



# **The Ultimate One Minute Explanations to OG12 Sentence Correction Questions**

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## **Introduction**

There is unanimous agreement among students and teachers that the Official Guide (OG) to the GMAT, 12<sup>th</sup> edition has the best collection of practice questions for the GMAT. Specifically with reference to the Sentence Correction section, there is a lot a student can learn by going through the official explanations given in the OG. However, one grouse that a lot of students have is that the OG explanations tend to be too lengthy and technical, at times almost impossible to understand for the average student. The students complain that there is no way they can arrive at the correct answer in less than a minute if they were to follow the methodology described in the OG.

Given this background, we decided to ask the subject matter experts at Aristotle Prep that if they were to attempt each of the questions in the OG 12 Sentence Correction section, how they would go about doing the same. What are the things that they would notice in each sentence and how would they eliminate options. The final objective was to arrive at the answer in less than a minute. This book is a compilation of their responses to this question. It is not an attempt to provide better explanations than the Official Guide but more practical and faster explanations. In a lot of the questions, we won't even be bothering with identifying all the errors. If we can get to the answer by identifying just one or two errors that's good enough.

However, we haven't just limited ourselves to providing you these one-minute explanations from our experts. We realise that an average student or even an above-average one might not be able to spot errors as quickly and effectively as the experts at Aristotle Prep who have years of experience in the subject matter. In fact students regularly complain that they are not able to identify the errors in a sentence or that they aren't sure what to look for in a sentence.

So, in addition to providing you with one-minute explanations to each question, we decided to come up with an additional structured method of approaching Sentence Correction questions, a method that could be applied to every Sentence Correction question irrespective of the error type and difficulty level being tested. We've called this the Aristotle Multiple-Split Method.

### **The Aristotle Multiple-Split Method**

As the name suggests, the Aristotle Multiple-Split Method of approaching Sentence Correction questions involves doing several splits one after the other in a fixed sequence.

**Here is the order of the splits:**

- 1) **Idiom Split** – In a lot of the questions, if you can identify the correct idiom you can immediately arrive at the correct answer or at least narrow down your choices to two options. So the first step is to always look for idioms in the underlined part of the sentence.
- 2) **First-word Split** - Try splitting and grouping the options on the basis of the first word of every option. In case the first word is the same for all the options you can consider the first two or three words together.
- 3) **Last-word Split** – Similar to the first-word split but use the last word of every option instead of the first. Again in case the last word is the same for all the options you can consider the last two or three words together.
- 4) **Pronoun Split** – Split the options on the basis of pronouns in the underlined part
- 5) **Verb Split** - Split the options on the basis of verbs in the underlined part
- 6) Check the remaining options for Meaning

In most of the questions you will be able to arrive at the answer well before you reach the verb-split stage, but in some tricky ones you might still have two or more options left after you have done this last split. In such cases the last step is always to check the remaining options for meaning. The option that conveys the meaning most clearly and using the least number of words will be the correct answer. At this stage you might have to make use of vague and subjective terms such as 'awkward wording' and 'not sounding correct' to eliminate options. This is fine because these will be high-difficulty questions and the difference between or among options will be very subtle.

It might appear that doing so many splits would take a lot of time but, in fact, it would only take around 10-15 seconds per split and in a lot of the questions you will arrive at the answer in two or three splits itself. The questions on which you require all the five splits and also the last step of checking for the meanings will most likely be high-difficulty ones so it makes sense to spend a little extra time on them anyway.

The beauty of the Aristotle Multiple-Split Method lies in the fact that it provides students with a structured method of approaching sentence correction questions, irrespective of the error type being tested or the difficulty level of the questions. Instead of reading a question and hoping that you will be able to spot the error, the Aristotle multiple-split method makes you actively look for specific errors and eliminate options on the basis of these. It makes a student feel more in control of the question, even in the case of difficult questions.

So to sum it up, in this book for each question you will have two separate explanations – a One-minute explanation and an explanation using the Aristotle Multiple-Split Method. There will of course be some overlap between the two methods but the approach will be entirely different for the two. We again reiterate that the OG has the best explanations and we strongly recommend that you go through them. Use this book as a supplement to know how a question can be attempted faster and without bothering too much with the technical nitty-gritty's of the question.

