors in modifiers.

Question 19 (Critical Reasoning)

Choice (C) is the correct answer because it contains information from the passage. Choice (A) is incorrect because prion proteins can exist without being misshapen. Choice (B) is incorrect because the passage mentions no generalization from misshapen prions to all brain disorders. Casual contact is not mentioned as a means of transmitting the malformed prion proteins.

Question 20 (Sentence Correction)

Choice (B) is correct because this construction involves positives, comparatives, and superlatives; the phrase Of all indicates the need for the superlative most because it calls for comparing many (three or more) vestiges. More indicates a comparison between only two items, as seen in choices (A) and (D). Choice (C) contains an idiom error in the use of for comprehension instead of the more accepted and less awkward to comprehend.

Question 21 (Sentence Correction)

The choices here are limited to (C) and (D) because the sentence’s subject Many (Many people is what is implied) and its verb believe need to agree—Many and believes do not agree in choices (A) and (B). Choice (C) is not correct because believe and can be are in the present tense and will be is in the future perfect tense. Choice (D) is correct because the subject and main verb agree and the conjunction but is placed to show the opposing relationship between censorship in the Muslim world and censorship in the West.

Question 22 (Critical Reasoning)

Choices (A) and (D) both weaken the conclusion but not as seriously as the correct choice, (C), which is related directly to the goal of reducing violent crime. Choice (B) is incorrect because even when increasing the percentage of violent offenders using crack by 8%, the total percentage of offenders is still less than 21% (the percent of violent crimes related to alcohol use).
Admission Test
Verbal A

Directions: There are 22 questions on this section of the test which must be answered in 30 minutes. Work quickly. Please do not make any marks in the test booklet. You will be notified when your testing time has expired. You are not penalized for wrong answers, so answer as many questions as possible.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
A B C D A B C D A B C D
11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20
A B C D A B C D A B C D
21 22
A B C D

Score
_____ acceptable
_____ conditional
_____ not acceptable

Test Administrator ___________________________
Date ___________________________

Verified by ___________________________
Date ___________________________

Comments ___________________________