

Name _____
Please print your last name first, then print your first name.

Formal Language Usage Pretest

Learning to write like a lawyer is a process that begins in the University of Memphis School of Law first-year course entitled *Legal Methods* and extends throughout the years of law school and into the years of practice. The members of the Legal Methods faculty expect you to use formal language correctly and concisely. The Writing Center staff works exclusively with students enrolled in Legal Methods. Our mission is to help you refine and perfect your use of formal language as you write for your professors. The purpose of this pretest is to help you self-assess your strengths using formal language effectively. Completing the *Formal Language Usage Pretest* is a requirement of Legal Methods. Failing to complete the *Formal Language Usage Pretest* or turning in work that does not represent your best effort may result in the loss of points used to calculate your grade for Legal Methods. Your score on this pretest will not affect your Legal Methods grade.

Directions:

Please print the *Formal Language Usage Pretest*. Print your name legibly on the line above. Please use a pen or pencil to mark your selection or selections for each question. Please do not use reference materials as you answer the questions. The purpose of this pretest is to help you self-assess your current skills in using formal language correctly.

Your completed hard copy is due at 9:00 a.m. on the first day of Orientation, August 13, 2018. I will place collection boxes at the registration table so that you can turn it in. Your pretest will be collected and reviewed. During the Orientation session entitled *Introduction to Using Formal Language Effectively*, I will return your completed pretest to you and teach about using language correctly, highlighting the expectations the Legal Methods faculty members hold for your use of the written word. Thank you.

—Dr. Marilyn Dunham Smith, Director of the Writing Center

1. Select the sentences that include correctly punctuated singular possessive nouns.
 - The defendant's car was red.
 - The witness's testimony was brief.
 - The witness's statement was informative.
 - The witness' statement was informative.
2. Select the sentences that include correctly punctuated plural possessive nouns.
 - The jury listened to the witnesses's statements.
 - The jury listened to the witnesses' statements.
 - The memoranda's author was Judge Rosenthal.
 - The memorandas' author was Judge Rosenthal.
3. Select the sentence correctly indicating that two people each possess something individually.
 - Frodo and Bilbo's quest was epic.
 - Frodo's and Bilbo's quest was epic.
4. Select the sentence correctly indicating that two individuals jointly possess something.
 - Harry's and Ron's plan was to meet Hermione at midnight.
 - Harry and Ron's plan was to meet Hermione at midnight.

5. Select the grammatically correct sentence.
 - We are thrilled about Lin-Manuel Miranda’s winning the 2015 MacArthur Foundation Award.
 - We are thrilled about Lin-Manuel Miranda winning the 2015 MacArthur Foundation Award.
6. Select the sentence correctly demonstrating possession.
 - Yours is the only company to which I have written a letter of application.
 - Your’s is the only company to which I have written a letter of application.
7. Select the sentence correctly demonstrating possession.
 - Han Solo, who’s *Millennium Falcon* ran the Kessel Run in less than twelve parsecs, was a gifted pilot.
 - Han Solo, whose *Millennium Falcon* ran the Kessel Run in less than twelve parsecs, was a gifted pilot.
8. Select the correctly punctuated sentence. Assume that a proper citation would follow each sentence.

Original Text: As we did decades ago, we will travel bravely to the moon again. —Senator Culley

 - “We will travel bravely to the moon again.”
 - “[W]e will travel bravely to the moon again.”
 - “. . . we will travel bravely to the moon again.”
9. Select the correctly punctuated sentence. Assume that a proper citation would follow each sentence.

Original Text: The defendant used the fork lift to commit the crime. —Officer McGinnis

 - Officer McGinnis confirmed the defendant did “use[] the fork lift to commit the crime.”
 - Officer McGinnis confirmed the defendant did “use the fork lift to commit the crime.”
10. Select the correctly punctuated sentence.
 - All team members need these pieces of equipment (1) heavy boots, (2) raingear, (3) leather work gloves, and (4) a backpack.
 - All team members need these pieces of equipment: (1) heavy boots, (2) raingear, (3) leather work gloves, and (4) a backpack.
11. Select the correctly punctuated sentence or sentences.
 - The lawyer collected her books, notes, pens, and laptop.
 - The lawyer collected her books, notes, pens and laptop.
12. Select the correctly punctuated sentence.
 - Sheldon read Thomas Kuhn’s *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* and James Watson’s *The Double Helix* when he was nine.
 - Sheldon read Thomas Kuhn’s *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, and James Watson’s *The Double Helix* when he was nine.
13. Select the correctly punctuated sentence.
 - Captain Ahab battled the white whale but was defeated by two beasts: Moby Dick and revenge.
 - Captain Ahab battled the white whale, but was defeated by two beasts: Moby Dick and revenge.
14. Select the correctly punctuated sentence.
 - Indiana Jones recovered the idol from his dead guide, and escaped the cave by outrunning the giant bolder.
 - Indiana Jones recovered the idol from his dead guide and escaped the cave by outrunning the giant bolder.