We hope you find this book useful in your prep. As always, we look forward to your feedback on how we could make this book better. Please mail us your feedback on [feedback@aristotleprep.com](mailto:feedback@aristotleprep.com)

All the best!

Team Aristotle

**OG Q1) The One-minute Method**

The moment you see a pronoun in a sentence, do a split using this pronoun. The subject is Glass House Mountains so the pronoun has to be plural.

- a. **A & E** go out because of the use of singular 'its' & 'it' respectively
- b. The usage of 'and' in **B** distorts the cause-effect relationship in the sentence.
- c. Replacing option C in the original sentence makes no sense. Also, whatever comes after the comma should ideally refer to James Cook, so 'who' works perfectly. **Hence D is correct.**

**The Aristotle Multiple-Split Method**

**Idiom Split** – No Idioms underlined

**First word Split:**

~~A – by whom~~

~~B – by whom~~

C – naming

D – who

E – who

Eliminate 'by whom' because it's passive, so A and B are out

**Last word Split:**

C – their

D – their

E – their

Does not help because all the options have 'their' at the end

**Pronoun Split:**

C – them

D – them

~~E – it~~

Eliminate E, since the noun is plural 'mountains' so we require a plural pronoun 'them'

**Verb Split:**

C- no verb (*'naming' is a participle and not a verb*)

D- named

The usage of the participle 'naming' in C makes no sense. We obviously require a verb in the underlined part.

**Hence D is the best answer.**

- A - Passive
- B - Passive
- C - Meaning
- D - OA**
- E - Pronoun

**Difficulty Level - Low**

## OG Q2) **The One-minute Method**

The split, using the first word of the underlined part, gives us both, singular and plural verbs, and past and present tenses. Since the subject is singular 'surge', the verb also has to be singular. To get an idea of the correct verb tense always read the part of the sentence that is **not underlined**. The sentence states that 'some economists say'; 'say' is in the present tense, so the first part of the sentence should also be in some form of the present tense.

- A** is out because of the plural 'have'
- In **B, C & E**, 'raised' and 'had raised' are in the past tense. Also avoid 'being'.
- 'Has raised' is in the present perfect tense, hence **D is the correct answer**.

## **The Aristotle Multiple-Split Method**

**Idiom Split** – No Idioms underlined

**First word Split:**

~~A—have~~

~~B—raised~~

~~C—had~~

D - has

~~E—raised~~

Some options start with the past tense and some with the present tense. To figure out which tense we need to go with, read the part of the sentence that is not underlined. The line 'many economists say' tells you that we need a verb in the present tense since 'say' is in the present tense. Hence eliminate B, C, and E.

But now what do we see – A has the plural 'have' whereas D has the singular 'has' - a classic case of subject-verb agreement. Since the subject is the singular 'surge', the verb also has to be singular, i.e. 'has'

**Hence D is the best answer.**

A – Subject verb agreement

B – Tense

C – Tense

**D – OA**

E - Tense

**Difficulty Level - Low**

### OG Q3) **The One-minute Method**

Doing a split using the first/last words of the sentence doesn't prove to be of much help since none of the options can be eliminated. The next best thing is to go through each option quickly and figure out if it can be eliminated for one reason or the other. The idea is to narrow down our choice to two or three options.

- a. At first glance **B** can be eliminated because of the use of the past perfect tense 'had'. Remember, you only use the past perfect tense if you already have a simple past tense in the sentence. **C** can also be eliminated because the last part 'to begin seriously to study' sounds awkward because of the use of several infinitives; the other options definitely appear better than this.
- b. Taking a second look at the remaining three options, **A** can be eliminated because of the placement of the phrase 'until almost 1900'. You might not be sure of what exactly the problem is with **A** but you are fairly certain that the other two options definitely appear better than this. This kind of thinking is ok and you should move to the remaining two options. No points for figuring out what exactly is wrong with a particular option and wasting your time.
- c. Between D & E you need to be careful. If you read through these options very quickly, you might end up eliminating E because it uses the '-ing' form in 'studying'. However, on deeper scrutiny you will realize that the phrase 'almost until' in D has no meaning; it needs to be the other way around. **Hence E is the correct answer.**

### **The Aristotle Multiple-Split Method**

**Idiom Split** – No idioms underlined

**First word Split:**

~~A—until~~

~~B—until~~

C – not

D - it

E - it

The usage of 'until' is confusing because it is not clear whether 'until almost 1900' refers to the 'poets professing something' or whether it refers to 'critics seriously studying something'. Hence eliminate A and B.

**Last word Split:**

C - study

D - study

E - studying

A last word split doesn't help much because both the options (study and studying) can be correct depending on the sentence construction

**Pronoun Split:**

C - no pronoun

D - it

E - it

Even a pronoun split does not help. Remember that although D and E both have the pronoun 'it', they cannot be eliminated because 'it' is not referring to any particular noun; rather 'it' is used as a placeholder or a dummy pronoun in this sentence

**Verb Split:**

C - were to begin

D - began

E - began

Even though 'began' sounds better than 'were to begin' you can't come up with a specific reason to eliminate C, so hold it.

Phew, five splits and only two options have been eliminated so far. By now you should've realised that you are tackling a high difficulty question. You should have spent around 1.5 minutes so far on this question so give yourself another 1-1.5 minutes at the most to come up with the answer, else mark any option and move on.

**Check the remaining options for Meaning**

The best thing to do now is to quickly go through the remaining three options and find out the best one from amongst them. We can even use vague, subjective reasons (such as a sentence not sounding right) to eliminate now.

- a) C can be eliminated because the last part 'to begin seriously to study' sounds awkward; the other options definitely sound better than this.
- b) Between D & E you need to be careful. If you read through these options very quickly, you might end up eliminating E because it uses the '-ing' form in 'studying'. However, on deeper scrutiny you will realize that the phrase 'almost until' in D has no meaning; it needs to be the other way around - until almost.

**Hence E is the best answer.**

A – Awkward  
B – Tense  
C – Awkward  
D – Meaning  
**E - OA**

**Difficulty Level - High**

**OG Q4) The One-minute Method**

A split using the first words does not prove to be of much help but a split using the last word proves useful – as vs than. Remember, with more/less you always use a 'than'.

- a. Options A & B are out because of the use of 'as' instead of 'than' at the end
- b. If you can't spot a difference amongst the remaining three options, look for verbs and pronouns. In this case two of the options (C & D) use the present tense 'is' while one uses the past tense 'was'. Since the sentence is speaking about a past event, the use of the present tense is incorrect. **Hence E is the correct answer.**
- c. Alternatively, had you spotted the verb tense problem at the beginning itself, you could have simply checked the verbs in the five options and immediately arrived at the answer E without even bothering with the remaining parts of the other four options.

**The Aristotle Multiple-Split Method****Idiom Split:**

~~A - more.....as~~

~~B - more.....as~~

C - more.....than

D - more.....than

E - more.....than

Eliminate A and B because the correct idiom is 'more.....than'

**First word Split:**

C - perhaps

D - maybe

E - perhaps

Doesn't help because 'perhaps' and 'maybe' can be used interchangeably.

**Last word Split:**

C - than

D - than

E - than

Doesn't help because all the options are the same

**Pronoun Split:**

C - it

D - it

E - no pronoun

C and D look needlessly long and also have the ambiguous pronoun 'it' so ideally E should be the correct answer. If you are still unsure, do a verb split.

**Verb Split:**~~C - is~~~~D - is~~

E - was

Since the sentence is talking about a past event, the verb needs to be in the past tense.

**Hence E is the best answer.**

A - Idiom

B - Idiom

C - Tense

D - Tense

**E - OA****Difficulty Level - Low**

*Notice that even though we needed several steps to arrive at the correct answer we have put this question in the 'Low difficulty' category. This is because, unlike the previous question, we did not have to resort to vague and subjective considerations (such as awkward sounding options) to arrive at the correct answer. For all that you know you could have arrived at the correct answer immediately upon reading the question had you noticed the verb split.*

**OG Q5) The One-Minute Method**

Doing a split using the first words gives us some singular (ranks, has) and some plural verbs (rank, are, have). The subject is the singular 'diabetes' because of the usage of the additive phrase 'together with'.