15. Select the correctly punctuated sentence.
 - MacGyver used not only a broken zipper but also a paper clip to repair the jeep.
 - MacGyver used not only a broken zipper, but also a paper clip to repair the jeep.
16. Select the correctly punctuated sentence.
 - Carson read *The Federalist Papers* and Eli read Alexis de Tocqueville's *Democracy in America*.
 - Carson read *The Federalist Papers*, and Eli read Alexis de Tocqueville's *Democracy in America*.
17. Select the correctly punctuated sentence.
 - Liam read Homer's *Odyssey*, but he did not read Homer's *Iliad*.
 - Liam read Homer's *Odyssey* but he did not read Homer's *Iliad*.
18. Select the correctly punctuated sentence or sentences.
 - Therefore, the court holds in favor of the plaintiff.
 - Therefore the court holds in favor of the plaintiff.
19. Select the correctly punctuated sentence.
 - Because life moves pretty fast, Ferris took the day off to slow down and look around.
 - Because life moves pretty fast Ferris took the day off to slow down and look around.
20. Select the correctly punctuated sentence.
 - Watney who did not like Commander Lewis's taste in music used wit and skill to survive over a year on Mars.
 - Watney, who did not like Commander Lewis's taste in music, used wit and skill to survive over a year on Mars.
21. Select the correctly punctuated sentence.
 - The festival which had its largest attendance this year is held annually on the river bank.
 - The festival, which had its largest attendance this year, is held annually on the river bank.
22. Select the correctly punctuated sentence.
 - Drivers, with a permit, may park in the garage.
 - Drivers with a permit may park in the garage.
23. Select the correctly punctuated sentence.
 - The class that I wanted to take is no longer available.
 - The class, that I wanted to take, is no longer available.
24. Select the correctly punctuated sentence.
 - Professor Merwin missed his train, because he stayed at school to answer a student's question.
 - Professor Merwin missed his train because he stayed at school to answer a student's question.
25. Select any sentence correctly displaying the presentation of a date for formal writing.
 - I will graduate on Saturday May 16th, 2021.
 - I will graduate on Saturday, May 16th, 2021.
 - I will graduate on Saturday, May 16, 2021 at the Convention Center.
 - I will graduate on Saturday, May 16, 2021, at the Convention Center.

26. Select the correctly punctuated sentence. Assume that a proper citation would follow each sentence.
Original Text: As we did decades ago, we will travel bravely to the moon again. —Senator Culley
- “As we did decades ago, we will travel bravely to the moon”
 - “As we did decades ago, we will travel bravely to the moon . . .”
27. Select the correctly punctuated sentence.
- The manager appreciated the well-written report.
 - The manager appreciated the well written report.
 - The manager appreciated the report that was well-written.
28. Select the correctly punctuated sentence.
- While Stark casually calls the defense companies “the Big Six,” the nickname was not widely used before 2017.
 - While Stark casually calls the defense companies “the Big Six”, the nickname was not widely used before 2017.
29. Select the correctly punctuated sentence.
- Recently many in the field have adopted Stark’s nickname of “the Big Six”; in fact, the nickname appeared on the brochure at a 2018 conference for defense contractors.
 - Recently many in the field have adopted Stark’s nickname of “the Big Six;” in fact, the nickname appeared on the brochure at a 2018 conference for defense contractors.
30. Select the correctly punctuated sentence.
- Marty knew the DeLorean’s electrical flux capacitor was depleted, however he did not know that it required 1.21 gigawatts to operate or that a lightning bolt could generate the necessary power.
 - Marty knew the DeLorean’s electrical flux capacitor was depleted; however, he did not know that it required 1.21 gigawatts to operate or that a lightning bolt could generate the necessary power.
31. Select the sentence with the correctly presented adjective.
- The United States Attorney argued the case.
 - The US Attorney argued the case.
 - The U.S. Attorney argued the case.
32. Select the sentence with the correctly presented time.
- Nick Park’s film featuring Wallace and Gromit begins at 7:00 P.M.
 - Nick Park’s film featuring Wallace and Gromit begins at 7:00 p.m.
 - Nick Park’s film featuring Wallace and Gromit begins at 7:00 o’clock p.m. in the evening.
33. Select the sentence written in active voice.
- The treasure was stolen by Captain Jack Sparrow.
 - Captain Jack Sparrow stole the treasure.
34. Select the sentence employing the proper personal pronoun.
- The court in Hendricks held the defendant did not control the guitar. It ruled the defendant did not control the guitar because the guitar was on loan to another musician and was not in the defendant’s possession.
 - The court in Hendricks held the defendant did not control the guitar. They ruled the defendant did not control the guitar because the guitar was on loan to another musician and was not in the defendant’s possession.

35. Select the correctly worded sentence.
- Between you and I, the play was terrible.
 - Between you and me, the play was terrible.
36. Select the correctly worded sentence.
- The student that organized the charity's fundraiser was Jayden.
 - The student who organized the charity's fundraiser was Jayden.
37. Select the correctly worded sentence.
- He is whom we admire.
 - He is who we admire.
38. Select the correctly worded sentence.
- If I were rich, I would travel the world.
 - If I was rich, I would travel the world.
39. Select the most effectively worded sentence.
- In order to save the universe, the Avengers needed to work together.
 - To save the universe, the Avengers needed to work together.
40. Select the most effectively worded sentence.
- Reporters Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein made an investigation into the Watergate burglary.
 - Reporters Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein investigated the Watergate burglary.
41. Select the most effectively worded sentence.
- There are three reasons why I chose the University of Memphis School of Law.
 - I chose the University of Memphis School of Law for three reasons.
42. Select the correctly worded sentence.
- I would rather read fifty pages then write fifty pages.
 - I would rather read fifty pages than write fifty pages.
43. Select the correctly worded sentence.
- Since you have additional homework to complete, the pretest ends with this question.
 - Because you have additional homework to complete, the pretest ends with this question.