- a. Singular subject 'diabetes' needs a singular verb. Hence options B, D, and E go out.
- b. Between A & C, C is unnecessarily wordy. Also 'only' is used as an adjective on the GMAT so it should come closer to the noun 'heart disease' and not to the verb 'surpassing'. **Hence A is the correct answer.**

**The Aristotle Multiple-Split Method****Idiom Split :**

A – ranks as

B – rank as

~~C – rank of~~

D – no idiom

E – ranked as

The correct idiom is 'rank as' so eliminate C.

**First word Split:**

A - ranks

~~B – rank~~

~~D – are~~

~~E – have~~

A is singular whereas B, D, and E are plural. Since the subject is the singular 'Diabetes', the verb also needs to be singular. *(Do not be confused into thinking that the subject is plural because of the usage of the additive phrase 'together with'. For more on additives, go through the Sub-verb agreement section in the SC Grail)*

**Hence A is the best answer.**

**A – OA**

B – Subject-verb agreement

C – Idiom

D – Subject-verb agreement

E – Subject-verb agreement

**Difficulty Level – Low**

**OG Q6) The One-Minute Method**

Doing a split using the first words gives us two possibilities – due to and because of. We know that due to can only be used to replace caused by (which does not make sense in the context of this sentence), so we must go with because of.

- a. A & B are out because of the use of 'due to'
- b. The usage of the phrase 'within them' in C sounds ambiguous and you are tempted to remove this option, until you realize that all the three options make use of this phrase. So we need to look for something else.
- c. You can approach the remaining three options in two ways from here:
  - i. **Approach 1** – If you have understood the meaning of the sentence correctly, you might realize that the phrases 'because tourists were exhaling moisture' and 'because of moisture' don't logically follow from the earlier part of the sentence, whereas E does.
  - ii. **Approach 2** – If the above reasoning looks too vague, do a split using the last words – crystallize and crystallizing. Don't blindly eliminate 'crystallizing' because of the '-ing'. Read the part that is not underlined – it says 'fungus was growing' so you need to go with crystallizing to parallel growing. **Hence E is the correct answer.**

**The Aristotle Multiple-Split Method**

**Idiom Split** – No Idiom

**First word Split:**

~~A—due to~~

~~B—due to~~

C – because of

D – because of

E – because of

Since 'due to' can only be used to replace 'caused by' (which does not make sense in the context of this sentence), we must go with 'because of'.

**Last word split:**

~~C—crystallize~~

~~D—crystallize~~

E – crystallizing

Don't blindly eliminate 'crystallizing' because of the '-ing'. Read the

part that is not underlined – it says *'and fungus was growing'*. The usage of *'and'* means that there are two things that were happening and these two things obviously need to be parallel. So you need to go with *'crystallizing'* to parallel *'growing'*.

**Hence E is the best answer.**

- A – Usage
- B – Usage
- C – Parallelism
- D – Parallelism
- E – OA**

**Difficulty Level – Medium**

**OG Q7) The One-Minute Method**

Do a first word split using the pronouns 'it' and 'they'. Leave out option C for the time being.

- a. A & B are out because the plural pronoun 'they' cannot refer to the singular noun 'company'.
- b. From here on it's a simple matter of noticing the redundancy – previously and in the past mean the same thing so don't need to be used together. **Hence E is the correct answer.**

**The Aristotle Multiple-Split Method**

**Idiom Split** – No idioms underlined

**First word Split:**

~~A – they~~

~~B – they~~

C – that

D – it

E – it

A & B are out because the plural pronoun 'they' cannot refer to the singular noun 'company'.

**Last word Split:**

C - rivals

D - past

E - rivals

Doesn't help because both the alternatives could be correct.

**Pronoun Split:**

C - that

D - it

E – it

Doesn't help because both the pronouns (that and it) have been used correctly.

**Verb Split:**

C – would have been conceded

D – would have conceded

E – would have conceded

Doesn't help because both the verb usages are correct.

**Check the remaining options for Meaning:**

From here on it's a simple matter of noticing the redundancy – 'previously' and 'in the past' mean the same thing, so don't need to be used together.

**Hence E is the best answer.**

A – Pronoun agreement

B – Pronoun agreement

C – Redundancy

D – Redundancy

**E – OA**

**Difficulty Level – Low**

**OG Q8) The One-Minute Method**

The word 'holds' needs to be followed by 'that', since the theory cannot possibly be holding 'the beginning' or 'the universe'.

- a. D & E go out because they do not have 'that'
- b. Do a last-word split among the remaining three options. Since the original sentence implies that the universe is still expanding, the phrases 'had been expanding' and 'has expanded' are incorrect. **Hence A is the correct answer.**

**The Aristotle Multiple-Split Method**

**Idiom Split** – No Idioms

**First word Split:**

A - that

B - that

C - that

~~D — the (beginning)~~

~~E — the (universe)~~

In this sentence 'holds' means the same thing as 'claims' or 'posits'. So it obviously needs to be followed by a 'that'. D and E anyway don't make sense because the theory is not literally holding something.

**Last word Split:**

A – has been expanding

~~B — had been expanding~~

~~C — has expanded~~

You can see that this is the same as doing a verb split. Since the expansion of the universe is still continuing, we need to go with the present perfect continuous tense – has been expanding.

**Hence A is the best answer.**

**A - OA**

B - Tense

C - Tense

D - Usage

E - Usage

**Difficulty Level – Medium**

**OG Q9) The One-Minute Method**

Since the sentence starts with 'Like' you immediately know that this is a Comparison question. Read the non-underlined part after the comma to figure out what actually needs to be compared. The non-underlined part contains the names of two people and you can only compare people with people.

- a. Options A, B, C, and D are out because they compare 'idolization' with people'
- b. Only E compares people with people and so **E is the correct answer.**

**The Aristotle Multiple-Split Method**

**Idiom Split** – No Idioms

**First word Split:**

~~A – Like~~

~~B – As~~

~~C – Like~~

~~D – As~~

E – Like

The usage of 'Like' and 'As' should immediately tell you that this is a Comparison question. 'Like' is used to compare nouns and 'As' is used to compare everything other than nouns. To figure out what needs to be compared in this sentence we need to read the part (which is not underlined) after the comma. It says 'James Joyce and Virginia Woolf'. Since these are names of people, whatever is being compared also has to be people only. So we are comparing nouns, hence 'As' goes out.

We don't need to do another split here. Since we have already identified that this is a comparison question, quickly check the remaining options to see which ones get the comparison right. If there is more than one such option then we'll do another split.

A and C compare idolization with people; E is the only option that compares people (Brontes and Brownings) with people (James Joyce and Virginia Woolf).

**Hence E is the best answer.**

A - Comparison  
B - Comparison  
C - Comparison  
D - Comparison  
**E - OA**

**Difficulty Level - Low**

**OG Q10) The One-Minute Method**

Do a split using the first words. On the GMAT, 'which' needs to be preceded by a comma else its use is incorrect.

- a. Options A & C are out because of the usage of 'which'
- b. The sentence is in the present tense and discusses a current situation, so the use of the past tense 'kept' is incorrect. This eliminates E.
- c. Though both B & D use some form of the present tense, we require the simple present tense 'keeps' to parallel the rest of the sentence. **Hence the correct answer is B.**

**The Aristotle Multiple-Split Method**

**Idiom Split** – No Idioms

**First word Split:**

~~A— which~~

B - that

~~C— which~~

D - that

E – having

On the GMAT 'which' always needs to be preceded either by a comma or by a preposition, else its usage is wrong. (Refer to the SC Grail 'That vs Which' for details). Hence A and C are out.

**Last word Split:**

B - keeps

~~D— keeping~~

~~E— kept~~

Since a current situation is being discussed the usage of the past tense is incorrect. Hence E is out.

D unnecessarily uses the present perfect continuous tense 'has been keeping'. We are discussing a situation that is a fact but isn't necessarily an ongoing action; hence the simple present tense 'keeps' should be ideal.

**Hence B is the best answer.**

A - Usage/pronoun

**B - OA**

C - Usage/pronoun

D - Tense

E - Tense

**Difficulty Level - Low**